



'GRIEVOUS MISTAKE'
Says Blinken as
Cuba blames US
for unprecedented
anti-govt protests
SEE PAGE 6

SECOND EDITION

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"The government has completely failed in vaccination diplomacy."

JP CHAIRMAN AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION GM QUADER



"The government has been making wrong decisions one after another ... This decision [easing lockdown] will only worsen the situation."

BNP ORGANISING SECRETARY SYED EMRAN SALEH PRINCE



"The Delta variant is rippling around the world at a scorching pace, driving a new spike in Covid-19 cases and death."

WHO CHIEF TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS

GOVT'S NEW STIMULUS PACKAGES

For the poor made poorer

Questions hang over targeting of poor; experts voice concern about the new poor

- Tk 450 crore allocated for providing cash aid to 17.24 lakh day-laborers, transport workers, small traders and shipping workers
- Tk 1,500 crore for Palli Sanchay Bank, Karmasangsthan Bank and PKSF for financing job creation activities in rural areas
- Tk 1,000 crore allocated for providing loans at 4% interest for paying salaries, allowances of the employees of hotels, motels and theme parks
- Tk 100 crore to be given to Deputy Commissioners for providing food assistance to the poor on request

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The government yesterday announced a Tk 3,200 crore relief package for the ultra-poor and destitute families and the tourism sector -- segments that were dealt a fresh blow by the latest round of hard lockdown to contain the second wave of Covid-19 cases.

The country would be entering into another two weeks of strict lockdown from

July 23, so the latest package would provide some relief to the poor, who were hit the hardest by the global coronavirus pandemic that began in earnest in Bangladesh from March last year.

As many as 9 crore are now in a vulnerable position, according to the Asian Development Bank.

Under the new package, which comes as the country wraps up two weeks of 'hard'

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Three-year-old Rakib, Right, and his elder brother Rifat selling masks in front of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. As their father, a cook, hardly has any work and the boys' school is closed due to the pandemic, they have been sent on the job to support their family. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Daily deaths still hover above 200

Covid infections in 5 digits

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Officials reported 203 deaths from Covid-19 in 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, taking the official death toll from coronavirus to 16,842.

The death rate stood at 1.61 percent, said a press release issued by the Directorate General of Health Services.

At least 12,198 new infections were recorded during the period, taking the total number of confirmed cases to 10,47,155.

The positivity rate yesterday was 29.21 percent while the overall positivity rate stood at 14.84 percent.

The new cases were detected after conducting 41,755 tests across the country.

At least 7,646 Covid-19 patients have recovered during the period. The total number of recoveries was 8,56,346 with an 84.91 percent recovery rate.

Among the 203 deceased, 132 were men and 71 women. Of them, six were aged between 21 and 30, 12 between 31 and 40, 28 between 41 and 50, 39 between 51 and 60, and 118 above 60, added the release.

The country has been witnessing a surge in new cases due to the spread of the Delta variant of coronavirus.

The variant brought healthcare system in India to knees and alarmed health experts across the world.

COVID-19 SURGE As if Eid will give it a break

Govt announces 8-day pause in lockdown; stricter curbs for 14 days from July 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Relaxing the ongoing restrictions for eight days from tomorrow for the Eid-ul-Azha, the government yesterday decided to enforce a stricter lockdown across the country for two weeks from July 23 to rein in Covid infections.

The decision came at a time when the country logged 12,198 daily Covid cases and 203 deaths. A total of 1.34 lakh people got infected with the virus and 2,339 died in only 13 days from July 1.

The nationwide lockdown, imposed on July 1 to curb the surge in virus cases and deaths, ends today.

Health experts had earlier suggested continuing the lockdown, instead of relaxing it, to prevent further deterioration in the Covid situation.

They feared that the situation might turn grave in the coming week due to relaxation of restrictions with the healthcare system already under severe stress amid a surge in patients all over the country.

Yesterday, the Cabinet Division issued a gazette notification relaxing the restrictions for the Eid-ul-Azha to be celebrated on July 21. It also issued a set of directives on the stricter lockdown to be imposed on July 23.

For the Eid-ul-Azha celebrations, all the restrictions have been relaxed from July 14 midnight till 6:00am on July 23, allowing public movement

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

POST-EID LOCKDOWN

- Wearing masks mandatory
- Vehicular movement restricted after Eid
- Industries, factories to remain closed
- Kitchen markets will be open between 9:00am and 3:00pm

Govt to open schools after inoculation

Says health minister a day after Unicef, Unesco warning

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLA

The government is considering reopening schools and colleges by inoculating the teachers and students within the shortest possible time.

"The prime minister wants to reopen the educational institutions soon... Our technical committee on Covid-19 and the vaccination committee are working on it," Health Minister Zahid Maleque told The Daily Star yesterday.

Unicef and Unesco on Sunday urged decision-makers and governments all over the world to prioritise the safe reopening of schools in order to avoid a "generational catastrophe".

Education of millions of children has been disrupted since the Covid-19 outbreak started. As of yesterday, schools

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

To us, Kishwar has already won



KARIM WAHEED

Kishwar Chowdhury, the Aussie home cook of Bangladeshi origin, didn't win the MasterChef Australia title. She placed third. But for us, Bangladeshi who have been closely following her rise and rise on arguably the most popular reality show on food, Kishwar has already won.

At the risk of making a hyperbole, it can be said that up until now, no one had the courage to put everyday Bangladeshi home-cooked food in a pride of place on a global stage. Food that we eat every day at home unceremoniously. Food we don't consider "special" enough to serve to guests, let alone to foreigners.

For us, Kishwar has won because she has shown the world that Bangladeshi food isn't another subcategory under Indian food. She strongly believes in the integrity of our unpretentious food where the ingredients are few, the bold flavours speak for themselves, and the cook cannot hide behind razzle dazzle.

When this season of MasterChef started and Kishwar was introduced, viewers in Bangladesh were naturally delighted. When she said she had a

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BUSINESS

Rice prices rise despite bumper production

Despite the bumper yields in the just concluded Boro season, rice prices are going up, increasing the hardship of low-income people many of whom are suffering from income losses for lockdown and sluggish economic activities.

The spike raises questions among the consumers as the government agencies earlier claimed about increased production of the staple grain in the last three crop seasons. Estimates by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and Department of Agricultural Extension showed that Bangladesh produced 6 per cent higher rice year-on-year to 3.86 crore tonnes in the fiscal year 2020-21 from 3.66 crore tonnes in the previous year.

STORY ON B1



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BANGLADESH UPDATE

12,198
New cases in 24hrs10,47,155
Total cases16,842
Deaths8,89,167
RecoveriesGLOBAL UPDATE
4,059,226
Deaths188,404,749
Total cases

1.6cr Covid shots to arrive by end of August

Says Momen

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The current Covid-19 vaccination campaign in the country is set to get a boost with the expected arrival of around 1.6 crore vaccine doses by the end of August.

The first phase of the campaign hit a roadblock in March due to a halt in supply from Serum Institute of India, following a massive surge of cases and deaths in that country.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen on Facebook yesterday said Japan will soon supply 2.9 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine while the European Union will provide more than seven million doses of the same vaccine by August.

"Japan will stand by Bangladesh in the fight against #COVID19," Japanese Ambassador to Dhaka Ito Naoki tweeted yesterday.

He said Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi had announced that Japan will provide 11 million vaccines to 15 countries in the region, including Bangladesh, under the Covax facility.

The AstraZeneca shots will be of special importance for Bangladesh as some 15 lakh people, who had been administered the first dose, have not been able to get the second one.

Momen said in the Facebook post that China will provide one million doses of the Sinopharm vaccine as a gift, in addition to the gift of 1.1 million doses earlier.

Besides, under a purchase agreement, China will supply five million more Sinopharm vaccines later this month or in early August, Chinese Embassy Deputy Chief of Mission Hualong Yan said at an event on July 11.

Bangladesh has so far received 1.6 crore vaccine doses -- 10.03 million AstraZeneca from India, 2.5 million Moderna and 1.06 lakh Pfizer from US and 3.1 million Sinopharm from China.

"Initially, we had a strong supply [of AstraZeneca vaccines] from India. There were problems in the vaccination programme after the halt in the supply, but we are in a good position now. Vaccines will keep coming," Momen told reporters yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said the government will vaccinate 80 percent of the population, for which 26 crore vaccine doses will be needed, he said.

Bangladesh already has contracts with the Serum Institute of India and China's Sinopharm, while agreements with Sinovac of China and Sputnik V of Russia are also in the final stages.

Bangladesh is also working with both the Russian and Chinese authorities for co-production of vaccines, he said.

"If we can produce vaccines locally, we will not have any problem at all," Momen had told reporters on Monday.



Launches parked at the Sadarghat terminal in the capital. Workers passed busy hours yesterday cleaning the vessels since they are set to resume operation tomorrow at half capacity and maintaining the health safety rules, after the end of a 14-day Covid-19 nationwide lockdown.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

As if Eid will give it a break

FROM PAGE 1
and economic activities ahead of the festival," reads the notification.

"But people will have to remain cautious and strictly maintain the health safety guidelines, including wearing face masks, during this period."

It further said that taking into consideration the overall Covid situation, restrictions will be reimposed at 6:00am on July 23 and stay in force till August 5 midnight.

The Cabinet Division issued 23 directives for the said period.

Barring a few, all the directives are almost similar to those issued earlier for the current restrictions.

All the factories and industrial units will remain closed during the period, the circular said.

However, factories have been allowed to operate since the government first imposed the Covid restrictions last year, maintaining the health safety rules.

According to the directives, non-motorised vehicles, including rickshaws, will not be allowed on roads during the two-week lockdown.

"Operation of all kinds of vehicles, including public transport [river, rail and road], as well as domestic flights, will remain suspended," it read.

Kitchen markets will stay open from 9:00am to 3:00pm every day.

Now, those remain open from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) in a circular said launches and other water vessels will be allowed to operate at half capacity from July 14 to 23 given that they follow the health safety guidelines.

Also, Bangladesh Railway announced operating 38 inter-city and 19 commuter and mail trains during the period.

Tickets for inter-city trains will

be available online while those for commuter and mail trains will be issued at counters, it said in a circular.

Two private airlines -- US-Bangla Airlines and Novoair -- said they will resume flights on all domestic routes on July 15 in compliance with the health safety rules.

In the capital, cattle traders have started bringing sacrificial animals to the makeshift markets. This year, the two Dhaka city corporations have permitted setting up of 18 such markets.

Talking to The Daily Star earlier, Prof Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director (disease control) of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), said, "Our unscientific approach of relaxing the lockdown will aggravate the crisis. If the government really wants to curb infections, it must continue the lockdown."

"We needed to put under complete lockdown the border areas where cases of delta variant were detected. But we didn't do that... Now it has spread all over the country."

"More than one lakh people got infected even during this lockdown. Following its relaxation, the number of Covid cases may double or treble."

"The infected people moved around and spread the virus. Similar things will happen during the home rush and at cattle markets," Be-Nazir cautioned.

At a virtual conference yesterday, State Minister for Public Administration Farhad Hossain called upon people to stay alert and avoid crowds during the Eid to protect themselves against the virus.

"Refusal to wear face masks [in public places] is one kind of offence. It increases the risk of infection," he said, adding that it is everyone's responsibility to take preventive measures against Covid.

year pre-Covid. Therefore, living and working in Bangladesh played a role in shaping me.

"I'm a versatile cook with affinity for all different cuisines, like any metropolitan person. When I do cook Bengali food though, I get a sense of pride. I think that shows," she said.

Kishwar's masterstroke came in the MasterChef grand finale, when she served "panta bhaat-aloo bharta" as her final dish to the judges.

Here's why this mattered: "panta bhaat-aloo bharta" is quintessentially Bangladeshi. We eat it on the first day of the Bangla year, but we think it's too plebeian to serve to outsiders.

What better way to say that as a nation we've arrived on the global food stage, than serve something as humbly Bangladeshi as this?

You may not be MasterChef Australia, Kishwar, but you're certainly MasterChef Bangladesh.

To us, Kishwar has already

FROM PAGE 1
"small dream" of highlighting Bangladeshi food on the show, perhaps most of us took it casually.

But then as the season progressed, she demonstrated that she meant what she said. Starting from "machher jhol" to "jau bhaat", "lau chingri", "begun bharta" to the inventive dessert highlighting "paan" -- her trajectory has generated immense interest not just in her home country Australia and ancestral home Bangladesh, but also in India.

In her own words while talking to The Daily Star: "My father is from Bangladesh, and was a freedom fighter. He moved to Australia about 50 years ago as a student and met my mother, who is from Kolkata. I was born and brought up here in Australia. I moved to Dhaka and lived there for five years for work. My in-laws are based in Dhaka and I used to travel there four to five times a

year pre-Covid. Therefore, living and working in Bangladesh played a role in shaping me.

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government was contacting the World Health Organization seeking suggestions on vaccinating school and college students as a few countries have started inoculating students aged between 12-18 years.

Prof Dr Be-Nazir Ahmed, a member of the National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAG), said, "We have also discussed how we can reopen the schools and colleges and how the students can be vaccinated."

He said the USA, the UK and several other countries have started inoculating students aged between 12 and 18 years with the Pfizer vaccine.

The government started inoculating university students earlier this month to be able to eventually reopen the universities. No decision has yet been made regarding schools and colleges.

The health minister said the

evidence and information from various sources to see the feasibility," he said.

Prof Mohammad Shahidullah, chief of the National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19, said the committee had recommended reopening the universities by inoculating the students and teachers in the soonest possible time.

About vaccinating younger students, he said, "We are waiting for WHO's suggestions."

On Sunday, Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury said that the government made significant progress towards reopening schools as 65 percent of the secondary and about the same percentage of primary teachers have been vaccinated.

"There are more and more anticyclones in northern regions which increases the risk of fires," he said.

According to many scientists, Russia -- especially its Siberian and Arctic regions -- is among the countries most exposed to climate change.

Russia has set numerous records in recent years and in June 2020 registered 38 degrees Celsius (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit) in the town of Verkhoyansk -- the highest temperature recorded above the Arctic circle since measurements began.

Modest amount," said Binayak Sen, director-general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies.

As many as 1.5 crore has slipped into poverty for the pandemic to take the total number of poor in the country to 6 crore, according to BIDS's estimate.

But the Centre for Policy Dialogue estimates the number of new poor is as high as 4.2 crore to take the total number of poor to 7.6 crore.

The portion of the population living below the poverty line is simulated to be 33-44 percent against the pre-crisis estimate of 20.5 percent, according to a recent document of the ADB.

The first wave of Covid-19 was largely in the cities and metropolitan areas but the current wave is sweeping across the country, Sen said.

"So more people need help this time, so the package should have been more."

He went on to approve the deployment of OMS to extend help to the poor.

"It is not a bad idea as it is a self-targeting mechanism. You would only

come if you do not have food. It takes effort to come and collect food. Plus, there is a stigma attached. So, it is a good initiative," Sen added.

VGF AND OTHERS

In a separate move, the government is set to distribute 10 kgs of rice for free ahead of Eid-ul-Azha to about one crore "ultra-poor and destitute families" that have the vulnerable group feeding (VGF) card in 492 upazilas and 328 municipalities across the country.

The disaster management and relief ministry on July 4 sent a letter to all the offices concerned and asked the deputy commissioners of all districts to inform the respective lawmakers about the allocation.

The letter also asked the officials to distribute the allocated rice by July 19 to all the VGF cardholders.

According to the letter, the ultra-poor and destitute families will need to meet at least four out of the 12 criteria to be eligible for the assistance.

The criteria include landless households or those who have only homestead; households dependent on daily wage labour; households dependent on women's income or begging; households with no income-generating assets; households headed by widowed, divorced or separated women; households headed by a freedom fighter with disability; and households without access to two full meals a day for most of the year.

Only one beneficiary per household can receive the food aid, which will be distributed by local public representatives.

The letter also asked for redistribution of the VGF cards for unions and wards based on the 2011 census.

Besides, the ministry on the same day sent separate letters to concerned offices informed that 14,000 tonnes of rice and Tk 1.41 crore has been allocated in favour of 64 DCs, 3,280 tonnes of rice and Tk 3.28 crore for 328 municipalities and 800 tonnes of rice and Tk 4 crore for 12 city corporations as humanitarian assistance.

Priority should be given to the victims of natural disasters and people who became jobless, particularly the transport workers, as a result of the pandemic.

The allocation can be spent on giving food assistance -- rice, pulses, salt, oil, potatoes -- to those who seek help by calling the national helpline 333.

"We have made the allocation so that people can have some food stocks during the festival," said a top official of the Disaster Management and Relief Ministry.

Russia warms of hot summer after June records

AFP, Moscow

Russia's meteorological service said yesterday the country could see its hottest summer on record, driven by climate change, after a record-breaking heatwave in June.

Moscow was hit by a historic heat wave at the end of June, with temperatures reaching a 120-year record.

"We estimate that temperatures will be high in the country both in the second half of July and August," meteorologist Roman Vilfan of the Rosgidromet agency said at a press conference.

He added that it was "of course possible" that it will be the hottest summer ever recorded in Russia.

Vilfan said the average temperature in the European part of Russia was the highest since records began 130 years ago.

Russia as a whole saw its hottest June since 2012.

Vilfan said that not all of the country was affected by the heatwave, saying there were "swathes of cold in western Siberia."

He also explained that climate change is leading to a shift in atmospheric circulation, due to significant temperature contrasts between the country's Arctic and southern regions.

"There are more and more anticyclones in northern regions which increases the risk of fires," he said.

According to many scientists, Russia -- especially its Siberian and Arctic regions -- is among the countries most exposed to climate change.

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48 dengue cases reported in 24hrs

UNB, Dhaka

Amid a rise in the number of dengue patients, authorities reported 48 more new cases in 24 hours until yesterday morning.

Some 236 patients diagnosed with dengue are receiving treatment at different government and private hospitals in the country as of yesterday morning, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of them, one patient is receiving treatment at a hospital outside Dhaka. Some 844 patients have been admitted to different hospitals with dengue since January, and 608 of them have been released after recovery.

The recent spike in dengue cases has added to the worries, as the country continues to grapple with the devastating second wave of the pandemic.

DGHS reported 1,193 dengue cases and three confirmed dengue-related deaths in 2020. According to official figures, 1,01,354 dengue cases and 179 deaths were recorded in Bangladesh in 2019.

Dengue fever was first reported in Bangladesh in 2000, when it claimed 93 lives. In the following three years, the fatalities almost fell to zero.

However, the mosquito-borne viral infection struck again in 2018, killing 26, and infecting 10,148 people.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN, RASHED SHUMON

The directions for setting up cattle markets at designated locations has not quite worked it seems, as markets have sprung up here and there across the capital. Markets in the city are scheduled to operate from July 17-21, but this one here at the capital's Shahjahanpur Railway Colony has already started business. Judging by children's jubilation around a cow, inset, health safety guidelines are not much of a priority.

A second chance at life

Man's death sentence commuted by SC after years in condemned cell, after lawyer steps up for him pro bono

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Swapon Kumar Biswas, a private service holder, hit his wife Swapna Ghosh's head at a stage of alteration, resulting in her death 15 years back.

Swapon, who was 28 years old at that time, was sentenced to death by a trial court two years later, in 2008.

Being in a condemned cell for over a decade, he wrote a letter to senior counsel and criminal law expert Khandker Mahbub Hossain through jail authorities on July 30, 2019, requesting for pro bono legal assistance.

Mahbub Hossain received the letter on November 30, 2019 and decided to provide legal assistance to him without any cost.

He convinced the Appellate Division through legal arguments last week that Swapon had no intention to kill his wife.

The apex court on Monday commuted Swapon's death penalty to life imprisonment, clearing the way for him to

walk out of jail after six and a half years.

He said the incident took place in the heat of the moment.

Therefore, the sentence should be 10 years' imprisonment under section 304 of the Penal Code.

On Monday, the SC in its verdict said Swapon will get the benefit of section 35(A) of the CrPC in calculation of his sentence.

The apex court thanked Mahbub Hossain for giving pro bono legal assistance to an insolvent justice seeker. The bench led by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain said their expression of thanks will be mentioned in the written judgement.

After the SC delivered the verdict, Mahbub told The Daily Star that Swapon has become destitute facing the case's trial proceedings.

"I accepted the request on humanitarian grounds and placed arguments on behalf of Swapon free of charge. After five or six

3 held with crystal meth in port city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ag

Rab claimed to have arrested three drug dealers along with 975 grammes of crystal meth from Chattogram's Patharghata area on Monday night.

The arrestee are Shahidul Islam Tipu (28), Kazi Aminur Rashid (48) and Saimon Tarek (49).

On information, a team of Rab-7 arrested them from Notun Fishery Ghat area and seized the drugs from their possession, Lt Commander Moshirul Rahman, commanding officer of Rab-7, told a press briefing at his office yesterday.

"The drugs (worth Tk 1 crore) were smuggled into Teknaf from Myanmar seven to eight months

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Easing lockdown a wrong move: BNP

UNB, Dhaka

BNP yesterday termed the government's decision to relax the lockdown for a week ahead of Eid-ul-Azha a wrong one, and warned that it will contribute to further deterioration of the Covid situation.

"The government has been making wrong decisions one after another to hide its failures. This decision (to ease lockdown) will only worsen the situation further," said BNP organising secretary Syed Emran Saleh Prince, while talking to reporters after distributing food among people in front of BNP's Nayaplatan central office and its adjacent areas.

He also said had the government enforced a strict lockdown by providing low-income people with food and cash support after Eid-ul-Fitr and brought vaccines for all, the lockdown would not be needed.

Prince alleged that people are falling into catastrophic situations repeatedly due to the failures of the government and its wrong decisions.

He alleged that most steps taken by the government to tackle the coronavirus pandemic were against people.

"They've completely failed to deal with the situation."

The BNP leader said their party has repeatedly been saying that lockdowns or curfews will not work unless the needy and low-income people and those who live from hand-to-mouth are given necessary money and food support. "Now that has been proved right."

He demanded the government give one-time assistance of Tk 15,000 to marginalised people.

Prince said Jatiyatabadi Nagorik Samaj, a platform of BNP, arranged the food distribution programme as many people are going through serious sufferings due to the ongoing lockdown enforced by the government in an unplanned way.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Deans' body recommends rescheduling DU entry test

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

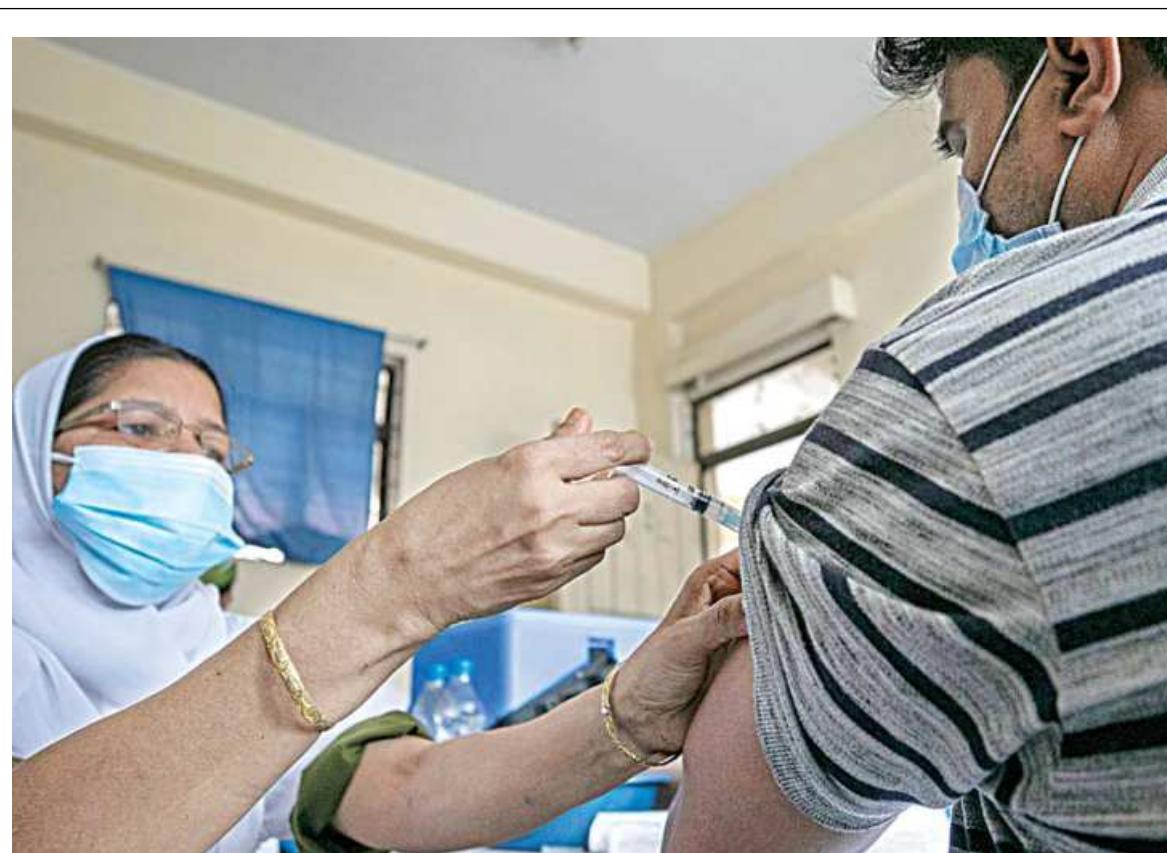
Dhaka University (DU) deans' committee has recommended rescheduling its honours admission tests for 2020-21 session, as the Covid-19 situation has worsened.

The committee, in a virtual meeting with DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Akhteruzzaman in the chair, made the recommendation, DU Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Dr ASM Maksud Kamal told The Daily Star.

It recommended taking science faculty (Ka unit) exam on October 1 instead of August 6, arts faculty (Kha unit) on October 2, fine arts (general part) faculty on October 9, business studies faculty (Ga unit) on October 22, while exam for social science faculty (Gha unit) was recommended for October 23.

Earlier on April 29, the university authorities were forced to reschedule dates of tests due to deteriorating situation of the pandemic.

The committee also recommended deferring admission tests of seven DU-affiliated colleges.



After a rather extended hiatus due to a shortage in supply, Covid-19 vaccination campaign resumed yesterday in Chattogram as registrants queued up to receive Moderna jabs since morning at their designated centres.

The photo was taken from Chattogram General Hospital.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Safety takes a back seat at cattle markets

Set to open Saturday, they're already teeming with traders, buyers; health guidelines largely ignored

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Even though the cattle markets in the capital were scheduled to start from Saturday, they are already witnessing large crowds as not only traders are bringing in sacrificial animals, people are also thronging there to purchase those, even amid the lockdown.

This is also increasing the risk of further spread of coronavirus as both buyers and traders were seen not maintaining health guidelines at the markets.

Traders have already started to bring in their cattle since Friday.

During visits to markets including Dhupkhola playground, North Shahjahanpur, Kachukhet and Gabtali, it was seen that most traders as well as visitors did not have masks on.

Besides, the market authorities did not set up any hand washing facility and thermal scanner to check body temperature. There was also no hand sanitiser available as part of the health guidelines.

This year, the two Dhaka city corporations are setting up 20 cattle markets -- 10 in Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) and 10 in Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), including the permanent one at Gabtali.

Mohammad Polas Ali, a trader who brought 19 bulls from Jhenaidah on Friday at Dhupkhola, said they came early to get a good place at the market. He and his associates were not wearing masks.

Asked about health guidelines, he said they were asked to wear masks and wash hands regularly but they cannot do so all the time due to their work.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Dhaka traffic almost back to its old self

STAR REPORT

It was an all too familiar Dhaka yesterday, with thoroughfares witnessing rapid rise in vehicular and public movement as well as traffic congestion -- on the 13th day of the government's "strict lockdown".

Though the government circular to ease the lockdown will come into effect from tomorrow, large numbers of people and vehicles like private cars, motorbikes and rickshaws were seen on streets.

There were gridlocks at different intersections including Panthapath, Karran Bazar, Bijoy Sarani, Mouchak, Kakrail and Mohakhali areas. Private cars, motorbikes and rickshaws dominated the city thoroughfares, while large numbers of people were seen walking.

"I have heard that the government has withdrawn the lockdown. That's why I have come out of home and going to a relative's residence," said Imran Hossain, a resident of Kalabagan, on his way to Moghbazar.

Around noon, a pedestrian, Abul Kashem was seen walking in Shahbagh area. Asked, he said, "I've been at home for over 10 days in a row. So I decided to head out."

Besides, many were seen roaming around without wearing masks.

"I know wearing mask is important. But I cannot keep wearing it all the time as I feel suffocated," said Shamnu Debnath.



Hundreds of vehicles, mostly goods-laden ones, are stuck in a 25km traffic congestion in Narayanganj on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway. The situation was created due to repair work on the Langalbandh bridge.

PHOTO: UNB

AMI PROBASHI APP REGISTRATION

Protect data of migrant workers: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Civil Society for Migrants yesterday urged the government to protect data provided by migrant workers when registering for "Ami Probashi" app, which is a prerequisite for Covid-19 vaccine registration.

Saying some private organisations are involved in operating Ami Probashi, they urged the government to add a "disclaimer" in the app's registration form, saying that data from the app will not be used for other purposes except for government use to send workers abroad.

A platform of more than 20 like-minded organisations working in the migration sector, BCSM made the call during an online press conference.

Besides, the platform urged the government to arrange single-dose vaccines such as Johnson and Johnson, which are approved in the destination country, for migrant workers to save their time during vaccination.

As per a government decision, outbound migrant workers have to register on Ami Probashi under the expatriates' welfare ministry first to have access to the designated Surokkha app for vaccine registration.

On Ami Probashi, a migrant worker has to input data of themselves and their families, said Prof Tasneem Siddiqui, chairperson of Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU), a member organisation of BCSM.

However, there is no disclaimer in the form stating that data will not be used for any other purpose by other institutions or organisations, she said, while reading out a concept note.

"It is a question of ethical concern," said Prof Tasneem.

Alongside the government, some private organisations are involved in the operation of Ami Probashi app, she added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

PRODUCING FAKE CURRENCY Couple placed on two-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed two people on two-day remand each in a case filed against them over producing Tk 43 lakh in fake notes and circulating them in the market.

They are Abdur Rahim Sheikh (39) and his accomplice Md Helal Khan (35).

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Sadbir Yasir Ahsan Chowdhury passed the order, after Md Zahidul Islam, an inspector of Detective Branch (DB) of police and investigation officer of the case, produced them before court with a 10-day remand prayer.

The magistrate rejected a bail petition and sent three others arrested on the same charges to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj, as the IO did not submit any remand prayer for them. The three accused are Rahim's wife Fatema Begum, and his two accomplices, Anwar Hossain and Israfel Amin.

In the remand prayer, the IO said the accused with help from others made counterfeit notes and circulated them in the market.

Therefore, they need to be remanded to know names and addresses of others responsible for committing such offences, the IO added.

The defence for the accused had submitted a petition, seeking bail along with cancellation of the remand prayer, on grounds that their clients were implicated in the case as part of a conspiracy to harass them.

Earlier, detectives arrested them from Dhaka's Badda area and seized around Tk 43 lakh in fake notes and money-printing materials during a raid on July 12.



A large number of residents in the capital's Shantinagar area waited for a Trading Corporation of Bangladesh truck since 7am yesterday, in hopes of being able to buy their daily essentials at a subsidised pricing. But after standing under the scorching sun for six to seven hours, many returned home disheartened as the mobile outlet for open-market sale did not turn up to its designated spot.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A second

FROM PAGE 3
years, he will get released from jail," he said.

Lawyer Mohammad Shishir Manir who accompanied Mahbub during the virtual hearing, said Swapon will have to serve in jail for another six and a half years more and he will be shifted to a normal cell of Kashimpur jail following the SC verdict.

He said Swapon is now supposed to serve in jail for total 22.5 years as he will get remission and other relevant facilities under the Jail Code now. He has already served 16 years in jail in the case.

Additional Attorney General Sk Md Moshed opposed Swapon's appeal, saying the murder allegation was proved beyond reasonable doubt.

As per the case statement, Swapon killed his wife in his rented house at Syedpur in Nilphamari on October 16, 2006 at a stage of quarrel over his second marriage. A lower court sentenced Swapon to death on November 18, 2008, which the HC confirmed on April 9, 2014.

Cargo vessel sinks near Bhasanchar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG

A cargo vessel capsized in the Bay of Bengal yesterday morning after hitting a sunken lighter vessel near Bhasanchar.

All 13 crew members were rescued by the staff of a fishing boat passing by.

Mohammad Selim, deputy director of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), said the vessel Hang Gang-1 carrying 1,200 tonnes of iron "angles" for Padma Bridge was heading towards Dhaka.

While crossing the sea, the cargo vessel hit a sunken vessel MV Fultola-1 after its master lost control over the helm around 10 nautical miles south from Bhasanchar around 9:40am, said Selim. A crack developed in its hull following the hit, he added.

Abdul Malek, master of oil tanker OT Ocean Taj which was crossing the area on its way to Chattogram, said hearing about the accident through VHF radio of his vessel they rushed to the spot to find that all the crewmembers of the sinking vessel rescued by the fishermen of a big sized fishing boat.

Earlier, a sand-laden bulkhead sank in the same area on July 3 and a lighter vessel MV Fultola-1 capsized on July 10 being hit against the sank bulkhead due to a lack of marking buoy.

BIWTA DD Selim said they marked the area with a red-colour floating buoy immediately after MV Fultola-1 capsized on July 10 so that vessels avoid the spot.

Four held for stealing SS coil rolls in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CTG

Police arrested four persons in Chattogram yesterday with three imported SS coil rolls which were removed on the way to Gazipur from Chattogram.

The arrestees are Mojibur Rahaman (30), Masum (34), Babul (30) and Nurul (46). Mojibur is a middleman in hiring transports in the port city's Kadamtali, said police.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) (South) Bijoy Basak of CMP said Madina Group at Gazipur has imported the three SS coil rolls weighing 8,670kg via Chattogram port and local transport agent Loop Freight Ltd hired a truck via Mojibur to send those to Gazipur on June 30.

Mojibur first unloaded the coils to another truck in Kadamtali before the trip, said the DC.

The DC said failing to get the items till July 11, an official of Loop Freight Ltd, contacted Mojibur but he was giving misinformation. Later, Mamun filed a case with Sadarghat Police Station on July 12.

3 held with

FROM PAGE 3

ago by one fish trader named Rubel. He handed the consignment to the arrestees before he went to Saudi Arabia," he added.

The drug dealers were trying to sell those in Dhaka and Chattogram and their clients are youths from affluent families, the Rab official said.

He said the arrestees have smuggled the drugs from Myanmar several times and this consignment was the second seizure by the law enforcers in Chattogram. On February 24, two persons were arrested from port city's Khulshi area with 140 grammes of meth.

A case was filed with Kotwali Police Station over Monday's arrest, said the Rab official.

Authorities stand by the hungry and needy in Barishal

Relief distribution on in full swing, officials say it will continue till day before Eid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, BARISHAL

Under Barishal City Corporation's (BCC) initiative, the city's distressed and helpless people are getting relief materials, which is easing their troubles during the lockdown.

The relief distribution started on Sunday and will continue till the day before Eid, BCC Public Relations Officer Swapna Kumar Das confirmed.

The official said in the last two days, relief was delivered to homes of about 5,000 people at night, on instructions of the BCC mayor.

He said relief was distributed among 2,400 people in the city's Bhatar Khal, Rasulpur and Kalapati slums yesterday, and a similar number of people received materials at slums of different areas on Monday night.

Each package contains 10 kg of rice, 2 kg of lentils and potatoes, and a litre of oil.

It was decided to extend relief operation in all wards in the future, he said.

Meanwhile, the working people affected by the ongoing lockdown said the materials have given them some respite during the crisis.

Momen to

FROM PAGE 3

Presently, trade level between South and Central Asia is very low, and all countries in the two regions want to improve trade but that needs connectivity.

Apart from the conference, the foreign minister will hold important bilateral meetings, including with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

Momen will request his Indian counterpart to begin vaccine supply to Bangladesh at the earliest. India halted vaccine export in March after supplying only 7 million AstraZeneca vaccines out of contracted 30 million between January and June.

On the other hand, a vaccine purchase deal is also pending with Russia. Bangladesh has sent the necessary documents but is yet to receive the response yet, an official concerned said.

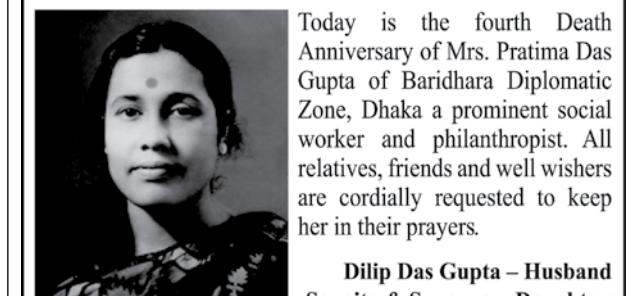
The foreign minister would request for quick signing of the deal, as well as on the co-production of vaccines in Bangladesh.

China is supplying Sinopharm vaccines but a deal with Sinovac is pending. Besides, he will also speak of quick beginning of vaccine co-production, the official said.

"All these three countries are also important ones in terms of Rohingya crisis. We will request them to help address the crisis and their return from Bangladesh," he said.

Abdul Momen will return to Dhaka on July 19.

DEATH ANNIVERSARY



Today is the fourth Death Anniversary of Mrs. Pratima Das Gupta of Baridhara Diplomatic Zone, Dhaka a prominent social worker and philanthropist. All relatives, friends and well-wishers are cordially requested to keep her in their prayers.

Dilip Das Gupta – Husband
Sangita & Suparna – Daughters

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- Sealed tenders are invited from bona-fide vendors for interior decoration works of Gallamari, Khulna and Jhalakathi Sub-Banches of the Bank.
- The participating companies must have at least 03 numbers of successful completion of interior decoration works within last 05 (five) years at scheduled Bank(s). Copy of previous work completion certificate(s) must be supplied along with the tender proof in this regard.
- A pay order of Tk. 15,000.00 each has to be submitted with the tenders in the name of BASIC Bank Limited, Head Office, Dhaka as earnest money. Earnest money can be forfeited for reasons mentioned in the tender schedule.
- The tender schedule may be obtained from Common Services Division (Sena Kalyan Bhaban, 5th floor, 195 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000) of BASIC Bank Limited between 10:00 AM. and 04:00 P.M. of all working days at a cost of Tk. 500/- only. No schedule will be sold after 04:00 P.M. of July 28, 2021.
- Sealed tenders have to be dropped in the tender box kept at Common Services Division of BASIC Bank Limited within July 29, 2021 by 03:00 P.M., and the tenders will be opened at 03:30 P.M. on the same day in presence of bidders, if any.
- Other terms and conditions can be found in the tender schedule.

Deputy General Manager
Common Services Division

Govt failed

FROM PAGE 3

people in the country have no food at home and no money in their pockets. "If you [government] don't give them food help, hungry people will come out of the house."

He also alleged that the government did not provide food aid to the poor due to its lack of goodwill.

I purchased two bulls for Tk 1.16 lakh," said Tauhid Hasan, a resident of Azimpur Sheikh Saheb Bazar.

Shahidul Islam, a trader at Gabtoli, who brought 15 cattle to the market on Friday, said so far the number of buyers is much more compared to that of last year.

"I've already sold five bulls and hope that I'll be able to sell the rest within a couple of days," he said.

Rakib Imran, a leaseholder of Gabtoli cattle market, said they will set up required health facilities at different points before July 17.

"We did not realise people in droves would start to come to the market, for which we could not ensure those," he said.

Meanwhile, DNCC Mayor Md Atiquel Islam on Sunday told The Daily Star that they will set up the cattle markets maintaining health guidelines and have already formed monitoring committees in this regard.

Protect data

FROM PAGE 3

BCSM Chairperson Prof CR Abrar hoped that the government will handle the issue of data protection with sincerity, saying it is a privacy issue of migrant workers.

"Data is the biggest capital in the present day," he said, adding that information provided by migrant workers should not be compromised.

Although the government has taken different initiatives to ensure wellbeing of migrant workers, it is not unlikely that there could be some limitations while implementing them, said Prof Abrar, also executive director of RMMRU.

Syed Saiful Haque, co-chair of BCSM and chairperson of Warbe Development Foundation, among others, spoke at the event.

He said they are setting up 10 cattle markets and there will be a monitoring team in each market. They will also initiate mobile court drives.

"We will take immediate action if we find violation of health guidelines. We have already instructed lease holders in this regard," he said.

DSCC chief estate officer Rusel Sabrin echoed him. In case of violation, they will take immediate action including cancelling the market, he said.

There will be monitoring teams and mobile courts in place to enforce the guidelines once the markets start officially, he said.

MAINTAIN HEALTH GUIDELINES: LGRD MINISTER

Local Government and Rural Development (LGRD) Minister Md Tazul Islam at a virtual inter-ministerial meeting yesterday asked all to maintain health guidelines at the markets.

He said there will be separate entrances and exits for sellers and buyers, as well as thermal scanners and hand washing facilities at the markets.

"We have also made all arrangements for buying and selling cattle online," he said, encouraging people to use the facility. "Steps will be taken to ensure that online and in-person cattle markets are run in accordance with proper hygiene practices," he added.

এসেনসিয়াল ড্রাগস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

৩৯৫-৩৯৭, তেজগাঁও শিল্প এলাকা

ঢাকা- ১২০৮

প্রতিপন্থ বিজ্ঞপ্তি



ক্র.নং	দরপত্র নং ও তারিখ	বিবরণ	পরিমাণ
০১।	ইডিসিএল/ড্রা/লোকাল/টেক্সার/২০২১/২৬৮ তারিখ ১৩/০৭/২০২১ইং	Avicel PH- 101 BP (সিডিউল মোতাবেক)	৫,০০০.০ কেজি
	২.৫%	ঢাকা ১,০০০.০০ প্রতি সেট	২৮/০৭/২০২১ইং বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা

সকল কার্যদার্দে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপরোক্ত কার্যালয় হতে শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ দরপত্রে শিডিউল তৈর্য করা যাইবে।

উক্ত কার্যালয়ে যে, যাহাদের ভ্যাটি রেজিস্ট্রেশন নাই তাহাদের দরপত্রে অংশগ্রহণ করার প্রয়োজন নাই।

দরপত্র খেলার দিনে কেবল দরপত্র শিডিউল বিতর্ক করা হইবে না।

মহাব্যবস্থাপক
প্রক্রিয়ার মেট

পক্ষেও ব্যবস্থাপনা পরিচালনা

Condition for entry:
The applicant must have:
• Legal status (valid registration number with NGO Affairs Bureau and Social Welfare Department)
• Appropriate organizational strength
• Physical presence in the area for which it applies
• Past exposure of implementing food and cash transfer based programme, livelihoods programme
• Organization's strategic objectives fit with WFP's strategic priorities
• Basic resource capacity (financial and human)
• Financial strength to conduct the required activities supported by an audited financial statement
• Good relationships with the local administration



Char Dakshin Gabura Government Primary School is on the verge of being devoured by the Teesta river in Pircachha upazila of Rangpur.

PHOTO: STAR

Primary school at risk of going into the Teesta

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

A government primary school on the Teesta river is now on the verge of being devoured by the river due to erosion in Rangpur's Pircachha upazila.

The Teesta is just 50 yards away from the school building in Chhawla union of the upazila, said Headmaster Md Akram Hossain of Char Dakshin Gabura Government Primary School.

"Workers hired by the local administration are trying hard to protect the school building from erosion by dumping sandbags," he told The Daily Star.

A total of 5,500 sandbags have already been dumped in the affected area since Friday to protect the building, he added.

Locals said a building of the school, which

was established in 1991, had gone into the river in 2013 due to erosion of the Teesta.

The following year, a new building was constructed on the school land. This structure is now threatened by erosion.

According to locals, erosion has been a common problem for them over the years. The Teesta was flowing far away from the school building a couple of years ago, but it has moved closer to the structure swallowing homes and land.

The authorities were quite late in taking steps to protect the school from erosion. The situation would not have been so grave if they had taken measures on time, said locals.

The headmaster said the school had many students before its previous building was devoured by the Teesta. But the number dropped later as many local residents were

forced to relocate due to erosion, he added.

Badsha Alam, chairman of Chhawla Union Parishad in Pircachha, said the flow in the Teesta remained stable in the last few days. "Hopefully, there will be no problem as enough sandbags have already been dumped in the affected area. But if the river swells further, it would be tough to protect the school."

The chairman said about 50 families have so far been affected by erosion in the area in the last three weeks.

Sheikh Samsul Arefin, upazila nirbahi officer of Pircachha, said he along with several other officials of the local government and water development board visited the school several times and decided to dump sandbags in the erosion-hit area.

He said steps have already been taken to protect the school from erosion.

200 metres of dreadfulness

SUZIT KUMAR DAS

It's just 200 metres of road but it is a key part of a thoroughfare that has been in appalling state for a year in Bhanaga municipality of Faridpur.

The people of Bhanaga town say they can't even walk on that piece of road after a light shower as the pothole-ridden surface becomes filthy with stagnant water and mud.

During monsoon, the road becomes almost unfit for traffic movement as water remains stagnant for days.

While visiting the municipality, this correspondent saw that the road, locally known as Thana Road on the west of the Dhaka-Barishal highway, was in a sorry state.

The road connects Bhanaga Bazar Bus Stand and Kumar river and locals say the road is one of the most significant roads in the upazila as vegetable, fish and meat markets, Bhanaga Government KM College, Bhanaga Post Office, Additional Police Superintendent's Office of Bhanaga Circle, Bhanaga Police Station, Bhanaga Land Office and other important government offices are on both sides of the road.

At least 5,000 people have to use

the road every day, they said.

The road was repaired two years ago under the supervision of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED).

This work was done by the company, locals said.

They said protests were held about the poor quality work being done two years ago but the "repairs" went ahead anyway.

M Nazrul Islam, a jeweler, said, "All traders like me are suffering due to the condition of the road." He claimed that he was getting fewer customers because of this.

Imdad Sheikh, who drives a three-wheeler, said, "We often can't go on the road with goods from the market due to the road condition. Our vehicles have to be pushed passed the area some times."

Abdul Malek Mia, engineer of Bhanaga upazila Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), said the road is under Bhanaga municipality but the LGED repaired it under a project two years ago.

"Now we have no funds to repair the road. The area needs a drainage system too."



The pothole- and crack-ridden Thana Road in Bhanaga municipality of Faridpur. It is hard to tell that this road was repaired two years ago.

PHOTO: SUZIT KUMAR DAS

Teen calls UNO to avert child marriage

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Nilphamari

A 15-year-old girl was saved from child marriage in Nilphamari Sadar on Monday night after she contacted the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) over phone seeking help.

Before the arrival of the would-be groom for the wedding, the girl sent a text message to the UNO's cell phone saying the marriage was taking place against her will.

The girl, a class-X student, lives in Nittayanandi village of the upazila.

Shantona Chakrovarti, vice chairperson of the upazila, said the girl's parents tried to married her off with a youth from nearby Itakhola village on Monday night.

Before the arrival of the would-be groom for the wedding, the girl sent a text message to the UNO's cell phone saying the marriage was taking place against her will.

She pleaded with the UNO to save her from the marriage. She also said she wanted to continue her studies, Shantona said.

Receiving the call for help, UNO Jesmin Nahar accompanied by Shantona and others rushed to the spot and foiled the child marriage.

The parents were also reprimanded, Shantona added.

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দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

তারিখঃ ১২/০৭/২০২১স্থির

ঝুঁটুনীয় সরকার, পঞ্জী উন্নয়ন ও সমবায় মন্ত্রণালয়।

বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন, বরিশাল।

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন, বরিশাল।

উন্নত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (ওপ্টিমাইজেশন)।

বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশনের রাজীব ও বার্ষিক উন্নয়ন সহায়তা তত্ত্বালীক (থোক করাদু)।

বিসিসি/ইডি/৩৬৬/২১ তারিখঃ ১২/০৭/২০২১স্থির।

পাবলিক প্রক্রিউরেমেন্ট আইন ২০০৬ ও তারিখে প্রণীত বিধিবাস্তু ২০০৮ অনুসরে সঞ্চিত কাজের জন্য প্রণীত দলিলের বর্ণনা ও শর্তন্যায়ী, মালামাল সরবরাহের ফেরে প্রণীত সরবরাহকারী।

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন, নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী-এলজিইডি, বরিশাল এবং বিভাগীয় কমিশনার, বরিশাল এর দরপত্র।

১৩/০৭/২০২১স্থির।

১২/০৭/২০২১স্থির (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে)।

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন, বরিশাল।

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন, বরিশাল।

তারিখঃ ০৪/০৮/২০২১স্থির সময়ের অফিস চলাকালীন সময়।

তারিখঃ ০৫/০৮/২০২১স্থির সময়ঃ ২.০০টা।

তারিখঃ ০৫/০৮/২০২১স্থির সময়ঃ ৩.০০টা।

১৫/০৮/২০২১স্থির সময়ঃ ৩.০০টা।

১৩/০৮/২০২১স্থির।

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People rally in solidarity with protesters in Cuba, in Little Havana neighborhood in Miami, Florida, US, on Monday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

UNPRECEDENTED ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS

Cuba blames US

Washington says protest result of 'decades of repression'

AFP, Havana

Havana on Monday blamed a US "policy of economic suffocation" for unprecedented protests against Cuba's communist government, as Washington pointed the finger at "decades of repression" in the one-party state.

The longtime foes traded barbs a day after thousands of Cubans took to the streets chanting: "Down with the dictatorship" in protests dispersed by police who arrested dozens.

The anti-government rallies erupted spontaneously in several cities as the country endures its worst economic crisis in 30 years, with chronic shortages of electricity, food and medicine and a recent worsening of the coronavirus epidemic.

The only authorized gatherings in Cuba are usually events of the ruling Communist Party, but according to the data journalism site Inventario, a total of 40 demonstrations took place on Sunday.

President Miguel Diaz-Canel blamed the discontent on the United States pursuing a "policy of economic suffocation to provoke social unrest in the country."

Cuba has been under US sanctions since 1962.

"What do they want? To provoke social unrest" with a view to "regime change," he said in an address broadcast on public television and radio.

He called on "all communists to go out in the streets where these provocations occur... and to face them in a decisive, firm and courageous way."

In a statement from Washington, US President Joe Biden expressed support

for the protesters' demand for relief "from the decades of repression and economic suffering to which they have been subjected by Cuba's authoritarian regime."

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said it would be a "grievous mistake" for Cuba to blame Washington for protests he said could be traced to the communist leadership's "mismanagement" of the economy and Covid-19.

US-Cuba relations have been particularly fraught since then-president Donald Trump reinforced sanctions following an historic but temporary easing of tensions under Barack Obama between 2014 and 2016.

The tougher measures, left unchanged by Biden, and the collapse of tourism due to the global pandemic, contributed to Cuba's economy declining 11 percent in 2020.

The EU and UN on Monday called for Cuba to respect freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

Brazil's far-right President Jair Bolsonaro, himself under fire at home for his handling of the pandemic, expressed "solidarity" with protesters seeking "an end to a cruel dictatorship."

But Mexico and long-term Cuban ally Russia warned against using the unrest as a pretext for foreign interference.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro expressed "all support" for the Cuban government during a televised meeting. His Argentine counterpart Alberto Fernandez demanded the US sanctions be lifted, although he rejected a possible intervention.

Covid 3rd wave inevitable

Says India's top medical body; Modi warns against super-spreader gatherings

AGENCIES

Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned yesterday against overcrowding at tourist sites after the Indian Medical Association (IMA) warned that the third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic is "inevitable" and "imminent" and alerted the state governments against allowing potential "super-spreader" events.

"With the global evidence available and the history of any pandemic, the third wave is inevitable and imminent," the medical association said in a press release.

The top doctors' body raised its specific concern over tourism activities, pilgrimages and other forms of mass congregations that have been permitted in several states amid the declining coronavirus second wave.

"I will say very emphatically that it is not OK to have huge crowds in hill stations, markets, without wearing masks," Modi said in comments posted on Twitter while acknowledging the tourism industry has been badly hit by lockdowns.

India's coronavirus caseload of

30.91 million infections is the world's second-highest behind the United States.

Its official tally of deaths is 410,784, many of them coming in a brutal second wave of infections in April and May when people died outside



hospitals as they waited for beds and bodies were washing up on the banks of the holy Ganges river.

Yesterday, authorities reported 32,906 new cases - the lowest daily tally since mid-March - compared with some 400,000 a day at the height of the second wave.

The government last month launched a campaign to inoculate all adults, with a target of 950 million people by the end of the year, but the pace of the drive has faltered because

of shortages of vaccines and various logistical hurdles, and only 8% of the target is fully vaccinated.

The Delta variant that is spreading in many countries was first detected in India where experts have recently identified what they believe is a new variant they have called Delta plus.

"To combat the third wave, we have to keep speeding up the process of vaccination," Modi said.

While new daily cases are at a three-month low, deaths have not fallen at the same pace. India reported 2,020 new Covid-19 deaths yesterday.

SPUTNIK COVID-19 VACCINE DEAL

Meanwhile, the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) and Serum Institute of India (SII) yesterday unveiled plans to start producing Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine in India from September to help meet New Delhi's own needs in the first instance.

RDIF, Russia's sovereign wealth fund, which promotes the vaccine globally, said the plan was to produce over 300 million doses of the vaccine per year in India, the leading production hub for Sputnik V.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



JULY 14

1789 – Storming of the Bastille in Paris. This event escalates the widespread discontent into the French Revolution.

1933 – The Nazi Party under Adolf Hitler bans all opposition parties in Germany.

1957 – Rawya Ateya takes her seat in the National Assembly of Egypt, thereby becoming the first female parliamentarian in the Arab world.

2015 – NASA's New Horizons probe performs the first flyby of Pluto, and thus completes the initial survey of the Solar System.

SOURCE: REUTERS



Deadly unrest in South Africa

A South African cop fires rubber bullets at rioters looting the Jabulani Mall in Soweto, southwest of Johannesburg, on Monday. Stores in two South African provinces were ransacked yesterday for a fifth consecutive day, hours after President Ramaphosa deployed troops in a bid to quell unrest that has claimed 45 lives. At least 757 people have been arrested. The unrest erupted last Friday after former president Jacob Zuma started serving a 15-month term for snubbing a probe into the corruption that stained his nine years in power.

PHOTO: AFP

NEWS IN brief

France fines Google 500m euros over copyright row

France's antitrust watchdog yesterday slapped a 500 million euro (\$593 million) fine on Alphabet's Google for failing to comply fully with temporary orders it had given in a row with the country's news publishers. The US tech giant must within the next two months come up with proposals on how it would compensate news agencies and other publishers for the use of their news. If it does not do that, it would face additional fines of up to 900,000 euros per day. News publishers APIG, SEPM and AFP accuse the tech giant of having failed to open talks in good faith with them to find common ground for the remuneration of news content online, under a recent EU directive that creates so-called "neighboring rights".

Wildfires rage across million acres in US, Canada

Wildfires were burning across more than one million acres of the western United States and Canada on Monday, as scorching temperatures held their grip on areas reeling from a brutal weekend heat wave. Some 850,000 acres were on fire in the United States – mainly in western states such as Oregon, California and Arizona – while more than 300,000 acres smoldered in Canada's British Columbia alone, according to wildfire officials. After a brief lull from late June's previous heat wave, extreme temperatures in recent days reached as far inland as the edge of the Rocky Mountains – part of a dramatic trend that experts attribute directly to climate change.

Macron's warning sees surge in French job requests

A record number of French people sought to book appointments for Covid-19 vaccinations on Monday night after President Emmanuel Macron announced a slew of measures designed to push sceptics to get themselves jabbed. In an address to the nation, Macron announced that from next month anyone wanting to go out to eat or drink, take a long-distance train or visit a shopping centre or a theatre show or a cinema screening will need to show either proof of vaccination or a negative test. The prospect of having to take a test for every meal or drink out appeared to have an instant impact on many unvaccinated people, with the main websites used to book appointments for a jab reporting a surge in visits. The Doctolib site reported what it said was a record 20,000 appointments being taken every minute on Monday evening.

SOURCE: AFP, REUTERS

Prevent your cities from getting damaged

Taliban tell city dwellers, warn Turkey over airport security deal

AFP, Kabul

The Taliban do not want to battle government forces inside Afghanistan's cities and would rather see them surrender, a senior insurgent leader said Tuesday, as the militants also warned Turkey against extending its troop presence.

The hardline Islamist group has swept through much of the north as foreign troops complete their withdrawal, and the government now holds little more than a constellation of provincial capitals that must largely be supplied by air.

On Tuesday, the head of a Taliban commission that oversees government forces who surrender urged residents of Afghanistan's cities to reach out to them.

"Now that the fighting from mountains and deserts has reached the doors of the cities, Mujahidin (Taliban) don't want fighting inside the city," Amir Khan Muttaqi said in a message tweeted by a Taliban spokesman.

"It is better... to use any possible channel to get in touch with our invitation and guidance commission," he said, adding this would "prevent their cities from getting damaged."

The strategy is one well-worn by the Taliban – particularly during their first rise to power in the 1990s – cutting off towns and district centres and getting elders to negotiate a surrender.

Hours after Muttaqi's message, a rush hour blast in the centre of the Afghan capital killed four civilians and wounded five others, police said.

In a separate statement yesterday, the Taliban said Turkey's decision to provide security to Kabul airport when US-led forces leave was "reprehensible". "We consider stay of foreign forces in our homeland by any country under whatever pretext as occupation," the group said, days after Ankara agreed with Washington to provide security for Kabul airport.

REUTERS, Nassiriya

The death toll from a fire that tore through a coronavirus hospital in southern Iraq rose to 92, health officials said yesterday, as authorities faced accusations of negligence from grieving relatives and a doctor who works there.

More than 100 others were injured in Monday night's fire in Nassiriya, which an investigation showed began when sparks from faulty wiring spread to an oxygen tank that then exploded, police and civil defence authorities said - the second such tragedy in three months.

Rescue teams were using a heavy crane yesterday to remove the charred and melted remains of the part of the city's al-Hussain hospital where Covid-19 patients were being treated, as relatives gathered nearby.

A medic at the hospital, who declined to give his name and whose Monday shift ended a few hours before the fire broke out, said the absence of basic safety measures meant it was an accident in the making.

"The hospital lacks a fire sprinkler system or even a simple fire alarm," he told Reuters.

FIRE AT IRAQ COVID-19 WARD

Anger as death toll hits 92

"We complained many times over the past three months that a tragedy could happen any moment from a cigarette stub but every time we get the same answer from health officials: 'we don't have enough money.'

In April, a similar explosion at Baghdad Covid-19 hospital killed at least 82 and injured 110. The head of Iraq's semi-official Human



Rights Commission said Monday's blast showed how ineffective safety measures still were in a health system crippled by war and sanctions.

An investigation team has arrived from Baghdad yesterday to find out what happened at the hospital, sources said.

Health and civil defence managers in the city and the hospital's manager

had been suspended and arrested on Monday on the orders of Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, his office said.

At the city's morgue, anger spread among people gathered as they waited to receive their relatives' bodies.

"No quick response to the fire, not enough firefighters. Sick people burned to death. It's a disaster," said Mohammed Fadhl, who was waiting there to receive his brother's body.

Two health officials said the dead from Monday's fire included 21 charred bodies that were still unidentified.

The blaze trapped many patients inside the coronavirus ward who rescue teams struggled to reach, a health worker told Reuters on Monday before entering the burning building.

In Najaf, a holy Shia city around 250 km (155 miles) northwest of Nassiriya, an angry Imad Hashim sobbed as he prepared to bury his mother, sister-in-law and niece, who all died in the fire.

"What should I say after losing my family," the 46-year-old said. "No point from demanding anything from a failed government. Three days and this case will be forgotten like others."

Quote of the day



"We will look back in anger, and we will look back in shame."

MIKE RYAN, WHO'S EMERGENCIES PROGRAMME HEAD, SLAMS WEALTHY COUNTRIES WHICH ARE PLANNING BOOSTER SHOTS FOR THEIR VACCINATED PEOPLE WHILE THOUSANDS UNVACCINATED PEOPLE DYING IN POORER COUNTRIES

Commuters escape Mexico City gridlock in new cable car

AFP, Mexico City

Commuters soared over one of the world's biggest and most traffic-clogged cities as a new cable car system went into operation in the Mexican capital on Monday.

The 9.2-kilometer aerial tramway, comprising 377 cars that can each carry 10 passengers, promises to cut travel times for thousands of people in northern Mexico City, a sprawling city of 20 million people.

"How much time was wasted. They should have done this much earlier," said 46-year-old electrician Marco Antonio Garcia, delighted that what was a journey of more than an hour now takes 20 minutes.

"Are we in France or Switzerland?" he said, laughing along with the other passengers.

In contrast to the buses and metro where pickpockets and thieves operate, passengers aboard the new Cablebus system enjoyed comfortable seats, legroom, air conditioning and Wi-Fi.

The line between Cuitláhuac and Indios Verdes can carry up to 5,000 people an hour between six stations, according to Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum's office, which



plans to open a second line in the east of the city.

Similar systems also exist in a number of other Latin American cities, notably La Paz and adjoining El Alto in Bolivia which have a 32-kilometer aerial tramway.

SCHOOLS CLOSURE DUE TO COVID

19 nations risk 'generational catastrophe': UN

AFP, Paris

Schools remain shut in 19 countries due to the pandemic, affecting 156 million children in what risks being "a generational catastrophe," the heads of two UN agencies warned Monday.

The statement from the leaders of UNICEF and UNESCO said "governments have too often shut down schools and kept them closed for prolonged periods, even when the epidemiological situation didn't warrant it."

"We urge decision-makers and governments to prioritise the safe reopening of schools to avoid a generational catastrophe," UNICEF leader Henrietta Fore and UNESCO chief Audrey Azoulay wrote.

"Closing schools mortgages our future for unclear benefits to our present. We must prioritise better. We can re-open schools safely, and we must," they added.

GRAPE VINE

Mithila & Partha's eid venture



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Singer Partha Barua and versatile actor Mithila will be seen sharing the screen for Alok Hasan directed drama *Shukhi Atma*. Shafiqur Rahman Shantanu wrote the storyline for the drama, and it will be shown on *Deepto TV* during Eid-ul-Adha. The director Alok Hasan said, "The drama has a unique storyline. I hope the audience will enjoy the story. The leads of the drama are also unique as they are rarely seen working together in any drama. I believe the audience will enjoy watching this drama during their Eid vacation."



APU BISWAS IN FIVE CINEMAS

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHE

Actor Apu Biswas is spending a busy time shooting for new projects. Recently, she signed for a film, *Isha Khan*, which is based on a historical story. She finished shooting for the government received grant film, *Chayabrikh*, directed by Bandhan Biswas. She will be sharing the screen with actor Nirab for this film. The shooting for the last part of the film, *Prem Pritir Badhan*, is yet to complete. In this film, Joy Chowdhury will be seen as the opposite of Apu Biswas. The films that are awaiting release are *Shosurbari Zindabab* in Bangladesh and *Shortcut* in Kolkata. In the Subir Mandal directed film, *Shortcut* Apu Biswas will be seen alongside Parambrata Chatterjee.

BUSY TIMES OF EMON



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Actor & model Emon is currently busy with his work. Recently he was seen in an advertisement for *Mukta* drinking water along with Shabnam Bubly. The Robin Khan directed advertisement was well-received by the audiences. Besides, he finished shooting for a web film, *Abar* directed by Anjan Aich. Suchona Azad will be seen alongside Emon. Emon's other film, *Agamikal* is awaiting release, where he will be seen sharing the screen with Zakia Bari Mamo. Emon said, "I put a lot of thought before taking any projects. During this pandemic, I have kept myself busy with work. Among the new ventures, the advertisement with Bubly received a lot of praises. I am awaiting the release of one of my films, *Agamikal*."

COVER STORY

THE WONDERS OF PARENTHOOD

We congratulate actor Masuma Rahman Nabila and Jubaidul Haque Reem on the birth of their baby girl, Malhar Masuma Haque Smiha. Few days before welcoming their baby girl Smiha to the world, the couple sat down for an interview with Rafi Hossain and talked about the new changes in their life during their 9-month long journey.



Rafi Hossain: Please tell us a bit about how your experience has been the past few months.

Jubaidul Haque Reem: Needless to say, the feeling of becoming a father is truly a beautiful experience. But something I did not expect after Nabila got pregnant is how much closer we would become as a couple over the next couple of months. Throughout the journey, our relationship as husband and wife has grown deeper. We have truly shared a very unique and enjoyable experience. Even though Nabila had to deal with the physical strain of carrying a child, it has been a wonderful journey for both of us.

Masuma Rahman Nabila: I have always heard that people who have never been through this journey will not know how it truly feels. I believe it is true because the thrill and excitement I have felt cannot be described with words. Even though I had to deal with some physical strain as Reem said, it has been interesting to learn about how our child is developing and the intricacies of pregnancy. Access to such information has become much easier with the internet. The people around me were incredibly supportive as well. The new mothers I knew also tried their best to guide me throughout the journey and gave me valuable advice. I was in a Facebook group for mothers, and even there, strangers came forward to support me. That was a nice feeling.

Rafi Hossain: *Nabila, now that you are a parent, are you taking a break from work?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: When I first got pregnant, I received various offers to work on projects, all of which I had to turn down. After people heard the news, they started to ask me when I would be fit enough to take on these projects again. Back then, I thought by October, I would be able to work on a few of them, but now that our baby is on the way, I feel like I should give them more time before taking on any project. The truth is, the whole experience is such a new thing that I cannot say anything for sure right now. However, my work is a part of my identity, and I cannot be without it. So, slowly but surely, I will be back to work soon.

Rafi Hossain: *What do you think of Reem as a father?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: Reem is a very caring person. He takes care of his family and me. He is also my friend and supports me throughout the entire day. I think someone as kind-hearted as him is bound to be an amazing father, and I do not doubt that.

Rafi Hossain: *Reem, what are some things you hope to do with your child in the near future?*

Jubaidul Haque Reem: I often picture all the good times I will get to spend with my child. I have already thought about the stories I shall tell them, the music I will introduce them to, the people I will talk to them about, the posters I will show them, and several other things. I spend my days thinking of these things, and I am very excited.

Rafi Hossain: *Many celebrities avoid the media when they are expecting. How do you feel about that?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: Since I am involved with the media, I get recognized by many people. Although I do have a personal life, I do not have any strict restrictions for what I can or cannot announce to the public when it comes to these things. As long as my personal space is not invaded, I think it is fine for people to know that I am expecting since they would notice it anyways when I go out for work. I do not have a reason to

hide it because I believe it is normal and natural for a woman to expect a child after getting married. But like I said, as long as I am physically able, I may go out to meet friends, to shop, or for work. I once shared a video on Instagram for an endorsement, and someone commented, saying I was sick and should have been resting. Unless there are specific complications, I do not think pregnancy is a kind of sickness at all. I believe that as long as I am healthy, there is nothing wrong with working. Again, it is very natural, and I believe it is something we should normalize. Especially during a time like this, I may get bored if I stay at home for too long. I think it is a healthy practice to go out sometimes. As such, pregnancy should not be stigmatized as a controversial thing.

Rafi Hossain: *Reem, do you still go to the office for work?*

Jubaidul Haque Reem: I do still go to the

their anger and frustrations with them to their homes. A home should be where you take a break from the outside world and relieve yourself. They do the opposite and use the people in their homes as outlets for their anger and frustrations. Love to me is about companionship. When you are committed to someone, you should be understanding and willing to make compromises. Marriage is a big decision in anyone's life, and there are many considerations to be made. I do not think anyone should rush into it without thinking about it properly. There is also societal pressure, but I believe people should be smart when it comes to it. Reem and I have also had some disagreements. But we make it work by communicating, respecting each other's opinions, and finding a middle ground. Over time, we could understand our different views better. We knew we wanted to spend our lives together, and I do not think anyone should get

deal with. It causes a great deal of stress. What we have to do is work on making ourselves more tolerant of these things. We should also work on being more tolerant towards our partners and other people. When Nabila and I have any disagreements or misunderstandings, we talk about and resolve them immediately. We have been able to communicate our feelings to each other well. I think more people should try and do that. As Nabila said, it is important to be compassionate.

Rafi Hossain: *How do you feel about the media following celebrity relationships?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: In my personal experience, the media has not been intrusive in our marriage. However, I have recently seen both the media and the general public overly speculating celebrity relationships. Even in social media, people are often pessimistic whenever there is news of celebrities getting married. I think this is very wrong. Before marriage, I would sometimes post statuses on Facebook when I was upset. Nowadays, I do not feel like doing that, because no matter what I am upset about, people inevitably assume it is related to my marriage.

Rafi Hossain: *Why do you think people have this pessimistic attitude towards celebrities?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: As I have said earlier, I think sometimes people cannot find their happiness and, as a result, fixate on public figures. Instead of working on themselves and focusing on their betterment, they try to demean others and focus on the negative aspects of their lives to feel better. Many people think they are perfect but really, I think they should focus more on developing themselves into better people.

Rafi Hossain: *Before marrying Reem, what were some things about him that you found attractive?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: There are many things. One of the most important things is Reem and I knew each other for a long time, and as such, we knew we would understand each other on a personal level. We were at a point in our life where we both wanted to settle down, and marriage simply felt right. Many people were also very supportive of our decision and held us up to high standards, which felt very nice. Moreover, we had similar personalities, and I would say that is why I chose him as my husband.

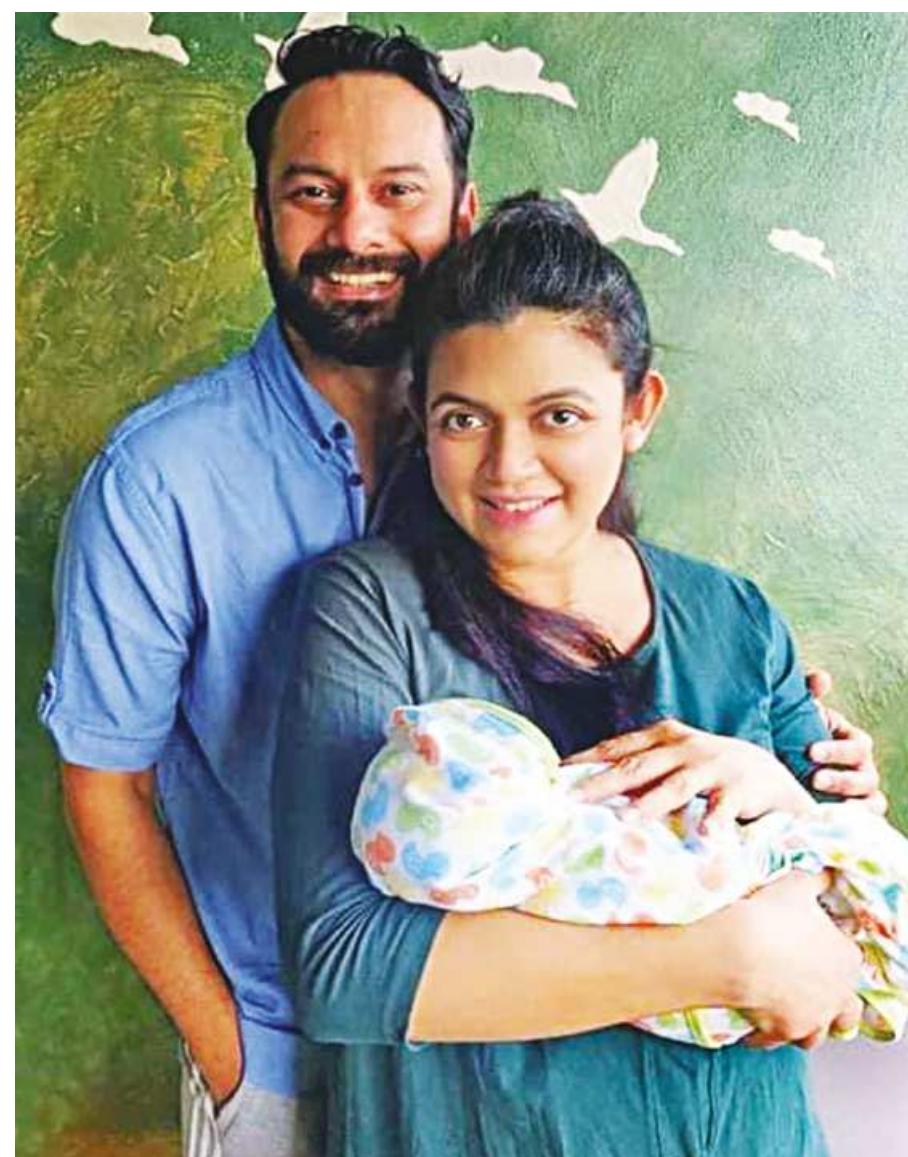
Rafi Hossain: *Many say that the relationship between a couple changes after they get married. Do you think that happened in your case?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: For us, there was always a lot of romance both before and after marriage. But one thing that changed significantly is that our friendship grew even stronger. After we come home from work, we both tell each other about how our day went. We watch a lot of movies and series together as well. Having a supportive friend like him is very pleasant.

Rafi Hossain: *Do you think your celebrity status affects your relationship?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: I do not live my day-to-day life as a celebrity. When I am in the studio or at the office, only then do I consider myself one. Outside of that, I am just like any other person. I do not carry my celebrity image around in my personal life or when I am with friends or relatives. As such, I would say it does not affect my relationship at all.

Rafi Hossain: *We wish you all the best in your journey as parents!*



office, but nowadays I come back home sooner. I also rarely go out without Nabila and try to spend most of my time with her. I even skipped a university alumni program today.

Rafi Hossain: *With the rise in domestic violence during the pandemic, how do you think couples can have a peaceful, loving relationship?*

Masuma Rahman Nabila: I think of myself as a simple person, and I find people who commit acts like domestic violence very complicated. I want to ask them if they even want to be happy in the first place. I think they do not even know what happiness is and how to achieve it. They do not know what they want in life and like to live in a state of restlessness. I think this is what causes them to act that way. Either that or they may be bringing

married without being sure about fully committing. Before marriage, I had too many expectations, but later, I learned that there is not always a solution to everything. Specific things should be ignored. People have to be patient with one another and suppress their egos. That being said, if there is ever a situation where someone is unable to make such compromises, it is better not to be in an unhappy relationship.

Jubaidul Haque Reem: It is difficult to explain why we see this. If you look around, nowadays we see people dealing with pressure everywhere, whether it be from work or financial struggles. When we were growing up, people focused more on things like the arts and sports. People would participate in various activities. Recently, we see less of that because people already have too many things to

Transcribed by Rakaat Sharif

Slackened 'lockdown' for Eid does not bode well

Are we prepared for the inevitable spike?

IT was a Catch-22 situation for the government and no doubt the decisionmakers are in a quandary at this moment. With Eid ul Azha about a week away, the government took the decision to ease the "lockdown", if one can call the present state a lockdown at all (considering the number of people and cars on the streets, especially in Dhaka city), in the assumption that people will go home for Eid no matter what. The decision to do so overrode the health directorate's grim warnings just a day before, regarding the deteriorating Covid situation. We cannot help but wonder why warnings by health experts have not been heeded and decisions taken accordingly.

The government has also decided to run private transport, trains and launches for the holidays. Again, conditions have been laid down under which the transport services should operate, but how will these conditions be enforced with thousands of travellers? What different measures will be taken from last Eid, during which health guidelines were totally flouted, leading to infection surges? While the railway authorities may be able to enforce the strict safety measures, as we have seen on previous occasions, the same, we fear, cannot be said of the launch owners and operators or private transport service. In the past, not only was the half-capacity rule disregarded, the 60 percent increase in fare was also charged from the public.

While enacting safety measures is the relatively easier aspect, what the administration must prepare seriously for is the consequence of the "eased lockdown", which in effect will be "no lockdown", given the state of adherence to the rules that we have witnessed during the present so-called lockdown. More than one lakh people have been infected even during this lockdown, and experts fear that the figure may treble after the end of the period of relaxed lockdown. A two-week "strict lockdown" will be on from July 23 6:00am till August 5 midnight. Unfortunately, the virus, now deadlier than ever, will not wait for festivals and holidays to be over and will find an ideal environment to spread amongst the thousands of people travelling around the country.

Health service and healthcare facilities are under severe duress as it is. The Delta variant has spread to most districts and will continue to spread. The spike portends an ominous future. Unfortunately, there is still a gross lack of awareness among people regarding how deadly and contagious the virus is, which must be addressed with more diligence. There should not be any ambiguity, moreover, regarding the term "lockdown"—a lockdown must always be strict if it is to be effective. Planning should be underway to pull up all resources to absorb the pressure that the system is like to encounter by the end of this month. And it must be done on a war footing.

Take legal action against the contractor

Public money cannot be wasted like this

IT is unacceptable that a contractor of the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has disrupted the flow of the Ratnai river in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila worse following its excavation. The contractor, Mohammad Yunus and Brothers (Pvt) Ltd of Chattogram, claims to have completed the excavation work in December last year, but the LGED says about 25 percent of the work has remained incomplete. The contractor, however, still collected the full payment—Tk 1.81 crore—for the work.

According to local farmers, the project was mired in corruption and in the name of excavation, the contractor even had the audacity to dredge and collect sand and sell it. The Aditmari Upazila Nirbahi Officer alleged that the contractor only dug holes in the riverbed in the name of excavation, which has made things worse by obstructing the flow of the river. This is naturally going to cause farmers and locals all sorts of problems. And agricultural production in the area may suffer as a result.

The Lalmonirhat LGED Executive Engineer claims to have written to the errant company seven times to complete the work, but the contractor never replied. What this demonstrates is a type of over-confidence on part of the contractor that it can simply get away with robbing the public's money—and without any consequences for not completing its contractual obligation. What we would like to ask is, why was this company given the contract in the first place? Is it because of lobbying and influence? That would explain why the company feels so sure that it won't have to face any repercussion for what it did to the three-kilometre stretch of the Ratnai river.

Officials have said that they will blacklist the contractor if they do not reply to their request to complete the work by this month's end; however, we believe that officials should have taken such a step by now. Moreover, the authorities should take legal action against the contracting company, as it is the public's money that it has taken without delivering on what it was legally obligated to. Unless such actions are taken, more and more contracting companies will feel emboldened to pursue a similar path. And the public's money will continue to get flushed down the drain on such wasteful projects.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

letters@thedailystar.net

Stop child labour

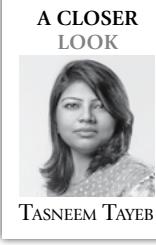
As the pandemic has greatly impacted the economic condition of poorer families, children have become a source of income. Most of them are forced into labour that can cause significant harm to their health and safety. We should all work together to stop child labour.

Apurba Das, Faujdarhat Cadet College, Chattogram

EDITORIAL

Dengue: an added worry amidst the pandemic

Integrated vector management mechanism needed

A CLOSER LOOK
TASNEEM TAYEB

DENGUE cases in the country are on the rise again—since June, there has been a surge in the number of dengue patients seeking treatment in various hospitals. As of Monday, 796 people have been diagnosed with the virus so far, with 209 being treated in hospitals across the country, according to data shared by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). A dengue-related death has also been reported by the media.

While the magnitude of the situation has not yet evolved to the scale of 2019, when according to official data, 101,354 individuals had been diagnosed with dengue with 179 deaths, the sudden increase in cases over the last few weeks indicate the possibility of dengue taking a dangerous shape in the coming months. This is in the midst of a surge in Covid-19 cases, which creates a whole new set of challenges.

There are various factors that are contributing to the increase in dengue cases. According to entomologist Professor Kabirul Bashar of Jahangirnagar University, there is usually a "zigzag pattern" in the rise and fall of dengue every alternative year. While one year, the number of cases may be very high, the next year the situation might not be as bad. And then the year after that, there might be another spike. We can see a similar pattern between 2019 and 2021. While in 2019 the scenario had been grim, in 2020 the spread of dengue had been significantly low, with 1,193 dengue cases and three deaths, as per DGHS data. In 2021, we are again seeing a sharp increase in dengue cases. In addition, there has been a good amount of rainfall this year, which has facilitated the accumulation of fresh water in various places, across public and private properties, turning them into the perfect breeding grounds for Aedes mosquitoes—the carrier of the dengue virus.

Brigadier General Mohammad Jobaidur Rahman, chief health officer of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), listed the measures DNCC has taken to contain the spread of the disease—spraying larvicide and adulticide, raising public awareness, and cleanliness drives, among others. Mobile courts are also identifying private properties that are enabling the breeding of Aedes larvae and imposing fines. Similar measures

have also been taken by Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC). They are also working on multiple fronts to contain the breeding and spread of dengue. Both city corporations started these drives in April 2021.

So why, despite these measures, are dengue cases increasing? There could be multiple reasons, including the lack of an integrated approach towards vector management throughout the country. In Dhaka, for example, DNCC is working in its own way to contain the spread of dengue, and so is DSCC. But these efforts are not necessarily synced, at least by design. While both the city corporation bodies are taking steps, they are doing it in their own ways, and the same goes for all the other city corporations across the country. The lack of public engagement

said Professor Kabirul Bashar.

Environmental control ensures that throughout the year, certain environmental parameters are maintained that can control the population growth of these pesky insects, he said. Biological control ensures the elimination of mosquito breeds through natural mechanisms. For instance, copepods—small aquatic creatures—can be used to suppress the growth of the Aedes population. These small predators have been used in various countries to control the spread of Aedes mosquitoes. Similarly, guppy fish can be released in stagnant water bodies to control Culex population growth. Through chemical control (using effective chemicals and pesticides), adulticide and larvicide of mosquitoes are carried out, which



Parents pour water on a child suffering from dengue fever at Mugda Medical College and Hospital during the outbreak in 2019.

PHOTO: STAR/AMRAN HOSSAIN

in containing the disease is another factor that is leading to its spike. While mobile courts are fining private properties, they cannot ensure proactive cooperation from the people through penalties.

However, all this could have been addressed had there been a Vector Control Policy in place, which could have been implemented in sync across the country, and throughout the year, to not only control the breeding of Aedes but also Culex mosquitoes, and other vectors. "There should be an integrated vector management mechanism in place. A vector management policy includes four major components: environmental control, biological control, chemical control, and community involvement,"

both the city corporations are currently doing across Dhaka. Finally, community involvement relates to the proactive collaboration of the common people with the city corporations in fighting the spread of mosquito-borne diseases, which is especially needed to contain the spike of dengue.

This integrated vector management mechanism is missing in our country and as a result, while some measures are being taken by the various city corporations, these are not yielding the best possible results. For the last year and a half, the government has been sitting on a Vector Control Policy—the draft of which, according to LGRD minister Md Tazul Islam (as reported by this

newspaper recently), is in its final stages. A Local Government Division official informed this daily that once the draft is finalised, it will be sent to the ministries of public administration and finance for vetting. But the question is, why is the government wasting so much time to finalise the draft of a policy which should be of high importance for it? Unless of course, dengue is no longer a priority for the government.

The country's healthcare system is scrambling and often failing—especially during the second and the ongoing extended Covid-19 wave—to support the people in fighting a global pandemic. In the midst of this, the outbreak of another disease would be disastrous for everyone, not least the common people who run the risk of being deprived of medical care due to a lack of adequate healthcare facilities. While why the government has not been able to strengthen its healthcare infrastructure in the last year and a half is a separate debate, why it did not take coordinated measures to prevent the rise of an old enemy—dengue—remains a big question.

Had the government been able to perceive the risk posed by dengue and taken proactive measures to control its spread, even before the season came, perhaps so many people may not have needed to be hospitalised for treatment today. The Vector Control Policy and an integrated vector management mechanism should have been in place by now to address this problem. But perhaps our government is reactive in nature and thus they take sporadic, stop-gap measures in reaction to certain situations. This has happened in the case of Covid-19 and is also happening in the case of dengue management. While 2019 should have been a lesson for the government, clearly it has not been so.

The government must immediately set in place the policy and its implementation mechanisms to salvage the situation. It is already late, but there is still time for a comprehensive and integrated approach involving the concerned ministries, the city corporations across the country, and the citizens of this nation to fight the spread of dengue. Covid-19 is already tearing our healthcare system apart. We must do everything we can to avoid an epidemic amidst a pandemic.

Tasneem Tayeb is a columnist for *The Daily Star*. Her Twitter handle is: @tasneem_tayeb



The second main new investment will be in offshore wind energy in the Bay of Bengal using the latest technologies of powerful wind turbines that can float and also withstand high wind speeds during cyclones.

REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

Vulnerable countries take the lead in tackling climate change

POLITICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE
SALEEMUL HUQ

LAST week, Bangladesh hosted the climate finance summit called by the nearly 50 vulnerable developing countries that are part of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), which is chaired by Bangladesh for the current two-year term. The summit was moderated by the former President of the Maldives, Mohamed Nasheed, who is the CVF Ambassador for Ambition, and was opened by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. This summit put forward a resounding call for all countries to take action to tackle the planetary emergency that we are facing. The heads of government from previous chairs of the CVF, the Marshall Islands and Ethiopia, also spoke, as well as UN Secretary-General António Guterres, US Climate Envoy John Kerry, COP26

President-designate Alok Sharma of the UK, and the heads of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and other high-level speakers.

The meeting gave a collective call for all countries to fulfil their promises to keep the global temperature below 1.5 degrees Celsius, as well as for the rich countries to fulfil their promise to provide USD 100 billion to developing countries to tackle climate change. The summit meeting was followed by a roundtable of the Finance Ministers of the CVF countries, who call themselves the V20, which came out with the important message that the climate vulnerable developing countries are not just sitting idle and waiting for support, but rather are moving ahead with their own respective Climate Prosperity Plans—which aim for these countries to take the initiative to not just build resilience to face the climate change impacts that they are already facing, but rather to prosper despite these impacts. In fact, the

PM declared that Bangladesh will be the first of the countries to develop its plan, named the *Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan* (MCPP) after the Father of the Nation. It is aimed at a decade-long effort to ensure game-changing actions on adaptation, as well as energy and capacity building, for Bangladesh to transform its development pathway going forward.

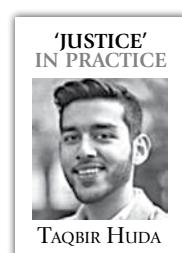
The three main transformational aspects of the MCPP will be to invest in Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) in all the most vulnerable zones of the country and enable the communities themselves to lead in the adaptation activities. Bangladesh is already a recognised world leader in LLA and aims to share its experiential knowledge with other CVF countries going forward. The second main new investment will be in offshore wind energy in the Bay of Bengal using the latest technologies of powerful wind turbines that can float and also withstand high wind speeds during cyclones. This can be a game changer for

providing energy in the country. The third transformational strategy is to invest in our young girls and boys to make them into the climate champions of tomorrow, who can help not just Bangladesh tackle climate change but also go and help other countries as well.

Thus, the MCPP is aiming to transform Bangladesh into a global leader in tackling climate change by 2030. The message from the vulnerable developing countries to the rest of the world is for everyone to do what is needed in the spirit of global solidarity, as the climate emergency is already upon us and every country must do what it can to tackle it if the world is to have any chance at overcoming the problem. The vulnerable developing countries are aiming to lead the world on this pathway to climate prosperity.

Dr Saleemul Huq is Director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development at the Independent University, Bangladesh.

We should stop calling acts of corporate manslaughter 'accidents'



JUSTICE IN PRACTICE
FOR almost 24 hours last week, the Hashem Food factory in Narayanganj, where hundreds of workers are employed, was up in flames. The bodies of 49 workers have been found so far, while 24 other workers

were wounded. Forty-nine humans went in for a day's work in the middle of a national lockdown, but would go back home in body bags—burnt beyond recognition. Three workers who had leapt out of the building in an attempt to save themselves from the fire also died, bringing the current death toll to 52.

Some of the workers who were able to escape the fire told reporters that the building had no proper fire safety measures in place. They also alleged that the front gate and only exit of the factory had remained locked at the time of the fire. Additionally, Mohammad Saiful, one of the factory workers able to escape the fire, told Al Jazeera "On the third floor, gates on both stairwells were closed".

Fire service officials remarked that if the workers of the third floor were not locked up, they could have had the chance to escape to the roof and be rescued by them, as workers from the other floors had been. Dinu Moni Sharma, head of the Dhaka fire department, explained that the fire broke out because highly flammable chemicals and plastics were kept stockpiled inside.

The story is one we have seen time and time again. Greedy corporations store hazardous and extremely flammable materials in extremely large quantities inside factories, without investing a penny in mandatory fire safety measures, putting workers' lives at acute risk. When the risk finally and inevitably materialises, workers are kept locked inside—prohibited from

exiting the sweatshop where they spent most of their days oiling the engine of economic growth, even if it means they will literally be burned to death.

When the Tazreen Factory Fire in 2012 burnt 117 workers to death and injured 200 more—workers whose employers padlocked the exits so they could not "steal time from their shift" and thereby caused them to burn to death—we as a nation said "never again".

Yet less than eight years later, here we are again, witnessing the same kind of greed



PHOTO: STAR

The lock kept workers trapped inside the factory when the fire burned the whole building.

induced corporate barbarity, disposing workers' lives with as much ease as ever before.

Before the bodies of 52 workers could even be identified (much less buried), and before the agonised family members could even know whether their loved one is dead or alive, the corporate behemoth who owns the factory that caught fire did

what corporations do when a preventable catastrophe exposes the extent of their labour rights violations: denial, blame shifting and invoking the "accident" card.

Speaking to *The Daily Star*, Md Abdul Hashem, Chairman of Sajeel group of companies said: "Building an industry is one of the greatest mistakes of my life. If there is an industry, there will be workers. If there are workers, then there will be work, and if there is work, there can be fire. Am I responsible for this? It is not like I went and set the fire.

"accidents", because God forbid we even think about your duty to ensure workers' safety by investing in fire safety measures that prevent such deadly fires from breaking out or, even when they do, that loss of human lives is minimised.

Why were there no investments in fire safety when the factory housed copious amounts of flammable materials? Where were the fire alarms, fire sprinklers, fire extinguishers or fire exits? Why were the exits on the third floor locked, which caused workers to be trapped inside to be burnt to death? These preliminary findings all indicate that this fire was no "accident". This was clear corporate manslaughter—a crime where a business or organisation is held to have caused a person's death, which may be alongside individuals, such as the company directors or employees, also being held liable.

Our continued tendency to treat or label the killing of workers by greed induced corporations as "unfortunate accidents" is what allows corporations putting workers' lives at risk to evade liability. We should start terming the mass killings of workers in incidents like the Tazreen Factory Fire and Hashem Food Factory Fire as acts of corporate manslaughter, and stop calling them "accidents". Notably, the police have filed a case under three sections of the Penal Code 1860 against Hashem and seven others: Section 302 (murder), Section 307 (attempt to murder) and Section 326 (voluntarily causing hurt to constrain to an illegal act). However, the concept of corporate manslaughter suggests that not only should individuals be tried for committing the offence of killing, but also corporations.

Registered corporations or companies, such as Hashem Foods Ltd, have legal personality, which means that they are seen to have a separate existence from their owners in the eyes and for the purposes of the law. Legally speaking, humans are

"natural persons" while corporations are "juridic persons". While human offenders can be punished through both imprisonment and fines, non-human offenders such as corporations are usually punished through the imposition of strict fines. Bearing this distinction in mind, prosecuting companies that caused the death of people for corporate manslaughter is especially important for at least two reasons.

Firstly, we know all too well that even when powerful individuals like Hashem Ali are arrested in connection with a criminal case, they can eventually remain effectively unpunished, such as by being granted bail once the initial outrage mellows down. By contrast, a fine imposed on a corporation, if realised immediately, becomes irreversible and sends a strong signal to all companies that there may be a sizeable price to pay if they cause the deaths of their workers (or even others, for that matter). Secondly, our criminal courts can convert the amount of fine realised from corporations into an award of compensation to be paid to those victimised by corporate manslaughter, such as family members of the workers killed.

While we do not have an offence called "corporate manslaughter" per se, prosecuting Hashem Foods Ltd for death related offences under the Penal Code 1860, such as causing death by culpable homicide or negligence, could have the same legal effect as holding them accountable for committing corporate manslaughter. Holding companies criminally responsible is not a wholly alien concept in Bangladeshi law. In fact, companies can be prosecuted for dishonoured cheques under the Negotiable Instruments Act 1881 by aggrieved creditors. So why should corporations who kill workers not be prosecuted for corporate manslaughter too?

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Bangladesh needs extensive measures to address its rising youth unemployment

SHAHRIAZ AHMED

BANGLADESH is now one of the world's fastest growing economies, with high rates of GDP growth that continued even during the pandemic. Yet, youth unemployment has been one of the major obstacles to the sustainability of its economic development. Additionally, Covid-19 has considerably affected the global economy and job markets all over the world. According to UNDP, this has been the worst economic recession since the great depression, and we have seen its impacts in Bangladesh as well. Thus, it is going to be a challenge to provide employment opportunities for those who have lost their jobs during the pandemic, as well as for the 2.26 million new entrants into the job market every year, as targeted in the Eighth Five Year Plan.

The reason for high rates of youth unemployment in Bangladesh is two-fold. On one hand, the education system is failing to create a competent and skilled workforce. Instead of career-oriented skills development, the only focus is on good grades. A recent World Bank report identified the skills gap between the supply and demand of industries as the main reason for the high youth unemployment rate in Bangladesh. The existing skills development programmes and institutions have been ineffective in transforming the young population into an efficient workforce. There is a dearth of standard job opportunities relating to the background and subjects that are being taught in the universities.

On the other hand, the drought of employment opportunities is a central reason behind the high youth unemployment rate in Bangladesh. The growth of the job market is meagre compared to the supply of

fresh graduates every year. The reason is inadequate investments in both the public and private sectors. Investment into the private sector had been stagnant, at around 22 to 23 percent of GDP for some time. Such sluggish growth in private investment curtails the opportunity of new job creation. Moreover, insufficient diversification in the manufacturing sector also contributes to low employment creation. Bangladesh ranks 168th in the

process in the field of education and technical training. The expansion of education and skill development was closely coordinated with responding to changing demands. We can apply the learnings from the East Asian model of skills development for a positive outcome in Bangladesh.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been proven to be an effective way of addressing the problem of unemployment in many countries. The existing technical and



PHOTO: ANSUR RAHMAN

There is a dearth of standard job opportunities relating to the background and subjects that are being taught in the universities.

"ease of doing business" index among 190 economies, according to data from 2020, which does not bode well for the flow of foreign direct investment.

According to a World Bank report (2019), one out of every three graduates were unemployed even before the pandemic in Bangladesh. What can be done to alter this? A radical change is needed in the education system

vocational education and training system requires revitalisation, and a mechanism of adequate monitoring and evaluation system is essential. It is vital that we learn from success cases like South Korea. The subsequent expansion of the skills base has made South Korea's rapid economic development possible. They went through a dynamic skill formation

process in the field of education and technical training. The expansion of education and skill development was closely coordinated with responding to changing demands. We can apply the learnings from the East Asian model of skills development for a positive outcome in Bangladesh.

The pace of the growth of investment must also be enhanced to create necessary employment opportunities. Ensuring access to finance, better

infrastructure and good governance is central to create an environment that facilitates higher investment. Incentivising and improving private investment can be an avenue to generating more jobs for the young population. To attract more foreign investment, the government needs to concentrate on extensive developments in indicators like the "ease of doing

business index" and "efficiency of legal framework index", which would gain the confidence of investors.

In the immediate future, Bangladesh also needs astute measures to adopt with the Fourth Industrial Revolution (the ongoing automation of traditional manufacturing and industrial practices, using modern smart technology). Thus, apart from conventional skills development, the country must prepare its workforce for the transformed job market through human resource development. Introducing data-driven decision-making into industries is indispensable in making them more efficient, so we need to focus on acquiring the technological expertise in this era of information technology and globalisation. On top of that, we need a transformation of the knowledge structure in the labour force, with a clear vision of the job market. Special incentives should be given to encourage technology-based entrepreneurship and innovations.

Furthermore, outsourcing has emerged as a significant source of earnings in recent times. This opportunity can be boosted by promoting online-based freelancing activities and arranging adequate training to accommodate more individuals. It is possible to transform the upcoming industrial revolution into an opportunity of economic expansion by taking appropriate measures. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as well as augment the growth process, it is pivotal to prepare the youth segment of the workforce and incorporate them into the development process by creating adequate employment opportunities for them.

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Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been proven to be an effective way of addressing the problem of unemployment in many countries.



ANGELA Y. DAVIS
American political activist
(born January 26, 1944)

The idea of freedom is inspiring. But what does it mean? If you are free in a political sense but have no food, what's that? The freedom to starve?

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 May honorees
- 35 In shape
- 5 Monastery figure
- 10 Limerick people
- 12 Half of Hispaniola
- 13 Effect badly
- 15 Greek vowel
- 16 Method
- 17 Firewood unit
- 18 American tree
- 20 Lawn pest
- 21 Motherless calf
- 22 Some sheep
- 23 Tale tellers
- 25 Increase
- 28 BLT base
- 31 High cards
- 32 Like old cars
- 34 Summer shirt
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- 96 Public outburst
- 97 Uncool group
- 98 Table scraps
- 99 Summer shirt
- 100 In shape

DOWN

- 1 Bishop's topper
- 2 Made speeches
- 3 Japanese emperor
- 4 Toronto-to-D.C.
- 5 Sailor's cry
- 6 Dance, in France
- 7 Swell with air
- 8 Peter of "Troy"
- 9 Slight colors
- 10 Land of the lei
- 11 Go on vacation
- 12 Buttes'kin
- 13 Highways
- 14 Wicker material
- 15 Glacial time
- 16 Harry Potter, in Quidditch
- 17 Author
- 18 Lease signer
- 19 Eyes
- 20 Buttes'kin
- 21 Motor
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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.

<h3

Pregnant woman

FROM PAGE 12
after the 20-year-old woman filed a case against three people, including a another woman.

But alleged rapist Sabbir, 21, and Asma Begum, 30, who allegedly beaten up the victim along with Sagor and Sabbir when she told her about the incident, went into hiding, said police.

According to the case statement, Sabbir and Sagor went to the victim's house in Baipal area around 3:30pm on Sunday and wanted a matchbox from her. Her husband, who is a construction worker, was not at home at that time. As she went to the room to bring the matchbox, Sabbir entered the room and Sagor locked the door from outside.

Sabbir then raped the three-month pregnant woman. After that, he asked Sagor to open the door and Sagor opened it and the duo left the spot. The victim disclosed the incident to her husband around 5:30pm after he returned home.

Later, the victim's husband informed neighbour Asma Begum of the incident. Asma then asked them not to share the incident with anybody. As they protested, Asma, Sabbir and Sagor beat up the duo, the case statement added.

Contacted, Shubrata Roy, sub-inspector of Ashulia Police Station and also investigation officer of the case, told The Daily Star that Sabbir was made the prime accused in the case, while Sagor was accused of abetting the rape and beating up the couple and Asma for assaulting the couple.

"We already arrested Sagor. And the victim was sent to One-stop Crisis Centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for tests," said the police official, adding that they were trying to arrest the other accused.

Liberal Deuba

FROM PAGE 12
and control the spread of the coronavirus that has infected more than 658,000 people and killed nearly 10,000 of them - figures experts say fail to reflect the true toll.

The biggest challenge of the new leader is to free every citizen from suffering from Covid-19 by inoculating them," said Prakash Sharan Mahat, a senior leader of Deuba's party.

More than 1.3 million people have had a first dose of Covid-19 vaccine and are awaiting a second shot as the government scrambles to protect its people.

Deuba, 75, head of the centrist Nepali Congress party, will head a coalition with former Maoist rebels and a party representing a minority community dominant on Nepal's southern plains, the latest development in a months-long political crisis that left the country without a parliament.

Deuba, who has served as prime minister four times in the past, must win a vote of confidence in parliament in the next month.

The Supreme Court on Monday ordered Deuba be appointed in place of K P Sharma Oli, who had failed to win a vote of confidence and dissolved parliament twice in recent months, which the court ruled was unconstitutional.

Deuba, a staunch democrat, will aim to end corruption and create conditions for free and fair elections due next year following the latest bout of political instability, Mahat said.

But Krishna Khanal, who teaches political science at Kathmandu's Tribhuvan University, said Deuba had struggled when he led governments before.

"The country has faced major crises every time he was prime minister in the past," Khanal told Reuters.

'Increased risk' of rare nerve disorder after J&J Covid vaccine: US

AFP, Washington

The US Food and Drug Administration updated its warning labels Monday for the Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 vaccine to include information about an observed "increased risk" of a rare neurological disorder called Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS).

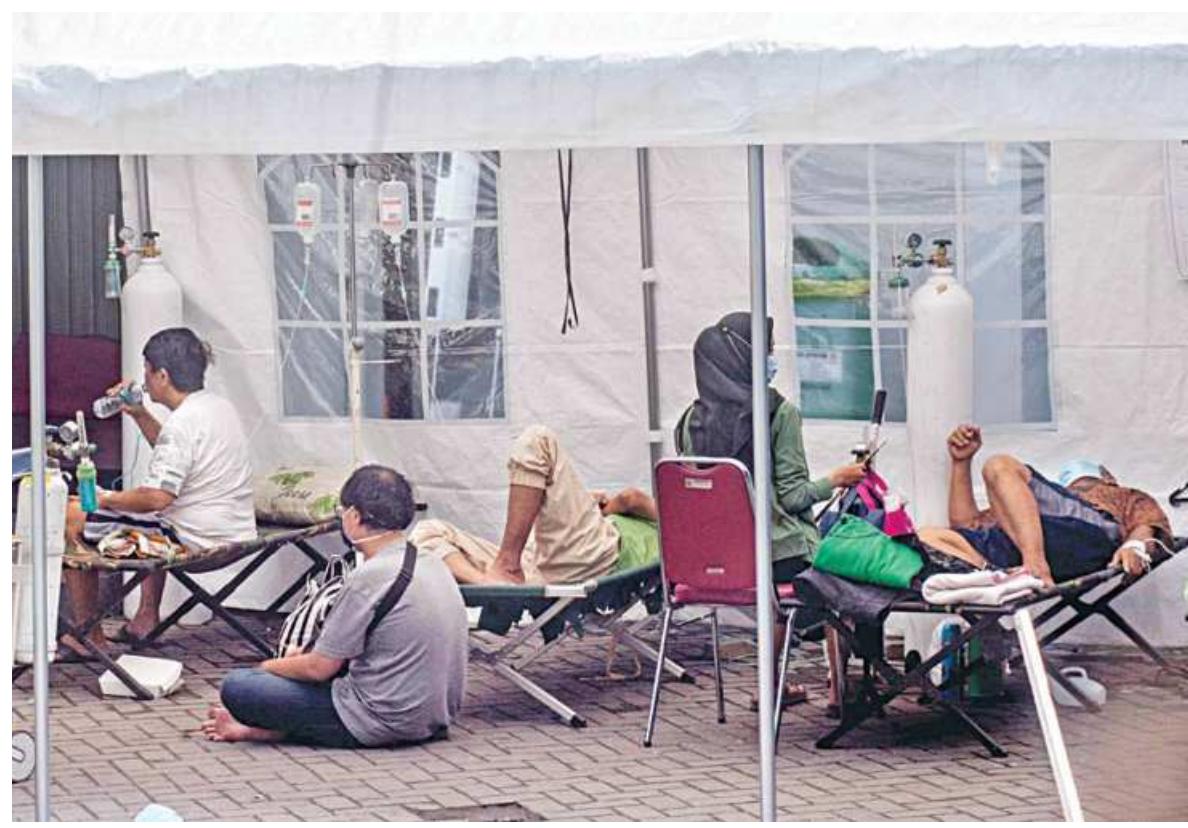
The news is a further blow for the company, which was granted an emergency use authorization for its shot in February but has played a minor role in America's coronavirus immunization campaign.

Based on analysis of a federal vaccine safety monitoring system, officials have identified 100 preliminary reports of GBS after approximately 12.5 million doses administered, people familiar with the matter said.

Of these reports, 95 of them were serious and required hospitalization. There was one reported death.

GBS is a neurological disorder in which the body's immune system damages nerve cells, causing muscle weakness or, in the most severe cases, paralysis.

It affects an estimated 3,000 to 6,000 people each year in the United States, and most go on to recover.



Patients receive care underneath a tent, erected on the compounds of a hospital to handle an influx of people suffering from the Covid-19 coronavirus, in Yogyakarta yesterday, as Indonesia faces its most serious outbreak driven by the highly infectious Delta variant.

The New York Times

FROM PAGE 12
last month is a devastating indictment of the West Pakistani military crackdown in Bengal. It strongly challenges the [US] Administration's policy of continuing both military and economic support for the Yahya Khan regime in Islamabad. This official confirmation of earlier widespread reports of barbaric action in East Pakistan renders inexcusable any further shipment of American military equipment to the Pakistani armed forces.

"There are clear grounds for suspending all further military and economic aid to the Pakistani Government, excepting relief supplies, until the reign of terror in East Pakistan is ended and steps are taken to restore power to elected representatives of the people who are currently in prison or in hiding," added the newspaper.

SOVIET ENVOY REGRETS US ARMS AID TO PAKISTAN

Mir Qasimov, vice-consul of the Soviet Union at Calcutta, deplored US arms aid to Pakistan and said it would only aggravate the situation in Bangladesh.

He emphasises that the situation in Bangladesh should be tackled by arriving at a political settlement between the leader of the Awami

League Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Pakistan President Yahya Khan. The diplomat further said the influx of evacuees from Bangladesh to India had created a "colossal human problem".

FIERCE RESISTANCE AT BELABO
Bangladeshi guerrillas put up a fierce resistance against the Pakistani army at Belabo, Narsingdi. Seven freedom fighters embraced martyrdom during the fight.

JAPAN STUDYING METHODS OF SETTLEMENT IN BANGLADESH

The Japanese government was anxious for a political settlement in East Pakistan and was examining how best that could be done, Ataushi Uyama, Japan's ambassador in India, said in Calcutta. He added that the large-scale influx of refugees from East Pakistan was no doubt a serious problem which had put great strain on India's economy.

REFUGEES SENT TO MIDNAPORE
Midnapore received the first batch of 1,500 refugees from Bangladesh. On their arrival in Midnapore station they were immediately sent to Brindabanpur camp by 20 reserved buses.

Shamsuddoza Sajen is a journalist and researcher. He can be contacted at sajen1986@gmail.com

Traffickers abuse visit, on-arrival visas

FROM PAGE 12
and investigating some recent trafficking incidents.

According to the SB database, around 1,99,864 men and women have left the country for Dubai with tourist visas from January last year to June 30 this year.

Of them, only 2,1754 came back. Although the visa of the others had already expired, they did not return.

"Analysing the travel documents, we have come to know that most of the people are aged 18 to 40. We suspect these people might have converted their visas and have acquired working permits and some others may have tried to enter European countries illegally," said an SB high official.

In Dubai, there is a provision that says a traveller can change their visa to a work visa by paying 2,000 Dirham, according to officials.

"A group of traffickers has been using Dubai as a transit route to send their victims to Europe. We are trying to get details of the locations of these travellers," the SB official, requesting anonymity, told The Daily Star.

UN data shows that at least 760 different nationals of different countries have died trying to cross the Mediterranean between January 1 and May 31.

Last year, the number was 1,400.

NEW ROUTE, CONTACT MARRIAGE
SB officials said a transnational syndicate -- operated by Bangladeshi and Pakistani nationals -- recently found the means of arranging

"contract marriage" in order to traffic people abroad.

The traffickers first take their victims to Kazakhstan and Ukraine from Dubai after arranging contract marriages for them there. Each marriage costs around \$400-500, the officer said.

Once the marriage documents are submitted, the traffickers get residence cards for the victims, which are then used to enter Europe.

The CID said it has also found two new routes that traffickers have been using over the last month, as traffickers made online advertisements regarding trips to Poland, Germany and Canada.

The syndicate charge Tk 10 to Tk 13 lakh as fee for anyone who responds to the ad, SS Khan, special superintendent (human trafficking) of the CID, told The Daily Star.

"To go to Poland, the traffickers first take the victims to Delhi and then to Uzbekistan on tourist visas. Later, the migrants are forced to make their journey to Poland through tough hilly roads," Khan said.

For Germany and Canada, the traffickers take the victims to Togo, which offers on arrival visas for Bangladeshi travellers.

The syndicate was found using two routes, one of which led from Kolkata, to Mumbai, Ethiopia and finally Togo.

Through second route, the syndicate sent migrants to Thailand and then Ethiopia before Togo, he said.

The CID has come to know about these two new routes after eight

victims returned to Bangladesh from Uzbekistan and Togo in March and April of this year.

These victims have filed five separate cases with Paltan, Gulshan, Mirpur and Bhatara police stations and with Gopalganj's Kotalipara police station, said officials.

"We have already started investigating and arrested five people. Four were arrested for illegally trafficking people to Uzbekistan and one for trafficking people to Togo," said Khan.

Sources claim the traffickers are getting the scope of sending migrants on visit visa after making sure there are no hurdles at the airport.

"We have to pay around Tk 40 thousand and sometimes even Tk one lakh to manage the airport while sending people abroad," claimed Md Habib, an executive of Helpline Travel and Consultancy.

Once the airport hassles are taken care of, the authorities do not stop anyone from boarding a plane, he added.

Monirul Islam, SB deputy inspector general (immigration), however, refuted the allegation and said immigration is not involved with the irregularities.

"It is the brokers who collect extra money in the name of immigration."

THE ARREST, JOURNEY

On a tip-off, the CID arrested Ahsanul Bari, the mastermind behind trafficking people to Uzbekistan from the capital's Kakrail on June 17.

Later, three others -- Yesair Bari Ahad, his wife Habiba Khatun Liza,

and Alamgir Apurbo -- were arrested in Bashundhara and Mirpur area on June 25, said CID officials.

Akteruzzaman, additional superintendent of police of the CID, said Alamgir, Ahad and his wife Liza had been involved in trafficking people for the last couple of years.

"The arrestees promised the victims that they would be sent to Poland legally, and had taken Tk 10 lakh for the process. As there is no embassy in Dhaka, they took the victims to India first and from there, they took them to Uzbekistan on tourist visas on July 10, 2019," he said.

After waiting for the travel documents for around a year and half and failing, the traffickers sent the migrants by road. As they refused to travel illegally, the syndicate told them to go back to Bangladesh, said Akteruzzaman.

Investigators said they suspect the syndicate might have contacts and counterparts in Poland and somehow their link did not work in their favour.

"We have come to know some 10 to 12 other Bangladeshis are stuck in Uzbekistan. We are investigating if any local agency is involved with the racket and trying to identify syndicate members in Uzbekistan. We may seek Interpol assistance for further investigation."

Regarding the second route, the CID said they arrested one Bazlur Rahman last month in Dhaka for trafficking people to Togo.

THE ORDEAL, TORTURE
Saidur Rahman, 26, left Dhaka on December 30, 2019, for Togo.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Saidur said that he had signed a Tk 15 lakh contract with a travel agency. "I paid them Tk 6 lakh and the contract said it would send me to Italy."

He reached Togo on December 31 via Thailand and Ethiopia. In Togo, a Bangladeshi -- Nurul Alam Sumon -- received him from the airport and took him to a hotel.

"There, Sumon took \$1,200 from me. But three days later, they shifted me to a rented house.

"An African named Tudo then confined me with dozens of other Bangladeshis and began the torture. He would only provide us with rice and a piece of meat a day and sometimes [there would be] no food. If anyone protested, they would be beaten up."

He added, "I was forced to contact my family in Bangladesh and make them pay Tk seven lakh in two instalments to their local agent -- Tuhinuzzaman Bhuyan. One day, we found a cell phone access and managed to communicate with an NGO."

"The NGO, aided by local police, then rescued us and helped us come back. But they failed to take any action against Tudo as he seemed to be too powerful... In the torture cell, there were at least 50 to 60 Bangladeshis. They would take away everyone's passports and torture people unless they would get a hefty amount of money."

CID's SS Khan said, "We are investigating the cases and a drive is underway to arrest those involved."

Violence spreads

FROM PAGE 12
provincial authorities. Police Minister Bheki Cele put the official death toll at 10.

Soldiers have been sent onto the streets to try to contain the unrest.

Zuma, 79, was sentenced last month for defying a constitutional court order to give evidence at an inquiry investigating high-level corruption during his nine years in office until 2018.

He also faces trial in a separate case on charges including corruption, fraud, racketeering and money laundering. He pleaded not guilty in court in May.

Zuma's foundation said there would be no peace in South Africa until the former president was released from jail.

"Peace and stability in South Africa is directly linked to the release of President Zuma with immediate effect," it said in a Tweet.

The violence could have been avoided. It started with the decision of the constitutional court to detain president Zuma ... This is what gave anger to the people," a spokesman for the foundation told Reuters separately.

Troops moved into flashpoints yesterday as outnumbered police

seemed helpless to stop the unrest, with columns of armoured personnel carriers rolling down highways.

The bodies of 10 people were found on Monday evening after a stampede at a Soweto shopping mall, Gauteng premier David Makhura said.

Hundreds of looters raided warehouses and supermarkets in Durban, one of the busiest shipping terminals on the African continent and an import-export hub.

Outside a Durban warehouse of retailer Game, looters stuffed cars with electronic goods and clothes, a Reuters witness said. Inside, the floor was a mess of discarded packaging as the crowd emptied the shelves.

The rand, which had been one of the best performing emerging market currencies during the pandemic, dropped to a three-month low yesterday, and local and hard currency bonds suffered.

Shops and petrol stations have been forced to close while on the streets protesters have hurled stones and police responded with rubber bullets, Reuters journalists said.

Aerial footage from local channel eNCA showed black smoke rising from several Durban warehouses, while debris lay strewn.

Pain-free blood

FROM PAGE 12

Understandably, some diabetes sufferers avoid the painful process by minimizing their tests.

However, this latest test works by embedding an enzyme that detects glucose into a transistor that can then transmit the presence of glucose, according to Paul Dastoor, Professor of Physics at the University of Newcastle in Australia, who led the team that created it.

Since the electronic materials in the transistor are inks, the test can be made through printing at a low cost, Dastoor said.

"The holy grail of glucose testing has been something that is non-invasive," said Dastoor.

"[This test] really does open up the prospect of pain-free, low-cost glucose testing and hopefully much better outcomes for diabetes sufferers," he said.

The new test, Dastoor said, was created by chance as scientists were working on solar cells.

The project secured A\$6.3 million (\$4.7 million) in funding from the Australian government to establish a facility to produce the test kits should clinical trials be passed.

Dastoor said the technology could also be transferred to Covid-19 testing and allergen, hormone and cancer testing.

The university is already working with Harvard University on a test for Covid-19 using same technology, but it's the implications for other testing that has the physicist excited about the potential for the sensors.

"I think it's going to radically change the way we think about medical devices and in particular sensors because we can print these at remarkably low cost," said Dastoor.

Bangladesh Development Bank Ltd.

<p

SPORT

Will things improve beyond ZIMBABWE?

MAZHAR UDDIN

 Zimbabwe have over the years been the ideal opposition for Bangladesh whenever the Tigers have been looking to gain confidence and return to winning ways following a string of defeats across formats.

Regardless of the strength of the opposition, a win always gives confidence to any team and inspires them to improve, but things have never gone right for Bangladesh despite the gains in confidence from defeating Zimbabwe.

The Tigers had previously returned to winning ways in the Test format by defeating Zimbabwe following a string of six consecutive losses, including a shock defeat to Afghanistan at home in 2019.

But after that convincing innings-and-106-run win, Bangladesh could not capitalise on the momentum and went on to lose their next two Test series. The Tigers first lost a two-match Test series 2-0 at home to an inexperienced West Indies side earlier this year and followed that with a 1-0 series defeat in Sri Lanka in May.

After those losses, Bangladesh left for Zimbabwe and registered a comprehensive 220-run win in the lone Test, presumably bolstering confidence ahead of a three-match



Wicketkeeper batsman Mushfiqur Rahim tries to catch a ball during practice yesterday in Harare. Mushfiqur has reportedly made himself available for the T20 series against Zimbabwe, retreating from his previous position of skipping the shortest format during the tour.

ODI and three-match T20I series on their current tour.

The trend in T20Is is similar to the Test tale. Bangladesh lost four games straight before getting back to winning ways by defeating

Zimbabwe 2-0 in March last year. They then went on to lose the next series 3-0 against New Zealand.

ODIs are the Tigers' favoured format and Tamim Iqbal's side managed to clinch the last three-

match series 2-1 against an inexperienced Sri Lankan side at home after being whitewashed in a three-match ODI series in New Zealand.

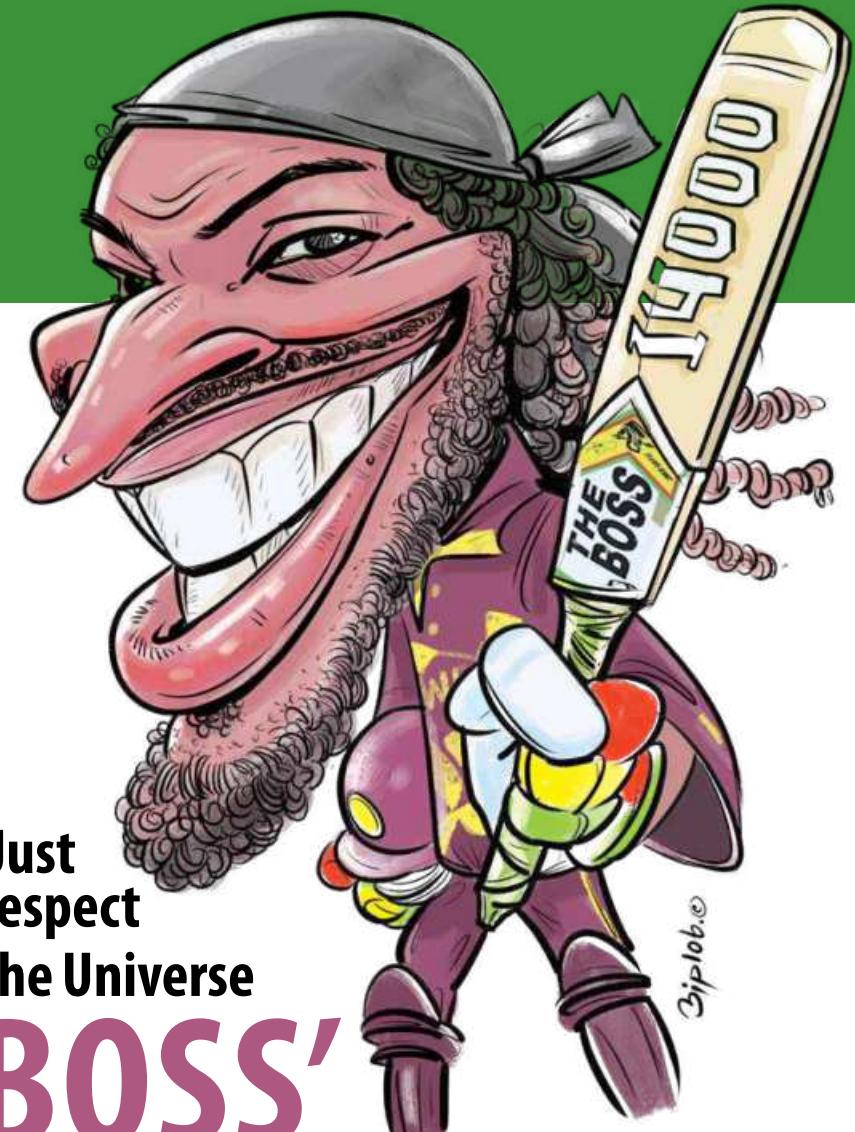
The visitors will take part in a warm-up game today ahead of the crucial ODI series, starting from July 16, which is part of the ICC Men's World Cup Super League.

Bangladesh will be desperate to gain the maximum number of points from this series, but will win the confidence gained from wins against help Bangladesh when the opponents are tougher and stronger?

Disappointingly, the answer remains has always been in the negative. And it is not because the Tigers have beaten a relatively weaker opponent, it is also because of the lack of foresight within the Bangladesh think-tank that hinders them from working on tougher challenges that await.

There is no scope to undermine Zimbabwe as a team nor any victory against them, but it is also important for Bangladesh to develop a culture of learning not just from their defeats, but from the wins as well.

There are once again bigger and tougher challenges for the Tigers on the horizon. The Tigers will host Australia for a five-match T20 series, which will be followed by series against England and New Zealand.



'Just respect the Universe BOSS'

AGENCIES

38-ball 67.

Gayle also became the first player to reach the milestone of 14,000 T20 runs.

"Don't mind the numbers ... you guys should be happy to see Chris Gayle on the field still. Hopefully Chris will last as long as possible. Cherish those moments ... just respect the Universe Boss and let him play cricket and have some fun," said Chris Gayle.

"ICC don't want me to use the Universe Boss. So I have shortened it and just put 'The Boss.' I am the boss (laughs)," Gayle said in a video posted by Cricket.com.au. On being asked whether ICC has the copyright over the term 'Universe Boss,' an animated Gayle said, "Well, I have to copyright it. Not ICC, I am technically the Boss."

OBITUARY



Former hockey star Naveed passes away

AGENCIES

Naveed Alam, a noted Pakistani hockey player and former coach of the Bangladesh national team, passed away in Lahore on Tuesday after a battle with cancer.

The 47-year-old Olympian and Hockey World Cup winner was a familiar name in Bangladesh hockey as he played in the Dhaka Premier League for Usha Krira Chakra in 1990s.

Later he coached Bangladesh team in 2013 and 2014.

Yashpal Sharma dies of cardiac arrest

AGENCIES

India's 1983 World Cup hero Yashpal Sharma died on Tuesday after suffering a massive cardiac arrest here. He was 66 and is survived by his wife, two daughters and a son.



In his international career, Yashpal played 37 Tests, scoring 1606 runs, and 42 ODIs in which he scored 883.

He was known for his gutsy attitude and his stroke-filled half-century in the semifinal against England in the 1983 campaign at the Old Trafford will forever be etched in the public memory.

WHAT TO WATCH

SPORTS

Bangladesh Premier League
Muktijoddha vs Sheikh Russel
Live from 4:00 pm

'We love you'

REUTERS, Manchester

 England soccer fans stepped up to defend striker Marcus Rashford on Tuesday by covering the racist abuse scrawled on a mural to the Black player in his hometown with messages of love and support for a "hero" who they said was a national role model.

Black players Rashford, 23, Jadon Sancho, 21, and Bukayo Saka, 19, were racially abused after they missed penalties in a shootout with Italy which settled Sunday's final.

Fans covered up racist abuse scrawled on the mural to Rashford in the Withington area of Manchester with hundreds of small messages of support. "We love you!", read one of the messages. One pink heart was affixed on the mural with the simple word: "Hero".

"You have stood up for us

repeatedly, now it's time for us to stand up for you!" read another. Rashford posted photographs of letters from children who said they were proud of him.

Rashford, who was born in Manchester and brought up by his single mother in the Wythenshawe area of the city, has used his experiences of hunger as a child to campaign for better provision for children to be given free food.

"My penalty was not good enough, it should have gone in but I will never apologise for who I am and where I came from," Rashford said in a statement. "Seeing the response in Withington had me on the verge of tears. The communities that always wrapped their arms around me continue to hold me up. I'm Marcus Rashford, 23-year-old, black man from Withington and Wythenshawe, South Manchester. If I have nothing else I have that."



Star on Friday.

Asked whether there is any realistic chance to hold the championship, Salahuddin said: "I can't answer at the moment because no one tells me 'no'. Everyone tells me to wait and see

how the situation goes. No one can give me guarantees and that is the problem."

Moving the championship to Sylhet from Dhaka, where the Bangabandhu National Stadium is undergoing renovation works, was discussed at a meeting between the SAFF general secretary and the



ITALY BASKS IN GLORY

Italy's President Sergio Mattarella poses with Giorgio Chiellini, who successfully led Italy to Euro 2020 glory, and his teammates and Matteo Berrettini, who became the first Italian to reach the Wimbledon men's singles final, at the Quirinale Palace in Rome on Monday. After 18 months of pandemic hell, Italy revelled in some soccer heaven on Monday after its national team brought back the European Championship trophy for the first time since 1968 following victory over England at Wembley. Led by coach Roberto Mancini, the players landed shortly after dawn to find many fans were still celebrating in the early morning cool, with the smell of fireworks lingering in the streets and flags flapping out of car windows. Meanwhile, Berrettini made a history for his country despite a defeat against Novak Djokovic in the final. Although world number one Djokovic was the overwhelming favourite to win the title, an upset victory for the 25-year-old Berrettini had not been completely ruled out by pundits.

PHOTO: REUTERS

2021 SAFF Championship increasingly unlikely

ANISUR RAHMAN

 With fans still reeling from the excitement of Copa America and Euros, any enthusiasm regarding the SAFF Championship -- South Asia's biggest football carnival -- is likely to be vanish before a ball is kicked due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The SAFF Championship, a biennial tournament featuring seven South Asian nations, was rescheduled to be held this year in September in Bangladesh after it had been delayed by a year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

But uncertainty over the 13th edition of the championship is looming large as the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is having trouble roping in sponsors and still awaiting assurances from concerned authorities amidst the 'second wave', which has seen record deaths and infections almost every day in Bangladesh.

Bhutan, one of the participating nations, already informed the SAFF secretariat on July 1 that they would not be allowed by their government to participate in the SAFF Championship beyond their territory, leaving five sides in the tournament as Pakistan are currently suspended from international matches by FIFA.

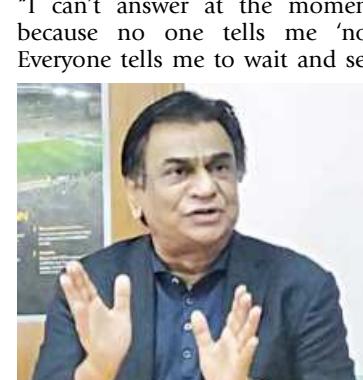
"No country can tell us anything confidently because of lockdown, pandemic, etc. For instance, Bhutan won't be able to come out of their territory while other participating teams have also been hesitant, telling us that they will let us know later as they need to talk to their governments about developing situations. It is indecisive. There are also financial matters. Those who promised to sponsor the championship have kept us waiting by asking us to wait and see. It is now a very uncertain situation because the situation is not as it was when they made promises," BFF and SAFF president Kazi Salahuddin told The Daily

general secretaries of the seven participating nations on July 1 and no one raised the objection to playing in Sylhet.

"The financial problem is not only the obstruction to hold the tournament. There are many other problems like travel restrictions, quarantine. If the government doesn't waive those things due to the ongoing pandemic, then it is really difficult to stage the SAFF Championship," Halal said.

The BFF president still wants to stay positive about holding the tournament -- which was last held in Dhaka in 2018 -- but sees no possibility of staging it this year if they cannot do so in the August-September slot.

"There is no possibility of holding the SAFF Championship this year if we can't hold it within August-September. We don't have a stadium in Dhaka, it is also a problem. We need this month to take the final decision about the SAFF Championship," Salahuddin concluded.



Bashundhara Kings players celebrate after an empathetic 3-0 victory over their nearest rivals Ataur Rahman Bhuiyan College SC in the Women's Football League, which resumed at Birsreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday following a coronavirus-induced 13-day break. Captain Sabina Khatun struck twice to improve her goals tally to 50 for her club as Bashundhara went one more step closer to defending their title, requiring four points from three remaining games.

PHOTO: BFF



HIGHEST SELLING 15 CEMENT for more than years



Traffickers abuse visit, on-arrival visas

Another gang uses 'contract marriage' to send people abroad

1,99,864 people left for Dubai on visit visa in last 18 months, only 21,754 returned

Togo, Uzbekistan new route for trafficking; 8 tortured victims returned in last 2 months

Brokers use to manage airport, immigration for Tk 40,000 to Tk one lakh

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Abusing visit visas and on-arrival visas, a transnational syndicate has been trafficking people from Bangladesh to different countries, including the Middle East and Europe.

The syndicate first trap aspiring migrant workers through online advertisements and fake documents that promise a job abroad.

They then take them to countries that accept visit visas or provide on-arrival visas.

Once abroad, the ordeal begins as

syndicate members keep the aspiring migrant workers confined and tortured them for money.

After the traffickers collected the money, they would send the victims to different countries in Europe through the Mediterranean.

Many die during the journey, officials and other victims said.

The Special Branch and Criminal Investigation Department of police came up with the findings while analysing

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Admin, locals, reps, to fix place for Eid prayers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

This year, local administrations, in consultation with public representatives and local dignitaries, would decide whether the Eid prayers would be held at mosques, eidgahs or open spaces.

The religious affairs ministry said this in an emergency notification issued yesterday.

The decision would be made considering the severity of coronavirus infection in any particular area.

The circular read that the authorities

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

The New York Times condemns arms supply

JULY 14, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN CONDEMNED



The New York Times in an editorial published today urges the US administration to promptly divert military supplies already en route to Pakistan.

It wrote, "The report of a World Bank mission to East Pakistan

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



Transport workers cleaning vehicles in the capital's Gabtoli Bus Stand as the government permitted them to operate on a limited scale across the country from Thursday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Liberal Deuba becomes PM of Nepal

REUTERS, Kathmandu

Nepal's president appointed veteran liberal Sher Bahadur Deuba as prime minister yesterday, the president's office said, a day after the Supreme Court reinstated the parliament that was dissolved in May.

The new leader's immediate task is to procure Covid-19 vaccines

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Pregnant woman raped in Ashulia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

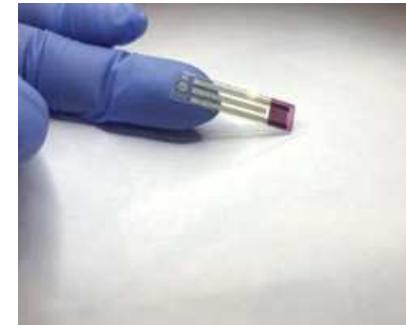
A pregnant woman was raped by one of her neighbours in Savar's Ashulia, on the outskirts of the capital, on Sunday, police said, quoting the victim.

The law enforcers yesterday arrested one Sagar, 22, for his alleged involvement in the incident

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Pain-free blood sugar test developed

REUTERS, Sydney



Australian scientists said they have developed the "holy grail" of blood sugar testing for diabetics, a non-invasive strip that checks glucose levels via saliva.

For diabetics, managing their blood sugar levels typically means pricking their fingers multiple times a day with a lancet and then placing a drop of blood on a testing strip.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4



The demand for oxygen cylinders has gone up with the increasing number of coronavirus cases, boosting related businesses. In the capital's Moghbazar area, a shop keeps cylinders queued up for rent for Tk 800 a day.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

ডক্ট মুল্যমান ব্যাংক নোটের প্রধান নিরাপত্তা বৈশিষ্ট্য

www.bb.org.bd → Bank notes & coins → Security features

জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান এর প্রতিকৃতি স্বলিত ১০০, ২০০, ৫০০ ও ১০০০ টাকা মুল্যমানের নোটে নেলদেনে নিম্নবর্ণিত নিরাপত্তা বৈশিষ্ট্য খেয়াল করলে আমরা সহজেই আসল নোট চিনতে পাব :

মুজিববর্ষের অঙ্গীকার দেশী পয়েন্টের ব্যাবহার

নিরাপত্তা সূতা : ১০০ ও ৫০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটের বাম পাশে ৪ মি.মি. চওড়া ছলের বেলী সন্দৃশ নিরাপত্তা সূতা রয়েছে যার একটি অশে লাল হতে সবুজ রংয়ে পরিবর্তিত হয় এবং অপর অংশে নোটের মুল্যমান (১০০ টাকা/১০০০টাকা) মুদ্রিত রয়েছে। ২০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটের বাম পাশে ৪ মি.মি. চওড়া নিরাপত্তা সূতা রয়েছে যা লাল হতে সবুজ রংয়ে পরিবর্তিত হয় এবং ১০০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটে ৫ মি.মি. চওড়া নিরাপত্তা সূতা রয়েছে যা সোনালী হতে সবুজ রংয়ে পরিবর্তিত হয়। ২০০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটের নিরাপত্তা সূত্যাক বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের মনোযোগ ও নোটের মুল্যমান (২০০ টাকা/১০০০ টাকা) মুদ্রিত আছে। নোটগুলো নাড়াঢ়া করলে এতে হালেগাহিন ইমেজ পরিপন্থিত হয়।

বুকানো ছাপা : ১০০, ৫০০ ও ১০০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটের সামনের দিকের নিচে মাঝে বরাবর নোটের মুল্যমান ১০০, ৫০০ ও ১০০০ এবং ২০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটের পেছনের দিকের চিহ্নিত অংশে অতি সূক্ষ্ম আকারে ২০০ মুদ্রিত রয়েছে, যা আতঙ্গী কাঁচ অথবা উরামারের শার্ট মোবাইল ফোনের ক্যামেরা প্রয়োজন মত জুড়ে করে কিংবা "Flashlight & magnifying glass" App এর সহায়তায় মোবাইল ফোন দ্বারে দেখা যাবে।

অতি সূক্ষ্ম আকারের লেখা : ১০০, ৫০০ ও ১০০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটের পেছনের দিকের চিহ্নিত অংশে অতি সূক্ষ্ম আকারে BANGLADESH BANK এবং ২০০ টাকা মুল্যমান নোটের পেছনের দিকের চিহ্নিত অংশে অতি সূক্ষ্ম আকারে ২০০ মুদ্রিত রয়েছে, যা আতঙ্গী কাঁচ অথবা উরামারের শার্ট মোবাইল ফোনের ক্যামেরা প্রয়োজন মত জুড়ে করে কিংবা "Flashlight & magnifying glass" App এর সহায়তায় মোবাইল ফোন দ্বারে দেখা যাবে।

UV লাইটযুক্ত জাল নোট সনাক্তকারী মেশিন ও মোবাইল ফোন
এবং আতঙ্গী কাঁচ দ্বারা জাল নোট সহজে পরিষ্কা করা যায়।

নোট জালকারী চত্বরের প্রতারণা থেকে নিজেকে রক্ষা করুন এবং এসকল নোট জালকারীকে ধরিয়ে দিন। আসল নোটের বিভিন্ন নিরাপত্তা বৈশিষ্ট্য সম্পর্কে নিজে জানুন এবং অপরকে জানতে সহায়তা করুন।

ব্যাংক নোটের ব্যবহার সম্পর্কে সচেতন হোন

আমরা শোকাত

শোক সহজে পরিদর্শন করতি নমদেন্দা আশুর করারি

হাসেম ফুডস লিমিটেডের কৃপণ্জ কারখানাতে অন্ধিকারে আহত ও নিহতদের পরিবারের পাশে রয়েছে সজীব ফণ্ট।

ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত পরিবারের সদস্যদের নিম্নতর নম্বরে যোগাযোগের জন্য বিনোদ তাবে অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

৫ ০১৭১২৯৮৯১৮

হাসেম ফুডস লিমিটেড



SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION