



The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION



REGD. NO. DA 781 | Vol. XXXI No. 179 | SRABAN 3, 1428 BS | Your Right to Know | ZILHAJ 7, 1442 HIJRI | 16 PAGES PRICE : Tk12.00



"Passengers must be carried maintaining rules and health safety guidelines, otherwise legal action would be taken."
ROAD TRANSPORT AND BRIDGES MINISTER OBIDUL QUADER WARNS TRANSPORT OWNERS



"The 14-day lockdown that will begin right after Eid, will be stricter than the last strict lockdown."
STATE MINISTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION FARHAD HOSSAIN



"Look, the only pandemic we have is among the unvaccinated. And they're killing people."
US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN SLAMS SOCIAL MEDIA FOR FAILING TO STOP COVID MISINFORMATION

Foolhardy for festivities

People stream out of city amid risk of Covid, suffer all along

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People in their thousands continued to leave the capital yesterday for Eid-ul-Azha holidays and those heading to the northern, north-western and southern districts suffered immensely on highways and near ferry terminals due to congestion.

Once again, physical distancing was largely ignored during the mad rush. Many home-goers did not even wear masks. It fuelled concerns over a rise in the Covid-19 transmission at a time when both virus deaths and infections are surging across the country.

The situation was similar on Friday.

Meanwhile, transport service providers and officials involved in the sector said the number of home-goers is likely to increase today and so is their suffering. They also said the home rush is expected to reach its peak on Tuesday with the beginning of the government holidays for the festival.

According to different estimations, more than one crore people on average left Dhaka, Narayanganj and Gazipur ahead of Eid before the pandemic. Many office-goers in these districts would send their family members home days before the festival and

they would join them later.

But this time, the home-goers have to leave the districts within a short period of time since a 14-day countrywide coronavirus lockdown ended only on Wednesday. Their sufferings aggravated after the government asked transport operators to keep half the seats empty to ensure physical distancing. Many operators are charging passengers extra. At the same time, they are carrying more passengers than they are supposed to.

The government relaxed the strict lockdown for eight days from Thursday for the Eid, which will be celebrated on Wednesday.

It made the move although many experts had warned that lifting the restrictions may lead to a spike in infections and deaths.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity, a platform working to protect passengers' rights, yesterday urged the government to take action against unscrupulous bus operators, who were overcharging passengers and not maintaining the health safety rules.

Most public transport operators are not following the government instruction, it

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A bull being unloaded from a cargo vessel at Shashan Ghat in the capital's Postagola yesterday. Traders and farmers from Kushtia have brought sacrificial animals on this boat to sell those in a temporary cattle market at Shashan Ghat. With the Eid-ul-Azha days away, sale of animals is gathering pace.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Virus ravages as lockdown relaxed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The fatalities and new cases of Covid-19 have both shot up this week, coincidentally, with the lifting of lockdown on July 15 despite health experts' best advice.

In the 24 hours ending at 8:00am yesterday, Bangladesh recorded 204 Covid-19 deaths and 8,489 infections, according to the data from the Directorate General of Health Services.

Until yesterday, the fatalities have increased 15.9 percent and infections 13.7 percent from a week earlier.

In the past week, a total of 1,277 died from Covid-19 and 73,059 had tested positive.

The week has not ended yet and the numbers have already been exceeded: as of yesterday morning, there have been 1,480 deaths and 83,096 infections.

On the bright side, the rate of recovery of Covid-19 patients has also increased: by 41.30 percent.

Last week, a total of 38,940 people recovered from the disease. So far this

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Covid fear loses way in cattle markets

SHAHEEN MOLLA, HELEMUL ALAM and MAHBUBUR RAHMAN KHAN

The government's condition of maintaining health guidelines for allowing cattle markets ahead of Eid-ul-Azha seems to have fallen on deaf ears.

The measures instructed by the government at the cattle markets include checking of body temperature at the entrance, which would have disinfected chambers and proper handwashing stations as well.

The cattle markets must provide separate entry and exit points to enable one-way movement of buyers throughout the venue and avoid crowding at the venue, as per a notice from the Press Information Department (PID) on Tuesday.

The correspondents visited makeshift cattle markets at Gabtoli, Kochukhet, Dhupkhola, Sadeque Hossain Khoka Playground, Postagola and Mohammadpur and found none of the instructions was being followed.

Neither were there separate walkways nor were there handwashing facilities at the entrance. The body temperature was not being checked either.

The entry of the elderly and children are supposed to be restricted inside the venue as they are more vulnerable to Covid-19. But buyers, old and new, were seen casually moving about.

What is most frightening was that only a handful of people were seen wearing masks at these markets -- at a time when the coronavirus caseload and fatalities are spiralling.

PHOTOS ON PAGE 5

Called in to cut the time for project completion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prof Shamsul Alam, a member of the planning commission's General Economy Division (senior secretary), is set to be sworn in as state minister for planning at the Bangabhaban today.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is going to give him the post as part of government efforts to reduce delays in projects' implementation and waste of public money, said highly-placed sources in the government.

Increasing costs of different government projects in line with repeated extensions of the work tenures has become

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Tragedy scripted with own lives

Cinema hall staff, families reeling from the pandemic with no support from industry, govt

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

For Atoar Rahman, life has played out like a tragic movie since the Covid-19 pandemic brought the country's already-struggling film industry to a grinding halt more than a year ago.

A projector operator at Ananda Cinema Hall at Farmgate, he has not been getting any wages for more than a year and a half. Yet, he clings on to the industry that has been his life and livelihood for over three decades.

With cinemas shut, the 50-year-old had no option but to start working as a labourer to make ends meet.

However, renewed shutdowns and the recent lockdown

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Court slaps a travel ban on Evaly MD, chairman

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court on Thursday issued a travel ban on evaly.com.bd Chairman Shamima Nasrin and Managing Director Mohammad Russel as part of an investigation into the allegation that they embezzled around Tk 338.62 crore.

KM Emrul Kayesh of Dhaka's Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after Mamunur Rashid Chowdhury, an assistant director of the Anti-Corruption Commission, also the head of the enquiry team, submitted an application to the court, seeking the travel ban.

The judge also directed the ACC to send the order sheet to the

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2ND PANDEMIC HAJJ Pilgrims arrive in Makkah

AFP, Makkah

Pilgrims began arriving in the holy city of Makkah yesterday for the second downsized hajj staged during the coronavirus pandemic, circling Islam's holiest site in masks and on distanced paths.

The kingdom is allowing only 60,000 fully vaccinated residents to take part, seeking to repeat last year's success that saw no virus outbreak during the five-day ritual.

This year's hajj, with participants chosen through a lottery, is larger than the pared-down version staged in 2020 but drastically smaller than in normal times, stoking resentment among Muslims abroad who are barred once again.

After being loaded on buses and brought to Makkah's Grand Mosque, pilgrims began performing the "tawaf", the circumambulation of the Kaaba, a large cubic

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The capital's Karwan Bazar wholesale kitchen market is crowded with people who violate health safety rules amid the rise in novel coronavirus cases in recent weeks. With the lockdown eased for eight days for Eid, more people are coming out of their homes to kitchen markets and shopping malls in the city. The photo was taken around 7:00am yesterday. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

POST-EID 14-DAY LOCKDOWN Govt in a dilemma over factories

Public and state minister says curbs to be even stronger this time

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While the state minister for public administration warned that the upcoming lockdown after Eid will be stricter than the last, the government is yet to decide whether export-oriented factories will be operational or not during that time.

"We will transition from a strict lockdown to a stricter one during the next 14-day lockdown that will start right after Eid," said Farhad Hossain, public administration minister, while addressing the media at a Border Guard Battalion programme in Chuadanga.

However, Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi had earlier told The Daily Star that he had been facing a lot of pressure from the business communities, especially export-oriented garment-makers, to let the factories stay open.

"I will have a meeting with government high-ups and the expert committee very soon to find ways to keep the factories running during the lockdown," he said.

A high official of the commerce ministry yesterday told The Daily Star that the garments owners are negotiating with the government.

"This is a national emergency so the health issue will get importance, but the demands made by the garments owners is also logical. Their demands are being considered with special importance," said the source.

He, however, said the factories producing daily essentials like sugar, oil or flour will remain open to keep the supply chain intact.

The cabinet secretary was supposed to meet the prime minister to make a decision about whether or not to

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BANGLADESH UPDATE

8,489
New cases in 24hrs

10,92,411
Total cases

17,669
Deaths

9,23,163
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE

4,095,927
Deaths

190,609,843
Total cases

RESOLVING ROHINGYA CRISIS Dhaka seeks Moscow's help

Momen meets his Russian counterpart in Tashkent

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh has sought Russia's "active and fruitful cooperation" for facilitating the reintegration and return of the Rohingyas to their homeland.

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen raised the issue with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov at a meeting on the sidelines of the international conference on "Central and South Asia: Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities" in Tashkent on Friday.

The two ministers agreed to work together on the Rohingya issue, the Bangladesh foreign ministry said yesterday.

Russia would continue to encourage Myanmar to engage in a dialogue with Bangladesh, the ministry added.

Momen also gave an overview of the

coronavirus vaccines and thanked the Russian foreign minister for standing beside Bangladesh in all difficult times, especially their direct support during the Liberation War in 1971.

The two ministers also expressed happiness at the level of the existing mutual cooperation between Bangladesh and Russia.

The Russian foreign minister also expressed his country's commitment to complete the two nuclear projects in Bangladesh. The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant unit-1 is scheduled to commence operations in 2023 and the unit-2 a year later.

The Bangladesh foreign minister also thanked his Russian counterpart for the gracious message sent by President Vladimir Putin during the birth centenary celebrations of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.



Buses wait in long queue to board ferries at Paturia Ferry Terminal in Manikganj yesterday. Passengers suffered long delays as an increased number of vehicles used the Paturia-Daulatdia route three days ahead of the Eid-ul-Azha. Bottom right, vehicles are caught in a long tailback at the east end of Bangabandhu Bridge in Tangail. Bottom left, the Dhaka-Tangail highway in Gazipur's Chandra area is gridlocked.

Tragedy scripted with own

FROM PAGE 1

cut off this option too, forcing him to send his wife and son back to his village home in Pabna.

"You have no idea how we are living with almost no income -- sometimes I eat just once a day.

"But that has also become tough. Now I have no other way but to sell blood to survive," said Atoar in a choked voice inside the empty, dark cinema hall.

An estimated 1,500 people work in various capacities at 140 cinema halls across the country, according to leaders of the Film Exhibitors' Association.

A majority of them are facing tragic life situations of the sort that get audiences tearing up when they see these on the big screen.

Someone has helplessly watched his wife die without treatment, another was desperate enough to try to sell his kidney -- the stories go on and on.

While cinema hall owners, who saw their business crash, wait for the audience to turn up, cinema hall staff are busy figuring out how to earn their living. They toil to keep films running at theatres year-round but are overlooked during this crucial time.

Closed for seven months since March last year, cinema halls were allowed to reopen with conditions. These were once again closed down after the strict lockdown was enforced from July 1 and now have a narrow window till after Eid when the lockdown is set to resume.

Hall owners have long been struggling to operate amidst a falling number of films and dwindling numbers of cinemagoers, especially with the rise of OTT platforms, but the pandemic put the last nail in the coffin of the film industry.

Industry people said the government helped cinema hall workers during the shutdown last year with cash assistance of Tk 2,500 each. But this time no such initiative has been taken, leaving the workers in a tight spot once again.

"We have no one to look after us. Even the actors and actresses do not care about us," said Atoar, who began his career in 1990 with a token salary of Tk 10 a month.

Atoar became a skilled projector operator, working in 25 cinema halls mostly in the northern districts of the country.

Now, he has no clue when the din of a busy cinema hall will resume. "If such a situation continues, neither I nor the film industry will survive."

Rubel Mia, too, is worried about his prospects amid a family tragedy.

A cleaner who worked at Chhanda Cinema Hall at Farmgate, the 35-year-old did not receive any salary this last year and a half.

Due to his financial situation, he said, he could not afford treatment for his ailing wife. She died on June 23.

"I could do nothing to save my wife. She died in front of my eyes. My youngest son is only three months old," said Rubel, his eyes welling up

with tears.

His three children, including the newborn, are now staying with his mother in Noakhali while he remains in Dhaka to earn a living.

Closed on and off, he started pulling a rickshaw sometimes and even worked as a day labourer.

"Believe me, I have no money to buy milk for my newborn baby. My mother often calls me but I don't pick up. What should I say to her?"

Rubel has also fallen behind in several months' house rent in Dhaka. "That's why I do not go to my house either," he added.

He said he had hoped that artists, directors, producers, and cinema hall owners would come forward to save industry workers, but that was not to be.

This lack of support from better-off industry workers and associations was emphasised by all these workers.

Md Wasim Khan, another projector operator of Ananda Cinema Hall, has been doing this job for the last 15 years.

With no money coming in, he said whenever he went to the manager and general manager of the cinema hall for his salary, they replied that they could not pay him any more since the hall was closed.

"My wife and son starved along with me most of the time," he said.

He said the government gave cash incentives to the people of many strata of life, but cinema hall workers were left out. "Even artists and producers did not come forward to help us."

"We don't want relief. If cinema halls are kept open, we can get by with our own money," Wasim said.

Awlad Hossain Uzal, general secretary of the Film Exhibitors' Association, said the cinema hall industry was "in the ICU".

"We did not get any good movies in the last two years to run in the cinema halls. If we cannot run shows, how will we survive?"

Uzal said many cinema halls have closed recently and others are destined for the same.

While acknowledging that cinema hall workers are passing trying times, Uzal said, "If cinema halls are open and run shows, we can give salaries to the staff. But how long can we give them salaries without any income?"

He said during the lockdown last year the government provided cash assistance to the workers -- Tk 2,500 each -- but not all of them received it.

There is no such initiative this time around, he added.

Zayed Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Film Artists' Association, said the organisation will extend support to the workers if the organisation that represents them communicates with the association.

"We are sympathetic to them but our organisation has limitations. We would be happy to stand beside them if the Film Exhibitors' Association seeks help," he said.

Court slaps a travel ban

FROM PAGE 1

Special Branch of police and the Department of Immigration and Passport in this regard.

In the application, Mamunur Rashid mentioned that the ACC had information that the two were secretly trying to leave the country, adding that if they leave, the investigation of the case would be hampered.

Earlier on July 9, the ACC had taken its own steps to ensure the two did not leave the country, by informing the immigration department, as the court was closed at the time.

The ACC launched an enquiry into Evaly following a commerce ministry request for legal action over alleged embezzlement.

On July 4, the commerce ministry sent separate letters to the home ministry, the ACC, the Directorate of

National Consumer Rights Protection and the Bangladesh Competition Commission to take legal action against Evaly by investigating the non-delivery of goods after accepting Tk 214 crore advance payment from customers and the refund of Tk 190 crore owed to businesses.

In an inspection report submitted to the commerce ministry last month, the Bangladesh Bank said Evaly's total liability was Tk 407.18 crore.

After receiving Tk 213.94 crore in advance from customers and Tk 189.85 crore from merchants, the company was expected to have at least Tk 403.80 crore in current assets, but it had only Tk 65.17 crore.

The commission on July 8 formed a two-member probe panel, led by Mamunur Rashid. The other member is Shihab Salam, deputy assistant director.

Foolhardy for festivities

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said after observing the ongoing Eid rush on Thursday and Friday.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader too said many bus operators were overcharging passengers and not following the health safety rules.

During his regular online briefing yesterday, Quader warned transport owners with legal action if they failed to follow the guidelines.

TAILBACK ON ROADS, CROWD AT FERRY TERMINALS
A huge rush of buses and cars caused a severe congestion on the Dhaka-Tangail-Rangpur highway.

Vehicles moved slowly throughout the day on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway.

On the Dhaka-Tangail-Rangpur highway, vehicles got stuck in a 20km tailback from Rabna Bypass area to the eastern end of Bangabandhu Bridge and in a 22km tailback from the western end of the bridge to Hatkumul intersection area in Sirajganj yesterday.

In face of a huge pressure of vehicles, including cattle-laden trucks, the bridge authorities stopped toll collection twice early yesterday and thrice after 4:20pm, which worsened the congestion.

The pressure eased after evening. Yasir Arafat, in-charge of the Elenga Highway Police Outpost, told our Tangail correspondent that the number of vehicles on the bridge throughout yesterday was more than double the usual.

A risky and narrow bridge in Nalka area of Sirajganj also led to the congestion as vehicles had to cross it very slowly and cautiously.

Ahmed Saju, a Bogura-bound passenger from Dhaka, said the bus he was in crossed a distance of six kilometers from the western end of the bridge in three hours.

Saiful Islam, a cattle trader from Pabna, said his cattle-laden truck got stuck in tailback at the western end of the bridge for more than two hours.

He was afraid that the animals may get sick.

Meanwhile, traffic slowed down on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway yesterday due to too many vehicles, reported our Gazipur Correspondent.

The situation worsened after a salt-laden truck lost control and hit a roadside battery-run auto-rickshaw in MCA Bazar area of Gazipur around 8:00am, leaving two people dead and halting traffic movement for one hour.

Due to the congestion, many buses could not return to their terminals in the capital, leaving passengers to wait for hours to board buses.

Mosharref Hossain, general manager of Hanif Paribahan, said gridlocks on the Dhaka-Tangail highway heavily disrupted their schedule. The situation was so bad that they had to cancel many tickets and refund passengers, he said.

"None of our buses left Dhaka after 9:00am for northern districts as many buses could not reach the terminals in the capital," Mosharref told The Daily Star around 4:00pm yesterday.

He blamed the rise in the number of vehicles, including cars and cattle-laden trucks, and some "choking" points on the highways for the situation.

He also said some bus operators brought local buses for long-haul services. Those buses are not fit for such a service and their operation was aggravating the situation on highway, he said.

Although some major bus operators maintained the health safety guidelines and carried passengers at half capacity, others simply did not bother to follow the government instruction, The Daily Star found visiting the Gabtoli bus terminal yesterday.

There were crowds of people in front of the counters. Social distancing went for a toss. Many did not even put on their masks the proper way.

Meanwhile, Shimulia-Banglabazar and Paturia-Dauladia ferry and launch terminals faced a huge pressure of

passengers and vehicles yesterday.

Visiting Paturia Ferry Terminal around 1:00pm, our Manikganj correspondent saw around 100 buses and 200 trucks waiting to cross the river.

Many launch operators were found carrying passengers more than what the authorities said they could.

A mobile court fined four launches for not having necessary papers.

A similar situation was seen at the Shimulia-Banglabazar ferry and launch terminal in the morning, reports our Munshiganj correspondent.

LAUNCH AND TRAIN
Zainal Abedin, joint director of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), said the number of home-goers leaving the capital by launches dropped yesterday compared to Friday.

He said the number was expected to rise from today and the home rush was likely to reach its peak on Monday, when garment factories were to close for the holidays.

Replying to a question on the violation of health safety rules, he said many passengers were reluctant to wear masks and follow the health rules. "We are trying our best so that both launch operators and passengers follow the safety guidelines."

Many home-goers left the capital by trains as the Bangladesh Railway is operating 34 trains from Dhaka to different destinations.

As per its previous announcement, BR will operate 38 inter-city and 19 commuters and local trains keeping 50 percent seats empty and maintaining physical distancing across the country.

Meanwhile, BR yesterday launched its "Cattle Special" train service yesterday to bring sacrificial animals to the city from different parts of the country.

A train with 80 cattle started at 4:30pm from Chapainawabganj. Taking more cattle from different other stations, the train was expected to reach Dhaka at 3:30am today.

Called in to cut the time for project

FROM PAGE 1

a common affair. On multiple occasions in the recent past, the PM called upon different ministers and government officials to save public money by completing projects on time, said the sources.

Talking to The Daily Star, Prof Alam said his main focus would be on improving the projects' management and ensuring their quick implementation.

"I want the projects to be implemented speedily, ensuring their quality," he said.

Prof Alam said the media highlights the suffering of people in different parts of the country and that he would keep records of such news articles and TV reports.

"Whenever I would come across such a piece of information, I would immediately communicate with the ministers and officials concerned to address the people's sufferings," he said.

Prof Alam said he would try to keep up the dynamism created in the general economic sector over the last 12 years.

He further said, "Talking from my experience, I saw 40 percent of the total budget goes to development, including in financial and social

sectors. Therefore, we will want to expedite the projects and their implementation."

Besides, he said, he would try to increase foreign investment and if needed, related policies would be changed or amended through discussions.

Prof Alam has worked as a member of the General Economy Division (GED) since 2009 and his contract ended on June 30 this year.

He joined Bangladesh Agricultural University as a teacher in 1974 and continued the job till 2009. He achieved honours and master's degrees from the same university in 1965 and 1973 respectively.

He received Ekushey Padak in 2020 for his contribution to the country's economy.

Prof Alam spent long years, from 1974 to 2015, as a faculty of Bangladesh Agricultural University.

During his tenure in academia, he served as a post-graduate visiting professor at Humboldt University, Germany, University of Ghent, Belgium, and at the School of Development Economics, Wageningen University, Netherlands.

After having 35 years of academic and research experience, Prof Alam joined as a Member of Bangladesh

Planning Commission on 1 July 2009.

Since then he has been the longest-serving member of the Bangladesh Planning Commission in its history.

Prof Alam led the preparation of National Planning Documents as Member, General Economics Division, Bangladesh Planning Commission during 2009-19 period; some of which are Sixth Five Year Plan FY2011-FY15; Revised Accelerated Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II (FY09-FY11) entitled, "Steps Towards Change"; "Perspective Plan of Bangladesh 2010-21- Making Vision 2021 a Reality"; National Sustainable Development Strategy (2011-2021) and First and Second Implementation Review of the Sixth Five Year Plan (1912).

He also guided the preparation of the Bangladesh National Social Security Strategy (2015-2025), and the Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020).

He led the preparation of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 and the Bangladesh Vision 2041 and the associated Perspective Plan.

Due to the pandemic situation, the oath-taking ceremony will be organised at a small scale with the presence of some senior ministers, Prof Alam told The Daily Star yesterday.

Virus ravages

FROM PAGE 1

week, 55,024 have made their recovery. With the latest count, the total number of deaths due to Covid-19 rose to 17,669 and the total confirmed cases to 10,92,411. The death rate stands at 1.6 percent.

In the 24 hours to 8 am yesterday, the positivity rate rose again: to 29.06 percent from 28.96 percent the previous day.

Thanks to the 14-day lockdown since the beginning of this month, the transmission showed a slightly downward trend from Tuesday, with the positivity rate declining to 27 percent on Thursday.

The rate, however, has started rising again from Friday, as predicted by the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid-19, which advised against lifting the lockdown for a week for the Eid-ul-Azha festivities.

Yesterday, the Dhaka division recorded 82 deaths, up from 68 recorded for the 24 hours to 8 am on Friday.

This was the highest death toll in a single day in the Dhaka division.

In Khulna division, 39 Covid-19 patients died, in Chattogram 32, in Rajshahi 20, in Rangpur 10, in Barishal five, in Mymensingh four and in Sylhet two.

Of yesterday's deceased, 125 were males and 79 were females.

Govt in a dilemma

FROM PAGE 1

keep factories open during the 14-day lockdown, but that meeting was postponed.

During the previous lockdown, the general public adhered to the rules during the first few days. However, crowds began thronging the streets soon after.

Hawkers, small traders and daily wage earners, who get by on daily wages, were seen the most.

Farhad Hossain's announcement about a stricter lockdown came at a time when preparations for Eid-ul-Azha are in full swing and all health precautions have been thrown out the window.

Thousands of people have been leaving the capital to celebrate the Eid-ul-Azha with their families.

Almost no bus or launch had a vacant seat, even though the government instructed the operators to run at half-capacity. Many home-goers were not wearing face masks.

The situation was similar at the cattle markets as there were huge crowds and a lack of face masks on them.

"There is a large economy surrounding Eid-ul-Azha. A lot of farmers have reared their cattle [for the festival]. Keeping such issues in mind, we had to relax the lockdown," said Farhad.

"However, safety precautions need to be maintained."

Factories were out of the purview of the lockdown that began on July 1 and finished on July 14.

Covid fear loses

FROM PAGE 1

Bangladesh is amongst the top 14 countries in the world in terms of the number of daily cases at present.

Though health experts have been asking the government to extend the 'lockdown' enforced on July 1 for a fortnight, the restrictions were relaxed for a week for the religious festival.

The atmosphere at the cattle markets suggested no one was bothered about getting Covid-19, with the nearby tea stalls were buzzing with customers.

Almost all traders who have gathered from different districts and areas were found without masks.

Take the case of Al-Amin, who brought five cows from Chudanga to the Dhupkhola cattle market. When quizzed where his mask was, he pulled one out from his bag.

Another trader Mokhlesur Rahman at Gabtoli said he feels uncomfortable wearing masks.

"It's hard to talk with customers with the masks on," he said.

On the other hand, no visible activity of law enforcement agencies, who were active during the lockdown to enforce people to wear masks and maintain health guidelines, was seen at the cattle markets.

Amir Ali, a resident of Tolarbag of Mirpur, went to Gabtoli along with his wife and son. None of them had masks on.

When the correspondent approached Ali, he whipped out a mask out of his pocket.

Rakib Imran, the lessee of the Gabtoli cattle market, said they are frequently asking people to maintain health guidelines on loudspeakers.

The temperature measurement machine has gone out of order, said Jakir Hossain, president of 43 no. ward Awami League of South Dhaka and advisor of the Sadeque Hossain Khoka cattle market.

Probed about the absence of handwashing facilities, he said: "Yes. We will set up washing basins."

Shafigul Isla Bacchu, manager of the Kochukhet cattle market, gave similar replies to the questions.

Contacted, Tazul Islam, the local government and rural development minister, said: "We will look into the irregularities."

"We all need to maintain health guidelines for our own sake. The government is doing its best. The people also need to do their part to win the war against the virus," he added.

One does not need to be an expert to infer that the rampant violation of health guidelines at the cattle markets will increase infection, said Mohammad Shahidullah, president of the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid-19.

"The hospitals are almost full. There are chances that many will not get treatment if the number of patients rises," he said.



Drives of rickshaws were seen filling up the capital's Dhanmondi Road-1 yesterday, as many shoppers were on their way to the markets right before Eid. With the lockdown relaxed, the scene was similar at many areas. Add to that the seasonal rickshaw-pullers coming into the capital to make some extra money, and the city gets even more crowded than usual.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

As if there is no coronavirus

People roam streets of capital without masks; shopping centres, kitchen markets see huge crowds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Traffic moving at a snail's pace, shoppers huddling together, and masks being ignored in general, with the coronavirus wreaking havoc across the country, one might be perplexed to know that this is the current scenario on the roads of Dhaka.

All these were observed at Gulistan around 1:30pm yesterday. The place was jam-packed with people and vehicles, with no regard for health guidelines. Queues for buses were stationed for droves of passengers rushing in, and crowds of Eid shoppers were thronging the nearby markets.

Similarly, around the same time at Karwan Bazar, vegetables and fish markets were flooded with hundreds of customers and traders, with almost no space left to maintain social distancing. Most of them had no mask or were wearing them under the chin.

After the government relaxed the restrictions for eight days to allow movement and business activities ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, chaos ensued at markets and streets amid authorities' lax monitoring. It is as if there is no Covid-19.

In a cabinet division notification issued on Tuesday, there was a condition that stated people will have to remain cautious and strictly maintain health guidelines, including

wearing face-masks, during this time.

However, visiting market areas and streets, this correspondent found the guidelines grossly ignored.

This correspondent found shops full of people from 10:30am in Dhaka's major shopping malls and markets, including New Market, Chadni Chawk, Gausia, Noor Mansion, Chandrima Super Market, Bashundhara City Shopping Mall, and shops at Elephant road and Gulistan.

"Seeing the crowds here [Gulistan], one can't differentiate whether it's a scene from normal times or Covid time. The place is filled with roadside vendors. Many are not wearing masks," said a traffic sergeant posted in front of Gulistan Shopping Complex, who was struggling to control the traffic.

Abdul Halim (45), a trader from Kishoreganj, said he came to the capital to buy clothes and accessories for Eid at a Gulistan market. He was seen having lunch at an open area just beside the road.

Asked, he said, "It may be unhealthy, but if I go to restaurants, I may miss the bus. So, I had a quick lunch here."

During the visit, no physical distancing was observed at most shops at New Market, Gausia, Noor Mansion, and Chadni Chawk. Clothing and jewellery stores at

the markets were packed. Several shopkeepers and buyers were seen without masks.

Crowds at New Market were seen buying crockery, kitchenware and home décor items.

During the visit, no physical distancing was observed at most shops at these places due to the market's limited space.

Yesterday, Dhaka witnessed heavy traffic on streets in most areas and intersections, particularly around market areas. The wait at traffic signals was considerably longer.

A number of inter-district buses entering and exiting the city also contributed to traffic, as holidaymakers left the capital.

Pedestrians, personal cars, motorcycles, rickshaws and other vehicles flooded the capital's streets, making commuters spend a harrowing time on the roads.

A record rise in the number of Covid-19 cases and fatalities in recent days prompted the government to enforce a nationwide strict lockdown from July 1. It was later extended until July 14.

However, ahead of Eid, the government issued a circular on Monday, relaxing the lockdown from July 15 to 23. From July 23 to August 5, the "strict lockdown" will be reinstated.

81 new dengue cases reported in a single day

UNB, Dhaka

As the number of dengue patients keep increasing, authorities reported 81 new cases in the 24 hours till yesterday morning.

The new cases add to the 336 patients already diagnosed with dengue who are receiving treatment at different government and private hospitals, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of them, 331 are receiving treatment at different hospitals in the capital while five are being treated outside Dhaka.

Some 1,139 patients have been admitted to different hospitals with the disease since January, 801 of whom have been released after recovery.

The recent spike in dengue cases adds to the worries of the country already ravaged by the devastating second wave of the coronavirus pandemic.

To curb the spike, anti-dengue drives will continue across Dhaka South City Corporation, said its mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh on Wednesday.

"The dengue situation is now under control although the number of dengue patients is a bit more this time due to heavy rainfall," mayor Taposh further said.

Dreams ended too soon

DU student's death from Covid-19 leaves family in despair

SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Sumon Hossen was buried at his native village in Jhenaidah on Friday. He was 22 years old. With his death, the hopes and dreams of his parents, which revolved around their son, were also shattered.

A student of Dhaka University's (DU) anthropology department, Sumon succumbed to Covid-19 after battling for his life at Jashore General Hospital's ICU.

He was from a financially strained family and got the opportunity to study at DU only after his father, Amir Hossen, sold and mortgaged some land to finance his son's education.

"He was my asset and the family's hope. I put a lot of effort for his studies. What will I do without him? I can't explain how difficult it is for a parent to see his child leave before him," Amir said.

Sumon's younger brother Sujon Hossen, an SSC examinee, said, "My brother's dream was to become a magistrate. He always advised me to study well."

Sumon was at home with his parents, since the university remained closed amid the pandemic. That's when he was infected with the virus.

Amir, a farmer, could not study himself, but struggled a lot to make his son's future bright. Sumon used to assure his father, saying if he gets a job, no one will have to struggle anymore.

Relatives said Sumon's family live in a small house. When Sumon used to stay at home during vacation, his parents would sleep in the kitchen due to the limited space.



Sumon Hossen

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Man held with 52 gold bars at Dhaka airport

UNB, DHAKA

Officials detained a man with 52 gold bars worth around Tk 4 crore at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Friday night.

The detainee was identified as Rakibul Hasan, hailing from Cumilla.

Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka Customs House Mohammad Abdus Sadek said he landed in a flight of Saudi Airlines which at the airport around 11:29pm.

Tipped off, a preventive team of Dhaka Customs challenged Rakibul while he was passing through the green channel of the airport.

Later, they recovered the gold bars from the passenger's handbag in presence of other officials.

He was later handed over to the Airport Police Station. A case was filed in this connection.

'Set up quality training facilities, explore new markets for migrants'

Experts urge expat ministry to spend budget aptly

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts in an online consultation yesterday said the expatriates' welfare ministry needs to spend its fiscal budget aptly to enhance overall labour migration situation, especially on quality training facilities and exploring new markets.

They said the allocated budget for the ministry for 2021-2022 fiscal year is not sufficient and urged the government to increase such allocation in the next national budget.

Titled "Online Post-Budget National Consultation for the FY 2021-2022 on Migrants' Welfare", the event was organised by Bangladesh Parliamentarians' Caucus on Migration and Development, Bangladesh Civil Society for Migrants (BCSM) and WARBE Development Foundation, with support from PROKAS, British Council and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Moderated by the caucus Secretary General Mahjabeen Khaled, the consultation was addressed by present and former parliamentarians, government officials, trade union leaders, civil society members and other stakeholders.

Nashid Rizwana Monir, deputy secretary at the expatriates' welfare ministry, said Tk 701.91 crore has been allocated for the ministry in the national budget 2021-2022.

Of those, Tk 319.86 crore is operating budget and Tk 382.05 crore is development budget, she said.

For the ongoing fiscal, several initiatives have been undertaken by the ministry including a project for encouraging private sector to explore new labour market as well as to strengthen labour diplomacy, she added.

Anisul Islam Mahmud, chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Protest continues against hospital project at CRB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, CG

Various sociocultural and political organisations continued protesting the hospital project in Chattogram Railway Building (CRB) area yesterday, claiming the project to be detrimental to the natural environment of the area.

In the morning, Shishu Kishor Mela organised a cycle rally in CRB area. After the rally, speakers said CRB is a unique place surrounded by hills, hillocks and valleys, which cannot be allowed to be ruined by the project.

Sachetan Nagorik Samaj organised protest recitation, complete with dance and music performances, in the afternoon where speakers said the city needs a hospital, but it should not be built by compromising the environment.

They said hundreds of people come to the area every day for morning and evening walks or a fresh breath of air, while for others it is a centre of cultural activities. They urged the railway authority to shift the project to another area.

Death by lockdown

Locked in cages, devoid of food, light, and air, hundreds of Kataban's pet animals pay price with life

HELEMUL ALAM

The lockdown has had severe consequences for most businesses. Behind closed shutters, jobs were lost and stocks rotted away. But what happens to businesses that are based on the trading of real lives?

Tragedy. Beyond just profit, loss, and job retention, the pet animal hub in Dhaka's Kataban paid the lockdown's price with the death of several hundred animals.

With their shutters forced down, the birds, dogs, cats, rabbits, rats, fish, and guinea pigs of these shops were starved of proper lighting and air, which eventually led to many of them dying from suffocation.

Life hasn't been too good for those who survived as well. Deprived of these essential sources of energy, those that live are falling increasingly sick. In addition, the building up of heat and gas inside the stores is only making matters worse.



STAR FILE PHOTO

Even if they are caged, pets at least have access to sunlight and air during regular times, something they are almost fully deprived of when shutters stay down during the lockdown.

Although some of the shops were allowed to remain open for two hours, dependent on the whims of the local police, this was still not enough.

Ten to 15 percent of our birds have died as shops had to be shut for 22 hours a day since the start of the strict lockdown on July 1. We also had to

see our dogs and some other animals die in this time," said Bazlur Rahman, general secretary of Kataban Pet Shop Association.

He said each of the 25 pet shops in Kataban market has around 200 to 300 birds, which puts avian deaths in

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

RMG workers take to street for arrears

Salaries pending for months, bonuses and increments for years, say demonstrators

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Workers of a garment factory blocked a road in Gazipur yesterday morning, demanding their pending salaries and other dues ahead of Eid-ul-Azha. Witnesses said they started demonstrating inside the factory of Style Craft Ltd around 8am. Getting no response from the management, they took to the street after two hours in Lakshmpur, 2-3km off Dhaka-Mymensingh highway.

Additional police were deployed in the area to avert tension. Jalal Uddin Ahmed, additional superintendent of industrial police in Gazipur, said the workers left the spot around 7:15pm after they assured them of a meeting with the factory owner to meet their demand.

The demonstrators claimed that around 750 employees and 5,000 workers did not get full salaries for March and May of the current year, 50 percent salaries of March and August in 2020, and 35 percent of October and December in 2019 and 15 percent of November that year.

Besides, two years of Eid bonuses and increments of four years are also pending. They have been raising their demands for the last few days. The authorities set several dates for clearing those but postponed it every time, they said.

Somir Chandra Sutradhar, inspector of Gazipur Metropolitan Industrial Police, said such a demonstration for salaries has become a matter of

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Another life lost to mismanagement?

Covid patient dies on way to hospital as pvt health centre runs out of oxygen; family says they weren't notified in time

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

On Thursday night, there were 54 patients admitted to the Covid-19 unit of a privately-owned Sylhet Community Based Hospital in the city.

Of them, 19 were in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Around midnight, the oxygen supply started decreasing and the patients were asked to leave the hospital less than an hour before the oxygen completely ran out around 2:30am.

Thirteen patients, including 11 from the ICU, left the hospital as soon as they could. Most managed to find seats at different hospitals' general beds.

However, for Kanchan Begum, a critical Covid patient, the lack of oxygen became fatal. She passed away just after reaching Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

"They suddenly informed us that they ran out of oxygen. My mother was in a dying condition. Managing an ambulance, we rushed to Osmani hospital. She died before she could be admitted there," her daughter Bably Begum told The Daily Star.

"The way the hospital authorities handled the situation, it was not right. We want justice for my mother," she said. "We are still reeling from the shock and not in a state to file a written complaint to health offices," she added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Refusing to let his age get the better of him, this octogenarian hawks "kochu" (taro stems) around Barishal city to eke out a living. He said he picks around 20 stems every day and sells them for Tk 10 each. This photo was taken from Muktijoddha Adv Nazrul Islam road on Friday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Rajapaksa thanks PM for mangoes

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa has expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for the gifts of Haribhanga mangoes she sent.

"It is with much gratitude that I receive this gift & hope it stays symbolic of our fruitful relationship with our neighbor," Rajapaksa tweeted after receiving the gifts handed over by Bangladesh High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Tareq MD Ariful Islam, on Friday.

The Sri Lankan PM, posting two photos of the handover, said he was honoured to have the Bangladesh envoy pay a visit bearing a gift of mangoes from PM Sheikh Hasina.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has decided to send sweet mangoes, which grow abundantly in Bangladesh, to the South Asian leadership of India, Bhutan, Nepal and the Maldives.

She sent mangoes as gifts to the Middle Eastern countries of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait and Bahrain earlier, but this is the first time the mangoes are being sent to the South Asian countries.



'Concert from Bangladesh' to revisit history

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To recall the history of solidarity embedded in the historical "Concert for Bangladesh", London-based UBIK Productions and Dhaka-based Samdani Art Foundation (SAF), supported by British Council Digital Collaboration Fund, is going to organise a mixed reality digital concert titled "Concert from Bangladesh".

The concert will go live to audiences on New York City-based Pioneer Works' digital platform on August 1, accompanied by live events at Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, UK.

All proceeds raised will be equally distributed between the performing musicians and Friendship, a Bangladeshi charity organisation that provides healthcare for climate refugees and promotes women's rights in Bangladesh.

The organisations have commissioned British-South Asian artist Shezad Dawood to create a virtual-reality stage for the concert.

The event will expand on the 50-year legacy of "Concert for Bangladesh"-- the original charity concert initiated by Ravi Shankar and George Harrison of Beatles' fame to aid efforts for relief distribution and resolving the refugee crisis during the Liberation War.

Co-curated by Diana Campbell, artistic director of SAF, with Dhaka-born music producer and artist Enayet Kabir, together with assistant curators Ruxmini Choudhury and Shoummo Saha, the concert will showcase a wealth of talent across varied Bangladeshi musical traditions.

Additional events will take place with Chisenhale Gallery (London), at Leeds City Varieties Music Hall (Leeds) and Srihatta Samdani Art Centre and Sculpture Park (Sylhet).



Protests against the CRB hospital project in Chattogram continued yesterday from various quarters of society. In the morning, Shishu Kishor Mela brought out a bicycle rally where children held up hand-made posters bearing their demands. A number of organisations have been demonstrating in the area, saying the hospital will severely damage the environment of one of the major green spaces in the port city. This photo was taken near Kazir Dewri area.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

RMG workers

FROM PAGE 3

every month.

Factory In-charge Abu Bakkar Siddiqui, however, claimed that the authorities cleared all the payments except 11 days of April and full month's salaries of May and June this year.

On July 10, the authorities assured the workers of partially clearing the payments by July 15, which the workers did not accept, factory sources said.

LAND FOR SALE @ GULSHAN

At Gulshan-2 (North), 8 kathas land with six storied building. RAJUK provided 100% undisputed property. Single owner. Only genuine buyers are requested to Contact. Monjur: 01711-877837

Set up quality

FROM PAGE 3

Ministry, said there should be immediate allocation for training the trainers who will be deployed at different centres.

He also said there should be open discussion on how and what sectors the money from wage earners' welfare fund are being spent, adding, the government spend a significant portion of the fund.

"The fund should be utilised for the workers' welfare," he added.

Nurul Islam, former director of Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training, said the main concern should be how each penny from the fiscal budget can be utilised.

A proper plan on how the money allocated for expatriates' welfare can be spent is required, he said.

"The key problems in the migration sector should be prioritised and a work plan should be undertaken accordingly," he added.

At present, migrant workers are facing various challenges regarding their vaccination, air tickets and quarantine, said BCSM chair Prof CR Abrar, adding that the government needs to make investment in these areas.

He said the technical training centres in the country lacked quality trainers where the government needs to focus on.

Shameem Haider Patwary, chairperson of the caucus, said they have already proposed in an earlier meeting that a portion of remittance sent by migrant workers should be allocated for their welfare.

Another life

FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, a video was uploaded that night on Facebook, where the patient's family members were seen crying inside an ambulance beside the body. They were seen blaming the Sylhet Community Based Hospital authorities in front of the hospital, after returning from Osmani hospital.

Other patients also had to suffer due to the oxygen crisis.

Shwapna Begum, an elderly patient from Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila, had been receiving treatment at the hospital's ICU since July 9.

Her son Moïn Uddin said, "That night, my cousin was attending to my mother and around midnight he saw that the oxygen flow was decreasing. The ICU in-charge and others said there might be some glitch in the line and it will be fixed soon."

"Around 2am, when the staffers at the reception could not say for sure what went wrong, I rushed to the hospital. Then the manager informed us about the oxygen shortage and asked us to transfer the patients to other hospitals as soon as possible," he said.

Moïn said, "At 2:30am, the oxygen ran

out completely. It was a horrific situation at the ICU. I managed an ambulance and rushed to Osmani hospital where I admitted my mother in the general bed."

"It was total mismanagement. They had no backup oxygen supply. They should have informed patients before it was too late. Many more lives could have been lost due to their mishandling of the situation that night," he said.

Denying the allegation, Dr Tarek Azad, managing director of the hospital, said, "We informed the patients around midnight when we understood we won't be able to manage oxygen."

He said since someone died, the matter is being discussed now.

"We solely rely on our suppliers. But as there was a gridlock on the highway, all three companies -- Linde, Spectra and Islam -- failed to supply oxygen on time and we could not manage it from any other source," he said.

"This is a desperate situation but we are struggling to serve the people," he said.

Contacted, Sylhet civil surgeon Dr Premananda Mandal said he was not informed of the incident and will look into it.

Invitation to Bid for Lab Supplies and Laboratory Grade Equipment

Tender Ref. No. icddr/b/SCM/OTM/2021/661

Date: 18th July 2021

icddr.b invites renowned equipment manufacturer and authorized agent/distributor of Lab supplies to participate in a bidding process.

Supplies and installation of Lab Grade Equipment and Lab supplies

Interested participants can download the ITB Documents from the below web address: <https://www.icddr.org/work-with-us/tender-notices>

Pre-Bid meeting will be held on 26th July, 2021 at 3:00 PM through Microsoft Teams. Interested bidders should notify icddr.b about their interest of participating in the pre-bid session through email [supplychain@icddr.org] within 25th July, 2021. Please mention 'Bid reference' and 'Interested in Pre-bid Participation' in the email subject.

Offers shall submit their Technical & Password protected Financial offers through email to supplychain@icddr.org. Offers must be received no later than 01st August 2021, 3:00 PM. Please note, bid opening session will not be conducted as a Public Opening. Please see the bid document for details.

icddr.b reserves the right to accept or reject all/part proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever. This ITB invitation will also form a part of the contract and will be binding upon the tenderer.

icddr.b

Senior Manager, Procurement
Email: supplychain@icddr.org

Dreams ended

FROM PAGE 3

Dr Farhana Begum, chairperson of DU's anthropology department, said initially they were unaware about Sumon's illness. "We were informed two days before his death. In such a short time, we managed to raise a small amount of money."

She added that they will discuss at the department and with hall authorities about providing financial assistance to Sumon's family.

DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman said it's painful that one of the university's students died in such a way. He urged everyone to stand by Sumon's family.

Death by

FROM PAGE 3

to 300 birds, which puts avian deaths in the area at 20 to 45 per shop.

"We have sought more time to keep our shops open. It's not even about the trading anymore, our animals need the air and light and we need time to provide them food," he said.

In light of their requests, the government has allowed them to keep the shops open for four hours -- from 10am to 12 noon and again from 3pm and 5pm -- from July 13, Bazlur said.

Bazlur said they will use the hours to feed the animals and release the heat and gas, while refraining from trading during this time.

Maudud Hawladar, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station said they have heard about the death of animals and birds at Kataban, although they don't have the exact numbers.

He told this correspondent they had allowed the shops to remain open two hours every day during the lockdown.

Meanwhile, as shop owners blame the lockdown for their animals' woes, animal rights activists are unwilling to allow the owners to avoid responsibility for keeping the pets in such hazardous conditions.

Afzal Khan, who runs the animal rescue organisation "RobinHood The Animal Rescuer", said the birds and animals at Kataban have died not only due to suffocation, but also due to lack of sufficient food, which he said is a shortcoming on the owners' part.

He recommended that the government allow the shops to stay open for at least half of the day to keep the animals alive and healthy.

If needed, volunteer organisations can step up to help take care of the animals during the lockdown with the help of the administration, Afzal said.

Rubaiya Ahmad, chairperson of animal rights group Obhoyaronno, framed it as a collective failure. "From government to animal rights activists, all of us are guilty for the death of the birds and animals," she said.


Rubaiya said although the same issues came up during last year's lockdown, the Department of Livestock had introduced a system to keep the doors open. But the situation has been abysmally dealt with this time around, she said.

Rubaiya said the breeding of animals and selling them in this way is illegal as per the Animal Welfare Act 2019. It also violates the international standard of five freedoms for animals -- freedom from hunger and thirst; freedom from discomfort; freedom from pain, injury, and disease; freedom to express normal and natural behaviour; and the freedom from fear and distress.

"Keeping an animal inside a cage means you're basically violating all of these freedoms," she said. "The Kataban market should just be shut, as the animals do not get proper care and stay there in terrible conditions," Rubaiya said.

She went on to say the people who buy from these shops are also to blame, as they encourage these practices to continue.

Director General of the Department of Livestock Sheikh Azizur Rahman told The Daily Star that they have issued a letter to the senior secretary of public security division of home ministry on July 12 to take necessary steps to allow pet bird, animal, and fish shops to keep their shutters up for at least two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening during the lockdown.



BUBT

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Positions	Minimum Qualifications, Experience and Expectations
Professor of: CSE	Ph.D/Equivalent Degree from any reputed university at home and abroad with at least two First Class/Division/A-Grade including one First Class/Division/A-Grade either in Bachelor or Master's Degree with 12 years of university teaching experience including 5 years as Associate Professor. At least 15 publications in reputed journals including 7 as Associate Professor.
Associate Professor of: CSE	Ph.D/Equivalent Degree with at least two First Class/Division/A-Grade including one First Class/Division/A-Grade either in Bachelor or Master's Degree with 07 years of university teaching experience including 3 years as Assistant Professor. At least 5 publications in reputed journals including 3 as Assistant Professor.
Additional Director (Finance & Accounts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MBA/Masters in Accounting or Finance with Professional qualification from ICAB or ICMAB. ● At least 15 (fifteen) years of service experience in managerial position in the accounting department of a reputed organization of which at least 03 years as the chief of Accounts/Finance; ● Have a proven track of leadership in the Finance/Accounting area of an enterprise and should be able to handle the job of routine and non-routine statements preparation for management feedback and decision; ● Should be able to maintain cost records of construction and development works; ● Experience of working with software based computerized accounting system in a large private university or in any reputed non government organization; ● Age limit: 60 years. Relaxable in case of highly experienced persons.
Joint Controller of Examinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Master Degree with minimum second class. ● At least 05 (five) years service experience in the post of not below the rank of Deputy Controller/equivalent, 07 (seven) years experience in the position of Assistant Controller/ equivalent position in University/Organization. ● Candidates must have knowledge & skills in software based computerized exam. system. Age limit: 50 years. Relaxable for suitable candidate.
Psychologist (Part-Time)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● M.Sc in Psychology from a recognized university. ● Minimum 2 first division/Class. ● No 3rd division/class will be considered. ● At least 10 (ten) years service experience as Psychologist ● Age limit: 50 years. Relaxable for suitable candidate.
Caretaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Three/Four years Diploma Engineering or Bachelor degree with minimum second class from recognized Institute/University. ● At least 03 (Three) years service experience as Assistant Caretaker/ equivalent. Age limit: 30 years. Relaxable for suitable candidate.

Please send your detailed CV and 2 copies of passport size photograph along with attested copies of educational and experience certificates to the office of the Registrar on or before **September 30, 2021**. Name of the position to be written on the envelop. Short listed candidates will be called for interview.

* Application with necessary documents may be sent through email (po.reg@bubt.edu.bd)

* Those who have applied for the posts before need not to apply again.

Registrar

গ্লোবাল ইন্স্যুরেন্স লিমিটেড Global Insurance Ltd.

Al-Razi Complex (12th floor), 166-167 Shaheed Syed Nazrul Islam Sarani, Purana Palatan, Dhaka-1000

NOTICE OF THE 21st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given to all Shareholders' of Global Insurance Limited that the 21st Annual General Meeting of the Shareholders' of the Company will be held on **Saturday, 14th August 2021 at 11:00 a.m.** virtually by using **Digital Platform** through the Link: <http://globalins21st.digitalagmbd.net> to transact the following business:

Agenda:

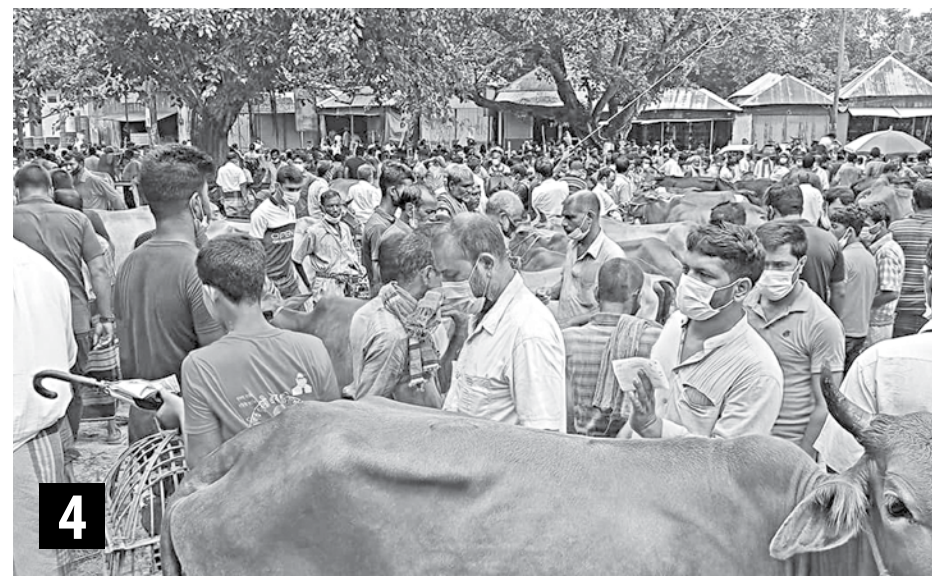
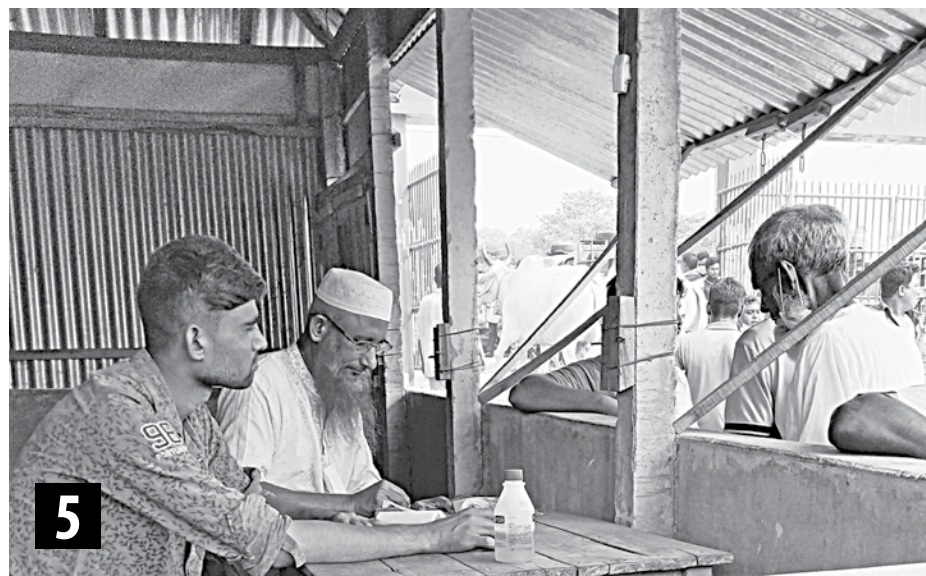
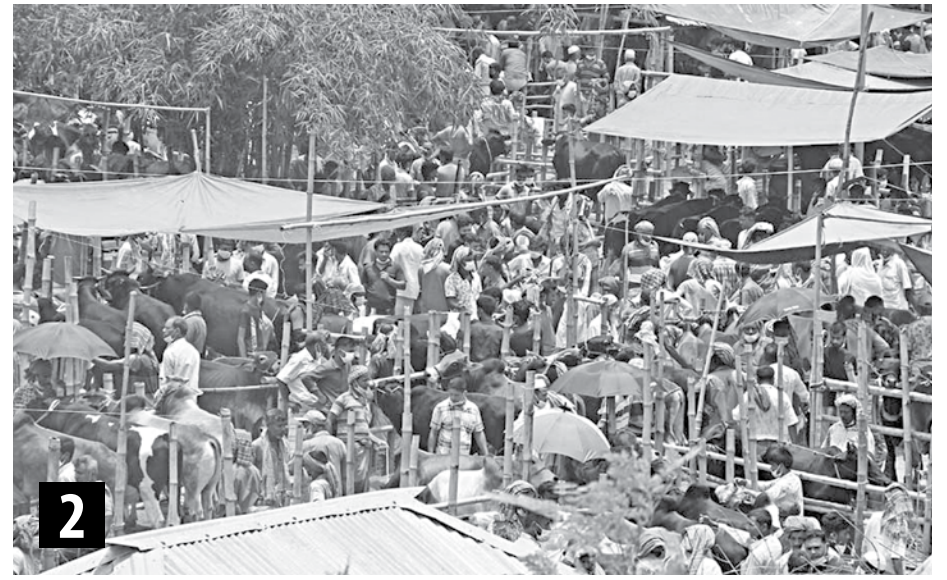
1. To receive, consider and adopt the Directors' Report, the Audited Financial Statements of the Company and the Auditors' Report thereon for the year ended 31st December, 2020.
2. To declare Dividend for the year ended 31st December, 2020 as recommended by the Board of Directors'.
3. To elect Directors' as per Articles of Association of the Company.
4. To appoint Auditors' for the year 2021 and fix their remuneration.
5. To appoint Auditors' for Corporate Governance Compliance Audit for the year 2021 and fix their remuneration.
6. To transact any other business with the permission of the Chair.

By Order of the Board of Directors'

Sd/-
Md. Omar Faruk
Company SecretaryDated, Dhaka
15th July, 2021

Notes:

- a) The Record date: 22nd June, 2021. The Shareholders' whose names appeared in the Share Register/Depository Register of the Company on the record date will be entitled to the dividend approved in the AGM.
- b) Any Shareholder of the Company entitled to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting may appoint a Proxy to attend and vote on his/her behalf. Proxy form duly filled, signed by the Shareholder and stamped with BDT 20.00 must be submitted through e-mail- globalins2000@gmail.com at the Registered Office of the Company at least 48 hours before the time fixed for the meeting.
- c) The Annual General Meeting is reserved only for the shareholder or his/her Proxy. They are requested to join the meeting with Laptop/Pe/Mobile.
- d) Pursuant to the Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission order No. SEC/SRMC/94-231/91 dated 31st March, 2021, the AGM will be virtual meeting of the respected shareholders, which will be conducted via live web cast by using digital platform.
- e) The members will be able to submit their question/ comment electronically 24 hours before the AGM.
- f) For logging into the system, the members need to put their BO ID/ Folio number and other credentials as proof of their identity through the <http://globalins21st.digitalagmbd.net>
- g) Members are requested to log in to the system well ahead of the meeting at 11:00 a.m. for the AGM on Saturday, 14th August, 2021.
- h) For any IT related matters for access in the virtual meeting the respected member may contact at 01712651345 and for share related matters at 01712221347.
- i) The soft copy of Annual Report 2020 will be sent to the e-mail address of the respected shareholder and the same will also be available in the Company's website at www.globalinsuranceld.com as per Condition No. 9 (2) of the BSEC/CMRRC/2006-158/208/Admin/81, dated 20 June 2018.
- j) Members may also please note that no gift/gift coupon/food box/benefit in cash or kind shall be distributed/paid at the AGM as per BSEC Circular No. SEC/CMRRC/2009-193/154 dated October 24, 2013.



CARELESS IN CATTLE MARKET

People crowd cattle markets across the country as they get only a handful of days before Eid and the lockdown imposed to curb the spread of coronavirus. The Delta variant of the pathogen has been wreaking havoc in many hospitals and experts fear the situation could take a turn for worse in the weeks ahead. However, buyers and sellers of cattle in these markets seem to care very little as many are seen without masks let alone maintaining social distancing. The photos were taken in Khulna, Pabna and Tangail over the last few days.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL, AHMED Hmayun Kabir Topu, Dipankar Roy

Palmer, new mango variety in Chapainawabganj



RABIUL HASAN, Chapainawabganj

Palmer, an US variety of mango, is going to be grown in the country commercially as its experimental production has been completed successfully in Chapainawabganj, the mango capital of the country.

Local scientists say the mango will gain popularity in Bangladesh for its attractive reddish colour, size, and availability in late season.

The fruit, which originated in Florida, USA, is being commercially grown in many other countries, including neighbouring India, as it has a good export value.

A late-season cultivar, palmer mango starts ripening between mid-July and August. Only Aswina mangoes are available in the local market during that period.

The medium-sized plants of palmer grow best in moist, tropical and subtropical climates. The soil and climatic condition of Chapainawabganj is ideal for growing palmer mango, said scientists at the Horticulture Centre in Chapainawabganj.

Each palmer mango weighs about 350 grams on average.

A scientist of the Horticulture Centre had brought four palmer saplings from abroad around 10 years ago and planted those at the centre.

Scientists at the centre observed those saplings over the year. They find that the fruit bearing capacity of the four trees is very good this year.

After completing research and observation, the scientists have decided to expand farming of palmer mango in the country, said Mozdar Hossain, deputy director of Horticulture Centre in Chapainawabganj.

Palmer mango tree is a "regular bearing" tree, meaning it produces

almost same amount of crop every year. It produces a lot of fruit at a very uniform size, he added.

The flesh of the fruit is almost fibreless. It has a pleasant aroma. Its total soluble sugar (TSS) is 15 percent, which is less than other popular mango varieties in the country.

Palmer is an ideal mango for those

who like less sweet. Its demand is high due to its taste and late ripening period.

Muhammad Nazrul Islam, deputy director of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), said mango orchards on 34,871 hectares in Chapainawabganj have produced 2.5 lakh tonnes of mangoes this year.

He said they will produce around 1,000 Palmer saplings this year and

will sell those to mango growers for Tk 300 to Tk 500 each.

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Man shot dead in Madaripur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A man was killed by one of his neighbours centring a feud allegedly over the ownership of a disputed land at Botla village in Madaripur's Kalkini upazila yesterday.

Police, however, arrested the alleged killer from the locality within an hour of the murder incident.

The arrestee, Ahad Matubbar, 33, is son of Abdul Hi Matubbar of the village.

Quoting local people, police said there had been a longstanding conflict between Ahad and his neighbour Sohag Mollah, 35, son of Shamsul Haque Talukdar, over a disputed land.

Centring the feud, an arbitration took place at the village on Tuesday, where the land was equally divided between Ahad and Sohag.

Moreover, the duo were asked to plant paddy on their respective portion.

Around 8:00am yesterday, Ahad locked into an altercation with Sohag when the latter went to plant paddy on his portion of the land.

At one stage of the altercation, Ahad shot Sohag with his licensed gun, leaving him seriously injured.

Injured Sohag was taken to Madaripur General Hospital, from where he was referred to Faridpur Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital.

But he died on the way to the hospital, Officer in Charge of Kalkini Police Station Mohammad Hasanuzzaman, said.

Three Manikganj upazilas face erosion threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Thousands of people in three upazilas of the district have been passing sleepless nights in fear of erosion by the mighty Padma and Jamuna rivers.

Hundreds of houses, vast tracts of cultivable lands and many educational institutions have already been affected by the erosion of the two rivers in Shivalaya, Harirampur and Daulatpur upazilas.

This correspondent visited some of the erosion affected areas in Shivalaya and Harirampur upazilas on Monday and saw at least 15 houses at Annaypur village have already been washed away by the rivers recently.

Moreover, over 300 metre areas at Annaypur and Anulia village in Shivalaya upazila were seen on the verge of being eroded by the Jamuna river.

Many people have lost their homesteads and took shelters at their relatives' houses or in the open places.

Those, who do not have other places to

go, are seen staying at home risking their lives.

Many locals said their houses were washed away by the river several times in the past, but if that happens again they will not be able to repair or rebuild their houses.

Sixty-year-old Mukul Molla said the Padma is flowing nearer to his house and it might devour his homestead anytime.

Meanwhile, a large area in Kancharpur union under Harirampur upazila is on the verge of being eroded by the mighty Padma.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) is trying to check the erosion by putting sand bags in the affected areas.

Ninety-year-old Abul Fazal of Kancharpur village said he lost his house on one hundred decimals of land a few days ago.

Shivalaya Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Jasmine Sultana said the Water Development Board has already started putting geo-bags in some of the affected areas to prevent the erosion.

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Office of the Executive Engineer
Department of Public Health Engineering
Rangpur Division, Radhaballave, Rangpur

Invitation for e-Tender Notice

1	Ministry/Division	Local Government Division.
2	Implementation agency	Department of Public Health Engineering.
3	Project/program name	Project of Safe Water Supply Throughout the Country (PSWSC).
4	e-Tenders TDs	594549, 594550, 594551, 594552, 594553, 594554, 594555, 594556
5	Tender Package No.	PSWSC-3196, 3197, 3198, 3199, 3200, 3201, 3202, 3203
6	Invitation Reference No.	46.03.8500.061.65.191.03-12 Date: 07/07/2021.
7	Description of works	Installation of 1698 Nos. No. 06 Shallow tube well at DPHE different upazila of Rangpur under the Project of Safe Water Supply Throughout the Country (PSWSC) during FY-2021-2022.
8	Tender document last selling downloading date & time	29 July, 2021 Time: 17:00
9	Tender opening date & time	01 Aug, 2021 Time: 11:00
10	Name, designation & address of official inviting tender	Pankaj Kumar Saha, Executive Engineer, DPHE, Rangpur, Tel. No. 0521 62907.
11	This is online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. Interested person/firms can see details in the website: www.eprocure.gov.bd	

Pankaj Kumar Saha
Executive Engineer
DPHE, Rangpur Division

GD-1356

Can Tigers carry lessons to perfection?

NABID YEASIN

From a potential batting collapse to winning the game by 155 runs, Bangladesh scripted an applaudable turnaround in the first ODI against Zimbabwe in Harare on Friday. To get the desired outcome, there were a number of boxes that the Tigers had to tick but a few others were still unmarked. Here, we look at both:

BOXES THEY TICKED

One of the top five scores big: "The message from the team management was that one of the top five batsmen needed to bat beyond 40 overs," Liton Das said after making that wish materialise by batting till the 42nd over en route his fourth ODI ton to seal Bangladesh's commanding victory.

Strong finish at the death: Failing to capitalise on a flying start due to a lack of firepower in the lower-order is a problem Bangladesh have been struggling with for years. However, after Liton's well-paced ton revived Bangladesh's innings, cameos from Afif Hossain and Mehedi Hasan Miraz ensured the Tigers posted a commendable total.

Getting early breakthroughs: Pacers Mohammad Saifuddin and Taskin Ahmed need to be credited for their aggression and accuracy on a pitch that had a green tinge and lots of purchase for fast bowlers. After the duo combined to remove Zimbabwe's openers inside five overs, young pacer Shoriful Islam left his mark by sending back Dion Myers in the 11th over.

The Shakib effect: Although there was no respite from his poor run of form with the willow, Bangladesh's premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan turned up with the ball in hand. The left-arter was the epitome of how a spinner could use guile and precision to make an impact on a pace-friendly wicket. He ran through the Zimbabwe middle order, picking up the crucial wickets of Brendan Taylor and Regis Chakabva on way to his third five-wicket haul in ODIs.

BOXES THEY DID NOT TICK

Getting the toss right: Although the coin flip depends totally on luck, its importance in giving Zimbabwe the initial edge is undeniable. Understanding the pitch and taking the right decision is key and although Bangladesh lost the toss, they were certainly on the right track as Tamim had mentioned his intention to bowl first on a seaming wicket. Perhaps luck will be on his side in today's second ODI and the southpaw will again make the right call.

Instability in the middle-order: Had it not been for Liton's timely ton, the absence of batting mainstay Mushfiqur Rahim, may have cost the Tigers dearly. Shakib and Mohammad Mithun both got starts but threw their wickets away while Mosaddek Hossain hit a 15-ball five. With Nurul Hasan Sohan, who has vast experience in the domestic circuit, in the squad, the team management could opt for some slight tinkering to the middle-order to bring about greater stability.

Lacking the patience to stick around: This is something that the Tigers need to work on immensely. Even if Tamim's failure to curb his desire to cut a bouncing delivery that was way too close to his body can be excused, what Shakib and Mithun did were unpardonable. Both players seemed to be in a hurry to score quick runs and perished after playing rash, unnecessary shots. The agonising part for fans was that they once again failed to convert after a decent start.

Despite a few drawbacks, Bangladesh were able to stage a comeback and win comprehensively. But the truth is that a low-ranked Zimbabwe's lack of ability played a role in that outcome. The pertinent question now is how far Bangladesh can go in

regards to displaying a relatively flawless performance in their second game today.



Bangladesh's ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is congratulated by Zimbabwe captain Brendan Taylor on taking five wickets at the end of the first ODI at the Harare Sports Club on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP



BASHUNDHARA KINGS RETAIN TITLE

Bashundhara Kings players and officials celebrate their title triumph in Women's Football League at the Birsreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday. The defending champions thrashed Jamalpur Kacharipara Ekadosh 18-0 to confirm their second title on their second appearance in the league. They won all 13 of their matches so far having scored 107 goals and conceding only one. The two-time champions will look to cap off another remarkable campaign with a victory against Nasrin Sports Academy in their last match of the campaign tomorrow.

PHOTO: BFF

'Important to highlight small contributions'

Bangladesh's second ODI against Zimbabwe today

SPORTS REPORTER



Following a convincing win in the first ODI, Bangladesh will look to seal the three-match ODI series as Tamim Iqbal and his troops take on the host Zimbabwe in the second ODI in Harare today.

Liton Das showed great maturity, after Bangladesh lost four wickets upfront including skipper Tamim Iqbal and experienced Shakib Al Hasan, as the right-hander went on to smash his fourth hundred to help his side post a winning total of 276 for 9. Young Afif Hossain also chipped in with a quick 45 off 35 and Mehedi Hasan Miraz scored 26 as Bangladesh added 48 runs off the last five overs.

According to Tamim, the relatively younger players performing is a positive sign for the team in the upcoming days.

"We were in trouble at one stage and something that I always say is that the juniors will also have to perform with responsibility. Yesterday (Friday) was an ideal situation where Liton

played a very responsible knock. "Afif's innings was crucial, as had he not played that knock in that situation we may have scored 30-40 runs short and wouldn't have reached 270 plus. Even Miraz's innings of 20 odd runs was also vital for us because if we had quickly lost one more wicket



after the departure of Mahmudullah Riyad bhai then we would've been in trouble. So I think it is equally important to highlight the small contributions as well," said Tamim ahead of the second ODI yesterday. Meanwhile, there were few injury

concerns in the side where Tamim is still carrying a knee injury while Liton had also hurt his wrist during the first ODI while batting. Left-arm seamer Mustafizur Rahman, who picked up an ankle injury during the two-day warm-up game ahead of the Test series and also missed the first ODI, is still doubtful for today's game.

"I am set to play the three ODIs with this injury but I think I will be able to manage it. As far as I know, Liton's condition is much better than before and will probably be available for tomorrow (today). Mustafizur is still 50-50 and we will be able to assess his condition properly by afternoon. Apart from that, everyone is fit in the team," he added.

Although Bangladesh won the first game with a huge margin of 155 runs, and yet, according to the 32-year-old there is still a lot of room for improvement with the bat, especially in the top-order. Tamim however, did express his satisfaction over the bowling department as they bundled out Zimbabwe within a small total of 121 runs where Shakib picked up his third five-wicket haul in ODIs.



Members of Australian contingent stretch as they wait to take the Covid-19 antigen test after arriving at Narita International Airport ahead of Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in Japan yesterday. Meanwhile, Tokyo Olympics organisers on Saturday reported the first case of Covid-19 at the athletes' village, along with 14 other new cases connected to the Games that begin next week, raising fresh doubts over promises of a "safe and secure" event. The latest cases were a blow to the local organisers and the International Olympic Committee, who have insisted the Games will not become a super-spreader event.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SL kick off series against India's newbies today

AGENCIES



A bunch of fresh faces will be desperate for a fair T20 World Cup audition when India's different-looking yet formidable white-ball squad face an under-fire Sri Lanka in the six-match limited overs contest, beginning with the first ODI at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo today.

Sri Lanka are second to bottom with only one victory in nine matches and would be aiming to improve their standings on the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League points table.



The suspension of Kusal Mendis and Niroshan Dickwella due to bio-bubble breach in UK along with injury to former skipper Kusal Perera puts Sri Lanka in a tight spot. Newly-appointed skipper Dasun Shanaka will have the huge task on his hands of overturning the hosts'



poor form in the ODI format. India also have a squad brimming with new faces, as many of the big names are currently camped in England, preparing for the upcoming five-match Test series. Led by the vastly experienced Shikhar Dhawan, the visitors

still have ample quality in their ranks and the likes of Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Hardik Pandya, Yuzvendra Chahal, and Manish Pandey will have the responsibility of guiding the youngsters on the tour.

Winning any international series will be paramount but one can expect a few combinations being tried out during a series which got delayed by five days due to COVID-19 scare in the Sri Lankan camp. The series comprises three ODIs and as many T20s.

If Sri Lanka can manage to win the series, that will be an achievement in itself after a disastrous tour of England.

Mohammedan thrash Baridhara

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club consolidated fourth spot on the Bangladesh Premier League table with a 4-1 thrashing of Uttar Baridhara Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The win took the Black and Whites to 32 points from 18 matches, four clear of Chattogram Abahani while Baridhara remained in ninth position with 15 points from 17 matches.

Amir Hakim Bappi gave Mohammedan the lead in the 19th minute with a powerful left-footed shot from the top of the box after Souleymane Diabate's cross was only half-cleared by the Baridhara defence.

However, national team striker Sumon Reza equalised for Baridhara five minutes later -- his seventh of the campaign -- with a diagonal shot from inside the box as the Mohammedan defence was caught napping on Mostafa Karhaba's throw-in. Diabate restored Mohammedan's lead with a towering header on a corner from Rakib Khan Evan on 36 minutes before Anik Hossain's volley from the top of the box gave Mohammedan a 3-1 lead in the stoppage time of the first half.

Baridhara had several chances to reduce the arrears in the second half but Saiddoston Fozilov's failure from the spot and then a string of misses from Reza meant there was no coming back for Mahbulul Ali Manik's charges. They were instead punished for their profligacy by Yassan Ouatching in the 81st minute as Mohammedan ran out with a comfortable victory.

The second match of the day between Rahmatganj MFS and Bangladesh Police ended in a 1-1 draw.

Felix Chidi gave Rahmatganj a 13th-minute lead with a superb strike from the edge of the box but the lead was cancelled out by Christian Kouakou from the spot on 26 minutes.

The draw left Police in eighth position with 18 points from 17 matches while Rahmatganj remained in 10th position with 15 points from 18 matches.

Kangaroo Mother Care: Learning from nature to sustain

Dr Abdullahel Amaan, and
Dr Khainoor Zahan

Annually approximately 15 million babies are born prematurely worldwide. More than one million of them die shortly after birth and many suffer from various physical, neurological, or intellectual disabilities afterwards. In Bangladesh, the neonatal mortality rate is 30 per 1,000 live births, accounting for 67% of all under-5 deaths. 19% of these deaths are from premature births.

With our societal and economic advancement, women are gradually getting more engaged in economic activities. The opportunity of living as a joint family in the big cities is also decreasing for its up-scaling expenditure. Thus, working women are entering into a more stressful lifestyle. They go through the stress of their workplace and the household as well. Studies show that women who experience high levels of stress during pregnancy have a 25-60% higher risk for premature delivery, even after accounting for the effects of other established risk factors.

During the 1970s, Colombian physicians found it difficult to treat premature newborns with their limited resources. Two Colombian physicians, Dr Edgar Rey Sanabria and Dr Héctor Martínez Gómez, observed a similar type of premature delivery among kangaroos as a natural phenomenon. The kangaroo newborn or 'joey' is usually delivered prematurely into its mother's pouch and grows up there up to a certain period



of life. Its mother's pouch provides not only the necessary warmth to prevent it from losing its body temperature, but also keeps the baby close to the breasts for unlimited feeding. The two physicians then tried to use this experience upon human newborns to curb the overcrowded and inadequate resources in neonatal intensive care units. They started to place the premature newborn naked (except for a diaper, hat, mitten and socks) on their mother's uncovered chest ensuring skin-to-skin contact and got beneficial results. This procedure helped them to reduce the congestion in incubators. They named it 'Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC)'. After several scientific trials and validation, the World Health Organisation has accepted KMC as a standard of care to decrease morbidity and mortality among premature newborns.

Premature newborns are at higher risk for heat loss because of their lack of a protective fat layer under their tender skin where temperature regulation plays an important role in their survival. The kangaroo position utilises the mother's body heat to maintain the newborn's body temperature. It has been further proven that the touch, light pressure and warmth of the newborn enhance the release of oxytocin, a hormone of multifaceted benefits.

Oxytocin causes dilatation of the blood vessels of the mother's chest resulting in increased blood supply which helps to provide more warmth to the premature newborn. Oxytocin results in flushing of the mother's chest and starts to pulse in response to skin-to-skin contact with the newborn. As a result newborn's skin temperature rises and reduces the

risk of life-threatening hypothermia. It enhances the availability of breast milk by increasing its enhanced ejection. Oxytocin augments necessary digestive hormones in the newborns which optimises their digestion and metabolism for their optimal growth and ultimately early discharge from hospital. It also contributes to decreasing postpartum bleeding, anxiety and enhanced wound healing ultimately leading to a quicker return to pre-pregnancy weight of the mother.

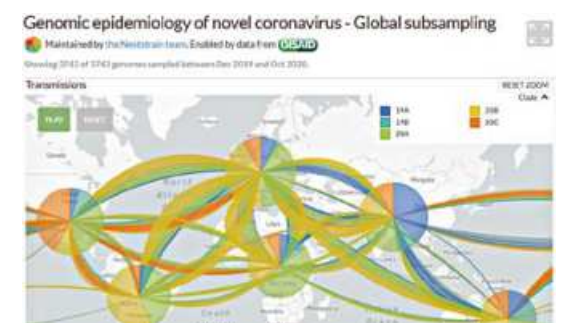
While giving kangaroo care, a mother can learn the various ways of nurturing a premature baby by being close to the nurses and doctors which helps to boost her confidence to take care of the baby at home. The process also contributes to optimising a trend of 'family-centred care' of a newborn which is a holistic way of bringing a positive pregnancy outcome.

To adopt a behaviour and make it a practice, awareness building with frequent reminders are necessary. Decision-makers of the family and healthcare workers at all levels need to get repeated reminders regarding the benefit of KMC to make it a common practice. Electronic, print and mass media, development partners, etc. as part of their social accountability, can play an important role in promoting such health awareness practices among the mass people.

Dr Abdullahel Amaan is a Resident at the Department of Neonatology, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Bangladesh. E-mail: abdullahelamaan@gmail.com

Dr Khainoor Zahan is a Deputy Director at the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC), Bangladesh. E-mail: khainoorzahan@gmail.com

COVID SEQUENCING



Inadequate sequencing of SARS-CoV-2 variants impedes global response

The lack of sequencing of SARS-CoV-2 variants is imperilling the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic, argues Dana Crawford of Case Western Reserve University in a new Viewpoint published recently in the journal PLOS Genetics.

Surveillance is essential to a successful and rapid response to disease outbreaks, but public health surveillance has traditionally focused on monitoring case numbers, hospitalisations and deaths. Advances in genome sequencing now allow us to track genetic variation in evolving viruses in unprecedented detail.

Crawford cites insufficient funding, the lack of an effective sample tracking system and strict regulations on sample and data sharing as the causes of the inadequate sequencing efforts. She cautions that investments in SARS-CoV-2 genomics need to continue and expand as new variants will likely arise due to variability in vaccination rates and adherence to COVID-19 precautions worldwide.

Crawford concludes that ongoing international sequencing efforts are still needed to understand and respond to this continually evolving virus that knows no international boundaries.

HEALTH bulletin



Poorer people less likely to be tested for SARS-CoV-2, more likely to be hospitalised, enter ICU and die

New research from Switzerland presented at this year's European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) shows that people living in poorer neighbourhoods were less likely to be tested for COVID-19 but more likely to test positive, be hospitalised, or die, compared with those in more wealthy areas.

Comparing the highest with the lowest Swiss-socioeconomic position (SEP) group and using the general population as the denominator, those in the wealthiest SEP neighbourhoods were 18% more likely to be tested for SARS-CoV-2 than those in the poorest. And, compared with the poorest neighbourhoods, those in the wealthiest neighbourhoods were 25% less likely to test positive, 32% less likely to be hospitalised, 46% less likely to be admitted to the ICU, and 14% less likely to die.

In this whole-population study of the COVID-19 epidemic in Switzerland in 2020-21, researchers found that people living in wealthier areas were more likely to get tested for SARS-CoV-2 but less likely to test positive and be admitted to hospital or the ICU, and less likely to die, compared with those in poorer areas.

Governments and health-care systems should address this pandemic of inequality by taking measures to reduce health inequalities in their response to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

Evercare Hospital Dhaka committed to providing end-to-end quality patient care

The Star Health recently was in a conversation with Dr Sanjay Kisanrao Pathare, Director - Medical Services and Mr Kaiser Chowdhury, Director - Human Resources at Evercare Hospital Dhaka. Here is a snapshot for the readers.

Star Health: What unique facilities does the Evercare Hospital Dhaka provide?

Dr Sanjay: Evercare Group is a leading impact-driven healthcare company that operates in South East Asia and Africa. We have 30 hospitals, 16 clinics and 82 diagnostic centres. In Bangladesh, we have two hospitals located in Dhaka and Chattogram.

Evercare Hospital Dhaka is 16 years old with a rich legacy of high-end clinical care. It is the only hospital in Bangladesh accredited by the Joint Commission International (JCI) five times in a row, which means we care about end-to-end quality patient care from admission to discharge. We have high-end services, starting from internal medicine, high-end cardiac services, in vitro fertilisation (IVF) and women care, haematology with bone marrow transplants and oncology services to name a few.

Star Health: How are Evercare Hospital's talents found? What kind of recruitment process does the hospital follow?

Mr Kaiser: In healthcare, talent acquisition can be a life-or-death issue where incompetent resources may lead to unfavourable consequences. At Evercare Hospital Dhaka we ensure that, we have a credible and competent team managing the talent acquisition.



Evercare believes in having a diverse workforce who understands the broader array of patient segments. 47% of our total workforce comprises of female employees, reflecting our strong focus on diversity and inclusion. For sourcing of international physicians, we seek support from our agencies along with our own sourcing channels. We use our own network, social media, company website, and job sites for sourcing local talents.

Star Health: What specialities are offered for clinical and non-clinical candidates?

Dr Sanjay: There are around 52 specialities available for candidates under the clinical wing including internal medicine, general and laparoscopic surgery, gynaecology and IVF, oncology, gastroenterology, cardiac sciences, paediatric services etc.

Mr Kaiser: Evercare Hospital Dhaka is a great place to work where there is enormous opportunity to learn new things everyday as we are going through various transformation and change management. People usually perceives this as a place to receive medical treatment only but there are also various non-clinical functions like finance, human resources,

operations, hospitality, information technology, medical administration and facility management etc. where a person can join and grow with the organisation.

Star Health: Where does Evercare Hospital see itself in the next few years?

Dr Sanjay: We have ambitious plans of adding complex medical programmes and technology. For example, the country has no sustainable liver transplant programme, so we want to develop a robust programme in the next few years. We are the only hospital in the country having a bone marrow transplant programme and now we are ramping it up. We are also developing a bariatric programme and comprehensive stroke centres in our hospitals in Dhaka and Chattogram. We have recently started a heart failure clinic that is one of its kind in the country. We are revamping our complete critical care facilities by adding new technology and talents. We are also updating our kidney transplant programme with a full-time clinical team.

Mr Kaiser: We are automating people processes and have partnered with world-class human resources information system solutions. We are also building performance-centric culture and encourage accountability in all operations. As the industry is changing, we will look for more innovative thinkers who can see the connection between different roles and specialties to provide an innovative and integrated approach towards treating illness and solving organisational problems.



Alcohol consumption linked to more than 740,000 new cancer cases in 2020

Four percent of newly diagnosed cancer cases in 2020 may be associated with drinking alcohol, according to a global study published in The Lancet Oncology, leading its authors to call for greater public awareness of the link between alcohol and cancers and increased government interventions to reduce alcohol consumption in worst-affected regions.

The study estimates that men accounted for 77% (568,700 cases) of alcohol-associated cancer cases, compared with women, who accounted for 23% of cases (172,600). Cancers of the oesophagus, liver, and breast accounted for the largest number of cases.

It is estimated that in 2020, there were more than 6.3 million cases of mouth, pharynx, voice box (larynx), oesophageal, colon, rectum, liver, and breast cancer. These cancers have well-established causal links to alcohol consumption, and the estimates of the direct associations with alcohol in the new study are the first of their kind for 2020. Disruptions to health care and cancer services across the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic are likely to have affected diagnosis rates for that year and may have led to an underestimation of new cancer cases in the recorded data.

Raising awareness about the link between alcohol consumption and cancer risk among policymakers and the general public is urgent. Public health strategies, such as reduced alcohol availability, labelling alcohol products with a health warning, and marketing bans could reduce rates of alcohol-driven cancer. Local context is essential for successful policy around alcohol consumption and will be key to reducing cancer cases linked to drinking.

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Have we given up on trying to curb Covid-19?

“Eased” lockdown amid crowds, virus, and deaths everywhere

As the eight-day “easing” of the “strict” lockdown is passing us by, reports are flooding in from all directions about how health and safety regulations are neither being enforced nor being followed, and how Covid-19 infection cases and deaths seem to only be rising. According to DGHS data, in the first 16 days of this month, at least seven people were infected every minute with the virus, while 2,962 deaths were recorded during the same number of days—already the highest death count in a month since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020.

But these facts and statistics seem to be of no value as people flock to shopping malls and cattle markets, highways face huge tailbacks, and streets everywhere are teeming with vehicles. What is more alarming is that all of this is happening with practically no resistance from authorities. Though the cattle markets of the capital were not set to open before July 17, reports by this daily stated that most have been operative since last Friday but with no health facilities (such as hand-washing facilities or hand sanitisers) available at the venues, nor any government representatives present to enforce social distancing and mask-wearing. Now, with the easing of the lockdown, reporters have also found the capital's shopping areas to be operating in the usual overly crowded, pre-Eid manner—sans social distancing and the proper wearing of masks. We cannot help but wonder if the lockdown has been eased or completely lifted.

However, our biggest concern is the government's continued lack of planning and foresight when it comes to managing this pandemic. As experts have observed, the government's tactic seems to be to tackle problems as they arise, their approach more reactive than proactive. Though the treatment of infected patients must be prioritised, it is equally important to curb the spread of the virus. This includes taking measures such as exploring all options for acquiring Covid-19 vaccines, rigorous testing and contact tracing of the virus, urging people to get inoculated and making the registration process accessible for every citizen, and of course, enforcing the basic health guidelines of wearing masks, social distancing and maintaining proper hygiene. Is it possible that the authorities are not seeing the lack of public awareness about the impacts of the virus and their unwillingness to voluntarily practice safety measures unless strictly enforced? A report by this newspaper cites a member of the National Technical Advisory Committee on Covid-19 saying that “till date, no targeted intervention to contain the transmission of Covid-19 has been seen”, and that few of their recommendations have been implemented by the government. We can now only hope that the government will soon come up with a cohesive, informed and long-term plan to combat the pandemic, and prioritise the health and safety of citizens above the economy and all else. Although we are currently going through Bangladesh's worst phase of the pandemic, the continuation of such haphazard interventions might very well face us with a situation worse than the rest of the world has seen.

Yaba smuggled in through newer, easier routes

Bangladesh and India must stop this together

A report in this daily reveals how yaba pills are continuing to be smuggled into Bangladesh, with the drug traders finding new and cheaper gateways in the country. With Teknaf (the regular entry point) recently being in the spotlight, the drug smugglers have now made Rowmari upazila of Kurigram their preferred entry point. Police and intelligence reports have found that yaba pills come from Myanmar and enter through the Indian states of Assam and Meghalaya.

The law enforcers discovered this new route after Jamalpur district police recovered 50,000 pills in early 2019. By June, another 64,605 yaba pills were recovered, indicating the ease with which these drug traders operate. More smuggling points have been discovered by law enforcers in Sylhet, Sunamganj and Habiganj, with all the pills coming via India's northeast from Myanmar.

The reports show how organised the operations are, with the pills being carried in cars, buses or motorbikes from Myanmar to Meghalaya, and reaching the border in Kurigram. From there, drug traffickers in India throw packets of yaba pills over the barbed wire fences and their Bangladeshi members collect them. From Rowmari, 90 percent of the pills are carried by the river route and distributed to different destinations in Dhaka and surrounding areas.

It is easy to see that there are many weak points in our checkpoints that allow such ease of trafficking. Clearly, we need India's cooperation in stopping the drugs from coming into Bangladesh. According to police and intelligence officials, drug syndicate members prefer the new route as there is no major checking from the Indian side.

There are allegations that syndicate members have close links with an influential leader from Kurigram. Surprisingly, a BGB high-up has said that they had not come across any such smuggling incident. All this is quite shocking and highlights how little is being done to stop the incursion of yaba through these lesser known routes. If the police and intelligence agencies know about it, how come the BGB doesn't have a clue?

Although senior officials of Jamalpur police have raised their concerns regarding the drug smuggling with their counterparts from Meghalaya, no real action has been taken. Even the Inspector General of Police, during a visit to India last year, handed a list of 18 yaba smugglers (from India) to the Indian authorities. Have the Indian authorities taken any steps to catch these smugglers?

Trade in drugs has flourished thanks to corrupt elements in the security forces on both sides of the border. In Bangladesh, it seems those with political links are also involved. While our government must take steps to catch the smugglers and their patrons and enablers within the country, there have to be concerted efforts to stop the traffickers before they cross the border. This requires close cooperation and political will of Bangladesh and India, and calls for representatives of home ministries of both countries to meet and chalk out an effective strategy to combat this scourge.

Glimpse of the year 2050 in the summer of 2021

Extreme climate events will become more common and more severe as the planet heats up



QUAMRUL HAIDER

A leaked upcoming Assessment Report of the UN climate science advisory body, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), scheduled for release in February 2022,

presents a rather distressing picture of the devastating effects of climate change in the coming decades. According to the report, even if greenhouse gas emissions begin a downward slide, “current levels of adaptation will be inadequate” because the impacts of climate change—global warming, melting glaciers, rising sea levels, destructive floods and devastating storms, to mention a few—are already baked into the climate system of our planet. It further warns that “Life on Earth can recover from a drastic climate shift by evolving into new species and creating new ecosystems. Humans cannot.”

This is not the first time IPCC has tried to raise awareness about climate change. In previous reports, it repeatedly cautioned that if we do not achieve net-zero emissions of carbon dioxide by 2050, our planet will cross the climate tipping points or thresholds that, when exceeded, will trigger self-perpetuating irreversible loops in the natural world. We will be warned of a bleak future again by the world leaders at their next annual road show, the 26th COP, to be held later this year in Glasgow.

We do not need another report or road show to highlight that climate change will have “profound negative effects for humanity and other species, affecting numerous aspects of life.” And we may not have to wait until 2050 to witness the havoc climate change will wreak on our planet. The summer of 2021 will suffice to give us a glimpse of the future.

We are only a few weeks into official summer, yet in late June, the characteristically cool Pacific Northwest of the United States and western Canada have turned into a seething cauldron. The blistering heat, uncontrollable wildfires, intensifying drought and a powerful fire tornado are a stark reminder of how climate change is signalling its relentless onward march by loading the weather dice against us.

The dangerous “heat dome” enveloping the region shattered temperature records by such large margins that it is making even climate scientists freak out. Portland,

the largest city in Oregon, broke its all-time high, topping out at a sizzling 46.7 degrees Celsius. Around the same time, Seattle soared to a sweltering 42.2 degrees—significantly hotter than the average June highs that are in the mid-twenties. Perhaps the most oppressive heatwave occurred in Lytton, a small village nestled among mountain ranges in British Columbia, where the temperature skyrocketed to a staggering 49.4 degrees. The hellish heat was followed by a raging wildfire that destroyed 90 percent of the village.

Hundreds have died due to heat-related ailments in this part of the world. Additionally, infrastructure across the region could not handle the intense heat. Roads and bridges buckled and cracked due to thermal expansion, making them unsafe to travel on. Rail services and street

shy of the all-time high set in July 1914. In neighbouring Norway, temperatures in the Saltdal municipality, located close to the Arctic Circle, rose to 34 degrees. Several parts of the world are also experiencing crushing heatwaves this summer. Clearly, we are running out of safe havens to hide or escape from the wrath of climate change.

In Bangladesh, the dog days of summer loudly announced its arrival in April when the country recorded its highest temperatures in seven years—over 40 degrees in Jashore and Rajshahi a week after Pahela Baishakh. About that same time, Dhaka experienced the hottest day in eight years, with the mercury rising to 39.5 degrees. Given that temperatures in Bangladesh may not be as high as in the Pacific Northwest or western Canada, the heat is nevertheless more stifling because

pot that traps steam at high pressure and temperature. As the air descends and gets compressed, it heats up, pushing temperatures upward. At the same time, the dome, worsened by human-induced climate change, keeps clouds from forming by inhibiting upward vertical motion in the atmosphere. Oddly enough, it is this same phenomenon that produces extremely cold temperatures in the winter.

The heat dome is not just warming the air near the Earth's surface. It is also warming mountainous areas, where temperatures are rising faster than elsewhere. A 2015 study found that at elevations above 2,000 metres where snow and ice are receding or disappearing, the exposed soil is warming about 75 percent faster than places at lower elevations.

Against this backdrop, the odds of global temperatures rising by two degrees before 2050 are very high. Until recently, such a rise set by the 2015 Paris Climate Accord was considered to be a relatively “safe level of change.” Recent heatwaves suggest otherwise. Climate scientists worry that deadly heatwaves and extreme climate events will become more common and more severe as the planet heats up as a result of burning fossil fuels. In fact, another heatwave descending on Southern California is expected to push temperatures into record-breaking territory in the region's high desert and interior valleys.

What made the recent heatwave so remarkable is the margin by which it shattered old records and how it exceeded predictions by worst-case climate models. This hints that some kind of a larger climate shift, a shift toward the worse, is in play. Indeed, the first few weeks of the summer of 2021 are heralding a climate reality that we were expecting in the year 2050.

So what should we do to stave off a nightmare scenario? Effective action to tackle the challenges posed by climate change is dependent not just on sound science, but on the political will of our leaders. Science can provide critical insights and show us the path, while leaders have the power to walk the path. Unfortunately, world leaders whose decisions matter have failed to realise that climate change is the most urgent issue with a time scale of a few generations, and that it deserves a concerted effort by all the stakeholders to save the only place in the Universe we can call home.

Quamrul Haider is a Professor of Physics at Fordham University, New York.



Bangladesh recorded its highest temperatures in seven years this April.

PHOTO: STAR

cars were shut down out of fear that high temperatures could warp the tracks, as well as strain the power grid and melt the overhead wires that power the trains.

As if air temperatures during the record setting heatwave were not bad enough, imagery from the European Space Agency's Sentinel-3 satellite showed that ground temperatures in Wenatchee, Washington, reached an astounding 62.8 degrees, surpassing the temperature in the hottest spot in North America—54.4 degrees at the Death Valley in California.

The heatwave is afflicting Nordic countries, too. Lapland in Finland's northernmost Arctic region recorded its hottest temperature for more than a century. At 33.6 degrees, it is a degree

of excessive moisture in the air.

Also, day and night temperatures during the heatwave remained nearly unchanged across Bangladesh. But our biological clock that regulates sleeping, walking, eating and other cyclic activities is based to a large extent on a day-night cycle with variations in temperature. However, with constant temperature, these circadian rhythms can be hopelessly out of sync with the natural world.

As for the unprecedented hot spell in the northwestern part of North America, it is a consequence of a self-reinforcing heat dome, which is a sprawling area of a persistent and strong high pressure system up in the atmosphere that traps warm ocean air, just like a lid on a boiling

Upcoming challenges in West Bengal's political landscape



PALLAB BHATTACHARYA

OVER two months after the state assembly elections, which saw Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress (TMC) returning to power with a thumping majority and its principal rival Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) making substantial gains in terms of seats, the political landscape in the state is set to be roiled once again on a range of issues.

Having come out of the poll battle with flying colours, Mamata now faces challenges posed by a number of legal tussles in which she and her government feature. These are the multi-crore Rupee Saradha chit fund scam case in which several TMC leaders are named, and the Narada sting operation case relating to alleged graft, which shows a number of ruling party leaders accepting wads of currency notes. The cases are being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation under the control of the federal Indian government on an order by the Calcutta High Court.

Another legal tangle is the Calcutta High Court ordering a thorough probe by a team of the National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRC) into several incidents of post-assembly poll violence and arson in the state. A five-judge bench of the High Court rejected an appeal by the Mamata government to recall its order regarding the NHRC probe. Adding to the tensions was the attack on an NHRC team that visited south Kolkata to investigate the violence against opposition workers there. Two cases are also pending in the Supreme Court relating to post-poll violence in Bengal.

Mamata Banerjee's defeat in Nandigram has also reached the Calcutta High Court, which has issued notices to Suwendu Adhikari (current opposition leader in West Bengal) and the Election Commission (EC), asking them to respond to the Chief Minister's citing of alleged use of corrupt practices, use of religion in campaigns and the EC's rejection of recount of votes in Nandigram. Suwendu, for his part, moved the Supreme Court with the plea that the hearing on Mamata's petition against Nandigram poll results be

shifted out of West Bengal. A large part of the political battle in West Bengal has also been seen as a duel between Mamata and her former trusted lieutenant Suwendu, who defected from TMC and walked into the saffron camp in December last year.

Post Suwendu's joining the BJP, Mamata left none in doubt about her firm opposition to him. A measure of her hardened stance towards can be had from a number of developments since the assembly election results were declared on May 2. Suwendu's influence has no doubt posed a serious challenge to TMC's dominance in East Midnapore and West Midnapore districts and surrounding areas. As part of efforts to counter Suwendu's hold in the region, Mamata has appointed six ministers from East and West Midnapore—all of them known for their strident anti-Suwendu posturing, out of her team of 43 ministerial colleagues.

Suwendu's victory in Nandigram.

In a continuous pushback by TMC against Suwendu to blunt his influence, he was removed from the post of chairperson of Tamralipta Janakalyan Samity, an East Midnapore-based cultural body that he had headed for nine years as a TMC leader. Suwendu was also removed from the Sanatan Brahman Trust. His ousting as the head of Haldia Development Authority and head of three cooperative banks in Midnapore is also likely. A no-trust motion against him has been moved at Contai cooperative bank and an audit has been ordered of all the three banks in an apparent bid to find any financial irregularity. A majority of the directors of the 14-member board of Midnapore Vidyasagar Cooperative Society has asked Mamata to remove Suwendu as its chairman. Besides, the Bengal CID is also probing the death of Suwendu's security



Mamata Banerjee now faces challenges posed by a number of legal tussles in which she and her government feature.

PHOTO: REUTERS/RUPAK DE CHOWDHURI

guard in 2018 as the guard's wife now alleges it was a murder. All these have served to keep the heat on Suwendu.

On the other hand, Suwendu has gained increasing traction with the top BJP national leadership in recent days. He has had a number of meetings with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP President J P Nadda in the last two to three months. He led BJP legislators in resigning from different committees of the Bengal assembly in protest against the appointment of Mukul Roy as the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), which gives

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After her Nandigram loss, Mamata, as per Indian law, must get elected as legislator within six months of becoming Chief Minister. More than half of that time has already gone by since Mamata occupied the top state executive post on May 5.

the latter the rank of a cabinet minister. Roy is in a piquant situation: he won the recent assembly poll as a BJP candidate but later switched over to TMC but did not give up his legislature membership. On the first day of the budget session of the assembly, Roy was seen sitting in opposition benches in legislators but did not join a walkout by the BJP. Traditionally, the post of PAC Chairman goes to the principal opposition party—be it in parliament or state legislative assembly.

Another issue on which a confrontation is brewing is the holding of by-elections to seven assembly constituencies. The reason the by-elections are important for the ruling party, according to media reports, is that Mamata herself may contest from one of the seven constituencies so that she can continue to be the chief minister.

After her Nandigram loss, Mamata, as per Indian law, must get elected as legislator within six months of becoming Chief Minister. More than half of that time has already gone by since Mamata occupied the top state executive post on May 5 and she has until November to be a legislator. The TMC suspects a ploy by the BJP to delay the bypolls. Mamata has made no secret of her anger with the EC. She took a jibe at both BJP and the EC when she requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to instruct the poll body to conduct early by-elections to the seven seats.

Pallab Bhattacharya is a special correspondent of The Daily Star. He writes from New Delhi, India.

The costs of abandoning the Afghan war



THE 20-year war in Afghanistan has been abandoned, with the United States announcing in mid-September that it will withdraw its troops from the country. What has the US left in its wake? Leaving power in the hands of

a deliberately weak government is virtually a US handover of power to the Taliban. This significant setback has once again left a "black mark" on the claim of US supremacy. The US declaration of abandonment of the Afghan war will also profoundly affect Central Asian politics, as well as the politics of Pakistan, India, and many countries in South Asia and the region. Many say China will benefit significantly from other aspects, including mineral extraction and investments in Afghanistan. However, China's biggest concern is with Uyghur Muslim rebels living in their Xinjiang province, adjacent to Afghanistan, and they fear the Taliban's presence on the Afghan border along the Wakhan Corridor could increase. A Taliban spokesman has assured them that they would not cooperate with Uyghur Muslims, but how credible is this assurance really? Russia is also concerned about the Taliban's influence in Central Asia's Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

According to many experts, the current situation in Afghanistan suggests that the Taliban may take the initiative to mend relations with neighbouring countries. The regime can create a new impression and get an image makeover by building a relationship with China, Russia and others. While this demands a more comprehensive analysis, there is no doubt that the politics of Central Asia will change dramatically.

From the South Asian political sphere, India supports the government of the current Afghan president Ashraf Ghani, largely due to its investments in Afghanistan. According to different estimates, several Indian businesses and companies have already invested between USD five to seven billion in Afghanistan. India has invested USD three billion in

infrastructure development alone, according to *The Times of India*. The Afghan president has also announced his commitment to increasing India-Afghanistan bilateral trade to at least USD 10 billion. India is also using the Chabahar seaport in the southeastern part of Iran through Afghanistan to connect with Central Asia. All in all, India is worried about what will happen to these billions of dollars of investment and trade.

In this context, to protect its interests in Afghanistan, India has started a secret or

Taliban in Afghanistan has already made Pakistani militant groups happy with the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Pakistan's notorious militant group born in 2006, is expected to grow stronger. The rise of the Taliban and subsequently, of TTP, can become a significant threat to Imran Khan or any government in Pakistan in the future. However, Pakistan has already said that it is possible to resolve the Afghan issue through talks. In this situation, if Imran Khan's

the US proposal, the balance of Pakistan's foreign policy will be in jeopardy, with a huge possibility of Pakistan being targeted by the Taliban. In the last week of May, the Taliban said in a statement that it would be a "historic mistake" if Pakistan favoured a US military decision. However, Pakistan's influential daily *Dawn* reported on May 24, quoting Pentagon sources, that Pakistan has allowed the US military to use its airspace, and has given ground access. It is safe to say that the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan will

defeat in the Vietnam War, and they have once again lost the longest-lasting war in Afghanistan by withdrawing troops. In 1969, Henry Kissinger wrote a lengthy article on the Vietnam War in the January issue of *Foreign Affairs*, in which he said, "We (US) fought a military war; our opponents fought a political one. We sought physical attrition; our opponents aimed for our psychological exhaustion. In the process, we lost sight of one of the cardinal maxims of guerrilla war: the guerrilla wins if he does not lose. The conventional army loses if it does not win." The ideology of the Taliban, no matter how militant or radical it is, is in line with Henry Kissinger's statement.

The United States has suffered substantial financial losses in the 20-year-long war in Afghanistan. According to the Associated Press, the US has lost more than USD two trillion in direct financial losses to Afghanistan in the 20 years to 2021. As of other estimates, the amount is USD 2.6 trillion. By 2050, the total cost of the war will be 6.5 trillion, including war veteran healthcare and various financial benefits. A total of 200,000 people have been killed in the war, including 2,448 members of the US military, ordinary Afghan civilians, US civilians at different levels, and members of the Taliban. Of these, 444 humanitarian aid workers and 72 journalists lost their lives, and 47,245 Afghan civilians were killed in the war.

After the defeat in the Vietnam War, the United States faced the questions of the people in its own country. There were protests all over the world against that war. Perhaps the same question about the Afghan war may come to the minds of US citizens. Many (not just the American people) may be wondering what it means to spend so many trillions of dollars on the loss of so many lives. In the book *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict*, the authors—Nobel prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes—said, "The failure in Iraq was not the result of a single mistake but the culmination of dozens of mistakes made over a period of years." The statement may also be true about the Afghan war.

Amir Khasru is the Chief Executive, Study Group on Regional Affairs, Dhaka. He can be reached at akhasru1964@gmail.com



Afghan security forces inspect the site of a car bomb attack in Kandahar province, Afghanistan, July 6, 2021.

PHOTO: REUTERS

back-channel negotiation with the Taliban, according to an Al Jazeera report from July 6. Indian Foreign Office officials acknowledged the allegations and said, "We are maintaining relations with all parties involved in Afghanistan. Because we want to continue India's commitment to building Afghanistan's long-term infrastructure and rebuilding the country."

Meanwhile, Pakistan is in quite a predicament. The substantial rise of the

government wants to confront the Taliban by promoting its own Islamic ideology, it will be another catastrophe for Pakistan.

Various media outlets have reported that US pressure on Pakistan will increase after its withdrawal from Afghanistan. Last month, the *New York Times* reported that the United States has already been trying hard to establish a military base in Pakistan. However, Pakistan is trying to reject interference from an outside power like the United States. If it agrees to

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impact not only India-Pakistan but the wider region, including Iran and NATO-affiliated Turkey. In particular, militants from countries in the region, including Bangladesh, may rise to prominence.

The Taliban strongly believe that the US is the defeated side in this conflict, apparent by the withdrawal of troops and the abandonment of war. Presumably, this is why the Taliban's morale is higher than ever before. In fact, they have already taken control of many areas, with very little force and resistance. To people across the world, it seems like the US did not learn from the

Protecting children's mental health during Covid-19



LAILA KHONDKAR

RECENTLY, many parents in Bangladesh are expressing concerns about the behavioural changes of their children and feeling worried about the impacts of Covid-19 related restrictions on their health and wellbeing.

During an interview, Nancy Close, Assistant Professor at the Child Study Center at the Yale School of Medicine and Associate Director of the Yale Program in Early Childhood Education, explained what parents may be experiencing with their children (from toddlers to university students): "I've been seeing a lot of regression and more than what, in typical times, is developmentally appropriate. I've seen children regressing through using baby talk, needing help with routines, needing help with sleeping and toileting—and much more than what's usual for them. Coping with and expressing strong feelings can be really challenging, so we're seeing temper tantrums in older and younger children and even college students. We are discovering that consistency and predictability have been more difficult to achieve during Covid-19. This can certainly result in behavioural dysregulation."

Covid-19 is primarily a public health emergency, but it has lots of secondary impacts on children's education, health and protection, in the short and long run. Due to prolonged school closure and social isolation, children have lost their regular lives.

Covid-19 has created stress for parents all over the world. Many of them are struggling to manage working from home and looking after children. In our society, we hear about this in general discussion and media also highlights the challenge. However, are we realising that children are used to going to schools, interacting with friends and being taught by teachers? Staying at home is stressful for them also. Are we viewing things from children's points of view? Are we listening to their concerns meaningfully?

"Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the mental health of children in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional

study", published by Children and Youth Services in October, 2020, highlighted that children are suffering from depression, anxiety and sleeping disorders. Estimates of moderate and severe mental disturbance were 19.3 percent and 7.2 percent respectively.

Different children are reacting differently to the situation. Many children have been resilient and adjusted to the crisis. However, there are many who need support to go through this difficult time. It is important that parents, caregivers,

print, electronic and social media.

Children need to feel they are being loved by parents and caregivers. It is also helpful when family members spend quality time together. Children should be encouraged to play, read books, maintain an active life by engaging in various activities, and reduce over-reliance on electronic devices. Parents should also limit their own screen time, as children follow what adults do.

Children have a lot of questions, especially



PHOTO: REUTERS FILE

teachers and other adults of society have the sensitivity and capacity to respond to their needs.

Research on effective parenting in the last 30 years demonstrated that parents need to provide warmth as well as structure, according to the age of their children. Parents should understand how children think and feel at various stages. Effective parent-child communication is critical at any and all times, and particularly during the Covid-19 crisis. Positive parenting messages, as well as messages on how all members of society can be more child-sensitive, should be promoted through

during crisis periods. Parents can share age-specific information with their children on how the virus spreads, what they can do to protect themselves, and the efforts that are being taken throughout the world to fight the pandemic. Parents can take initiatives to limit children's consumption of news to avoid unnecessary worries. The pandemic also provides an opportunity to teach children the importance of receiving information from credible sources.

There is no need for parents and caregivers to ask too many questions on how children are

feeling. But children should feel reassured that there is someone they can talk to if they want. Some may like to draw. Some may want to talk. They should be encouraged to express themselves in ways they are comfortable with.

Children get their emotional cues from adults. So, parents should not express anxieties in front of children. Parents need to find support around managing their own stress as this can ultimately help their children's wellbeing.

If a child continues to show signs of distress that affects his/her daily functioning and/or or are not regular (e.g. sleeplessness, lack of concentration, acting in a way that is suitable for children younger than his/her age), then parents should seek support from a trained mental health expert. As a society, we should also learn to understand that mental health is very important for our overall wellbeing, and there should not be any stigma about this.

The capacity of teachers should be developed so that they are able to respond to the needs of children when they return to school. They should be trained on mental health concerns that children are likely to face, what signs of distress may look like, and how to intervene with appropriate action and referral. Schools should also support teachers to manage their own stress.

The executive director of UNICEF has cautioned that if children's wellbeing is not adequately addressed, "The mental health consequences for a generation of children and young people could far surpass the immediate health and economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, leaving long-term social and economic consequences in its wake."

Children's health, nutrition, education, protection and overall wellbeing will be profoundly influenced by the impacts of the global pandemic. The next decade could see a huge reversal in children's rights or be a significant moment in the fight for a world where all children can grow up to realise their potential. It will depend on the decisions we make today. If we are serious in addressing the negative consequences of Covid-19 on children's lives, which includes stopping developmental regression, and protecting their mental health, then policymakers must make investing in children a priority.

Laila Khondkar is an international development worker.

Covid-19 is primarily a public health emergency, but it has lots of secondary impacts on children's education, health and protection, in the short and long run.

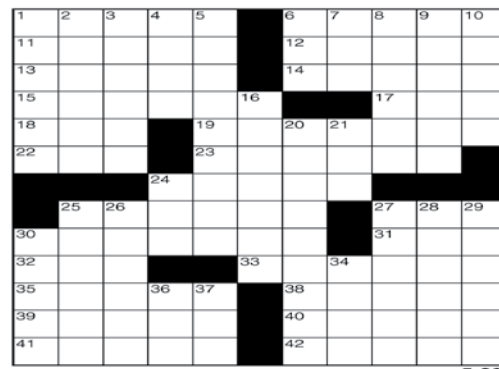


SARA AHMED
British-Australian scholar
(born August 30, 1969)

A system is working when an attempt to transform that system is blocked.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Giraffe features
 - 6 Playwright
 - Fugard
 - 11 South Asian language
 - 12 Grand, for one
 - 13 Met work
 - 14 Might
 - 15 Parking attendants
 - 17 Top pitcher
 - 18 Pupil's place
 - 19 Revolutionary mercenary
 - 22 Plunked down
 - 23 Bakery treat
 - 24 Make pigtailed
 - 25 Pop, e.g.
 - 27 Implore
- DOWN**
- 1 Kitchen fixtures
 - 2 Tropical fruit
 - 3 Egggy dish
 - 4 Fatigue
 - 5 Smearred liberally
 - 6 Phone download
 - 7 Uncle, in Acapulco
 - 8 Michener book
 - 9 Like some garages
 - 10 Sophia of "Two Women"
 - 16 Lines through circles
 - 20 Moved sinuously
 - 21 Down
 - 24 Lingerie buy
 - 25 Commend
 - 26 Give fizz to
 - 27 Child of the 1950s
 - 28 Straying
 - 29 Academic funds
 - 30 Kicked off
 - 34 Flaring star
 - 36 Auction bid
 - 37 Take a stab at



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS



BETLE BAILEY



BY MORT WALKER

BABY BLUES



BY KIRKMAN & SCOTT

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

21 Rohingyas

FROM PAGE 12 heading to the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, said Mohammad Yasirul Haque, officer-in-charge of Moulvibazar Police Station.

He said they detained the Rohingyas acting on a tip-off. Additional Superintendent of Police Ziaur Rahman said during primary interrogation, the Rohingyas told them that they reached Kulaura upazila on Friday night through the Shikri border point from Kalighat area of India's Tripura.

Later, they managed to make it to the bus stand area, where they were caught, he said.

Ziaur said they had already contacted the Cox's Bazar camp authorities and were deciding on what to do with the detainees.

'Criminal' killed

FROM PAGE 12 murder, claimed police.

Abdullah Mohammad Sheikh Sadi, assistant director (media) of Rab and also a senior assistant superintendent of police in Cox's Bazar, said a team of Rab conducted an operation in Borobill area around 4:00am after receiving a tip-off that Ashraf and his associates gathered there.

Sensing the presence of law enforcers, criminals opened fire on the team. The Rab members fired retaliatory shots in self-defence triggering the "gunfight", Rab claimed.

After sometime the gang managed to flee. The Rab team then found Ashraf lying dead at the scene, said the Rab official.

Sheikh Sadi claimed that Rab recovered three guns and six cartridges from the spot.

The body was sent to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

The Rab assistant director said Ashraf was the prime accused in a case filed over a double murder in Cox's Bazar town's Rumaliarchhaora on May 31.

The Rab filed a case with Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station yesterday in connection with the "gunfight".

On Thursday and Friday, two people, including a Rohingya man, were killed in two "gunfights" with Border Guard Bangladesh and Rab in the district.

Carrier

FROM PAGE 12 Speaking to The Daily Star, Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal, Biman's managing director and CEO, yesterday said the national flag carrier lost around Tk 7 crore in the last 48 hours due to cancellations of tickets.

He said most of the cancellations were of trips on Middle Eastern routes.

The Biman boss urged all passengers not to pay heed to any misinformation about pilots' going on strike.

"In an official letter, they [pilots] showed their discontentment over the continuation of salary cuts but [they] didn't give even hint that they may go for any strike over the issue," he told this correspondent.

Since July last year, Biman had been cutting salaries of all its employees, including pilots, and reduced its maintenance and operational costs.

On Thursday, the airlines decided to restore normal salaries for all employees, except pilots who have served the carrier for more than five years.

Revising the salary-cut structure, Biman said that from July it would cut five, instead of the usual 20, percent pay of pilots serving it for five to 10 years. It also said senior pilots working for the airlines for over 10 years would get 25 percent pay cut instead of 40 percent.

Sources in Biman said if the pilots do not fly additional flights, Biman might have to cancel flights to popular destinations, including Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dammam, and Dubai.

Scientists listen

FROM PAGE 12 powerful "rumbles" with their vocal chords that are at such a low frequency they are almost inaudible to the human ear.

These rumbles create sound waves that travel not only through the air but also -- because of the elephant's weight -- through the ground.

And these rumbles are thought to carry a wealth of information.

"Elephants use many different vocalisations in a variety of contexts, for example mating, greeting, or warning each other of an imminent threat," said Michael Reinwald, of the University of Oxford's Department of Zoology, who led the study published in the journal Royal Society Interface. "They really seem to be saying a lot!"

The researchers monitored African elephants in Kenya by listening for their vocalised rumbles using microphones and seismometers -- often used for measuring earthquakes and explosions.

Reinwald said the elephants "generate 'mini earthquakes' with every footstep but also when they rumble", allowing the researchers to record the sound waves at distances of several hundred metres and then estimate their position based on this data.



Muslim pilgrims perform Tawaf around Kaaba in the Grand Mosque in the holy city of Makkah, Saudi Arabia, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Pilgrims arrive in Makkah

FROM PAGE 1

structure draped in golden-embroidered black cloth, towards which Muslims around the world pray.

Many carried umbrellas to protect themselves from the scorching summer heat.

"Every three hours, 6,000 people enter to perform the tawaf of arrival," hajj ministry spokesman Hisham al-Saeed told AFP. "After each group leaves, a sterilisation process is carried out at the sanctuary."

The hajj, usually one of the world's largest annual religious gatherings with some 2.5 million people taking part in 2019, is one of the five pillars of Islam and must be undertaken by all Muslims with the means at least once in their lives.

It consists of a series of religious rites, formally starting today, which are completed over five days in Islam's holiest city and its surroundings in western Saudi Arabia.

Among the chosen ones this year was Ameen, a 58-year-old Indian oil contractor based in the eastern city

of Dammam, who was picked for the ritual along with his wife and three adult children.

"We are overjoyed," said Ameen. "So many of our friends and relatives were rejected," he told AFP.

Earlier this month, the hajj ministry said it was working on the "highest levels of health precautions" in light of the pandemic and the emergence of new variants.

Like the other countries of the Gulf, Saudi Arabia is home to significant expatriate populations from South Asia, the Far East, Africa as well as the Middle East.

"I feel like I won a lottery," Egyptian pharmacist Mohammed El Eter said after being selected.

"This is a special, unforgettable moment in one's life. I thank God for granting me this chance, to be accepted among a lot of people who applied," the 31-year-old told AFP.

Chosen from more than 558,000 applicants through an online vetting system, the event is confined to those who have been fully vaccinated and are aged 18-65 with no chronic

illnesses, according to the hajj ministry.

Pilgrims will be divided into groups of just 20 "to restrict any exposure to only those 20, limiting the spread of infection," ministry undersecretary Mohammad al-Bijawi told official media.

Saudi Arabia has so far recorded more than 507,000 coronavirus infections, including over 8,000 deaths.

More than 20 million vaccine doses have been administered in the country of over 34 million people.

The hajj went ahead last year on the smallest scale in modern history. Authorities initially said only 1,000 pilgrims would be allowed, although local media said up to 10,000 eventually took part.

No infections were reported as authorities set up multiple health facilities, mobile clinics and ambulances to cater for the pilgrims, who were taken to the religious sites in small batches.

In normal years, the pilgrimage packs large crowds into congested

religious sites, but even this year's downscaled events are seen as a potential mechanism for contagion.

"The biggest challenge of this hajj season will be for it to pass off without any Covid-19 infections," a doctor working at a hospital in Makkah told AFP by phone.

Worshippers were last year given amenity kits including sterilised pebbles for the "stoning of Satan" ritual, disinfectants, masks, a prayer rug and the ihram, a traditional seamless white hajj garment, made from a bacteria-resistant material.

Hosting the hajj is a matter of prestige for Saudi rulers, for whom the custodianship of Islam's holiest sites is their most powerful source of political legitimacy.

But barring overseas pilgrims has caused deep disappointment among Muslims worldwide, who typically save for years to take part.

And in addition to the many virus-related obstacles, the price of participating in this year's hajj, including official taxes, is 12,000 riyals (\$3,200).

Death toll rises to 157

FROM PAGE 12

Luxembourg and the Netherlands were also hammered by heavy rains, inundating many areas and forcing thousands to be evacuated in the city of Maastricht.

A burst dam in Germany's Heinsberg district 65 kilometres (40 miles) southwest of Duesseldorf overnight prompted the emergency evacuation of more than 700 residents.

In some affected areas, firefighters, and local officials and soldiers, some driving tanks, have begun the colossal work of clearing the piles of debris clogging the streets.

"The task is immense," said Tim

Kurzach, mayor of Solingen, a city in the south of the Ruhr area.

The real scale of the disaster is only now becoming clear, with damaged buildings being assessed, some of which will have to be demolished, and efforts under way to restore gas, electricity and telephone services.

The disruption to communication networks has complicated efforts to assess the number still missing, and most roads in the submerged Ahr Valley are out of service.

Roger Lewentz, interior minister for Rhineland-Palatinate, told local media up to 60 people were believed

to be missing. More than 600 were injured.

The government has said it is working to set up a special aid fund, with the cost of damage expected to reach several billion euros (dollars).

The devastating floods have put climate change back at the centre of Germany's election campaign ahead of a September 26 poll marking the end of Merkel's 16 years in power.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the storms that lashed Europe were "without doubt" the result of climate change while Steinmeier, the German president, urged a more "determined" battle against global

warming in light of the disaster.

Armin Laschet from Merkel's Christian Democratic Union, the frontrunner to succeed the veteran chancellor, spoke of "a disaster of historic proportions".

News magazine Der Spiegel said the floods would put a spotlight on the candidates' response to climate change.

German reinsurance giant Munich Re said nations would have to expect rising "frequency and intensity" of natural disasters due to climate change, calling for preventive action "which, in the final analysis, will be less costly".

Citizens' body finds 'human remains' 10 days later

FROM PAGE 12

around," Taslima Akhter, president of Bangladesh Garment Workers Solidarity and a member of the committee, told The Daily Star.

"It was probably the remains of a female as it was wrapped in a women's salwar," she said.

"As there are still bones here, there may be more corpses or body parts on the fourth floor of the factory," Taslima added.

The citizen body's convener Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua said, "We have visited the spot today [Saturday] as part of our investigation. Later, we will talk to the factory authorities and

government bodies concerned and check necessary documents.

"We will reveal our report after completion of the investigation."

Committee member Prof Anu Muhammad said the government normally forms multiple probe bodies when any accident occurs. In most cases, probe reports are not made public, resulting in the developing of a culture of impunity.

"Our purpose is not only to investigate into the fire at Hashem Foods factory, but also to portray the entire picture of how other industrial factories are run, the working environment in these factories, reasons

for recurrence of such accidents and the ways to overcome it," he said, adding they hope to publish their report within 30 working days.

Contacted, Tanharul Islam, assistant director of Narayanganj Fire Service and Civil Defense, said, "There is a stench but the reason is yet to be known. Search operations are going on to find what it is."

Meanwhile, a team of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police, led by Additional Deputy Inspector General (Dhaka range) Imam Hossain, yesterday visited the Hashem Foods factory site after taking charge of the

investigation.

"We will complete the investigation within the shortest possible time. We want cooperation of all and request those who have any video footage or information to contact us," the CID official also said, while briefing reporters after inspecting the site.

On July 8, a deadly fire broke out at the factory. Eight people, including the factory owner Abul Hashem, were subsequently arrested. Of them, Abul Hashem and five others were sent to jail after a four-day remand, while two others were released on bail.

Mission staff reaffirm loyalty to Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 12

resolve the deadlock over the question of repatriation of Indian and Pakistani diplomats from Kolkata and Dhaka respectively.

Dr Bonard interviewed 64 members of the former Pakistan deputy high commission who had switched over their loyalty to Bangladesh in the presence of the Indian representative Ashoke Roy and the Pakistani deputy high commissioner Mehdi Masud.

Hossain Ali, chief of the Bangladesh mission in Kolkata, refused to appear before the Swiss representative for the interview. Later clarifying the point Hossain Ali told newsmen, "Since the Swiss representative as also the Pakistani deputy high commissioner held lower diplomatic status than myself,

I could not possibly go to them to appear for the interview."

YAHYA'S SUMMIT OFFER A TRAP: SWARAN SINGH

The Indian external affairs minister Swaran Singh today described president Yahya Khan's reported offer to meet Indira Gandhi as a trap.

The military ruler should instead talk with Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to solve the Bangladesh issue, he said. Swaran Singh strongly criticised the USA for supply arms and ammunition to Pakistan and appreciated those countries who had refused to do so.

PAKISTAN BANS BOAT BUILDING Pakistan Army authorities banned building of country boats in the riverine areas of Bangladesh, reported Hindustan Standard referring to a high school teacher who arrived

in Kolkata from Bhola. He said the announcement made in early July prescribed three years rigorous imprisonment and confiscation of property for violation of the ban. Army authorities were also issuing a green and yellow identification disk to non-Awami League people.

TUNKU MEETS YAHYA Tunku Abdul Rahman, secretary-general of the 23-member-nation Islamic Secretariat, today discussed with president Yahya Khan the situation in East Pakistan. Tunku arrived in Pakistan yesterday on an eight-day visit to assess the needs of Pakistan and enable his organisation to help ease sufferings in East Pakistan. Tunku on his arrival from London told newsmen that he was seeking ways to organise a joint relief effort by members of the secretariat in

East Pakistan.

GERMAN STUDENTS URGE THANT TO MOVE UN BODIES

Various student organisations of Freiburg University in Germany in an open letter urged the UN Secretary General U Thant "to do his utmost in the organisations of the United Nations to prevail upon the West Pakistan government to respect human rights". They demanded that the suppression of human rights and genocide in Bangladesh should be stopped and "it should be made possible for the refugees to return to their country in which instead of systematic killings there should be freedom and right of self-determination".

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

Biden vows to appeal ruling against 'Dreamers' program

AFP, Washington

President Joe Biden yesterday denounced as "deeply disappointing" a federal judge's decision curbing a program that protects undocumented migrants brought to the country as children.

In a statement from the White House, Biden said the Justice Department would appeal the ruling by Texas-based Judge Andrew Hanen, while adding that "only Congress can ensure a permanent solution by granting a path to citizenship for Dreamers," the young people brought to the US as children.

DACA supporters received a temporary reprieve in June 2020 when the Supreme Court ruled in a 5-to-4 vote that the Trump administration had not provided sufficient justification for its attempts to end the program.

It made clear it was ruling largely on procedural issues, and left open the possibility of further challenges.

Hanen's ruling was limited, however. It is unclear how the nine high court justices might rule if the case again reaches them.

The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, instituted by then-president Barack Obama in 2012, covers around 700,000 people, conferring legal status on them, as well as the right to work. For many, America is the only country they have ever known.

In his ruling, Hanen said Obama exceeded his authority when he instituted DACA by executive order. He called the order "unlawful."

The government must stop accepting people to the program, Hanen said, though he added it could still receive applications.

He said the ruling did not require the Department of Homeland Security or Department of Justice to "take any immigration, deportation, or criminal action against any DACA recipient, applicant, or any other individual that it would not otherwise take."

The ruling also did not immediately affect the status of people already accepted to the program.

To apply for DACA protection applicants must have arrived in the United States before age 16.

Applicants must be in school or have a high school degree or equivalent, or have been honorably discharged from the military and have a clean criminal record.

In 2017, as part of his far wider push to limit immigration, then-president Donald Trump tried to dismantle DACA, insisting Obama had exceeded his constitutional powers. That triggered the lengthy court battle that brought the case to the high court last year.

DACA was subsequently reinstated. Since taking office, Biden has looked to strengthen the program, as well as initiate wider immigration reform.

Democrats in Congress have pushed for legislation that would permanently settle the status of the childhood arrivals, but immigration policies have long stalled in the face of Republican opposition.

After Friday's ruling, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called on Republicans in Congress "to join us in respecting the will of the American people and the law, to ensure that Dreamers have a permanent path to citizenship."

Moon 'wobble', climate change seen as driving coastal flooding in 2030s

REUTERS

US coastlines will face increasing flooding in the mid-2030s thanks to a regular lunar cycle that will magnify rising sea levels caused by climate change, according to research led by NASA scientists.

A key factor identified by the scientists is a regular "wobble" in the moon's orbit - first identified in the 18th century - that takes 18.6 years to complete. The moon's gravitational pull helps drive Earth's tides.

In half of this lunar cycle, Earth's regular daily tides are diminished, with high tides lower than usual and low tides higher than usual. In the cycle's other half, the situation is reversed, with high tides higher and low tides lower.

The expected flooding will result from the combination of the continuing sea level rise associated with climate change and the arrival of an amplification part of the lunar cycle in the mid-2030s, the researchers said.

"In the background, we have long-term sea level rise associated with global warming. It's causing sea level to increase everywhere," Ben Hamilton, NASA team leader and one of the study's authors, told Reuters.

Can Tigers carry lessons to perfection?

NABID YEASIN

From a potential batting collapse to winning the game by 155 runs, Bangladesh scripted an applaudable turnaround in the first ODI against Zimbabwe in Harare on Friday. To get the desired outcome, there were a number of boxes that the Tigers had to tick but a few others were still unmarked. Here, we look at both:

BOXES THEY TICKED

One of the top five scores big: "The message from the team management was that one of the top five batsmen needed to bat beyond 40 overs," Liton Das said after making that wish materialise by batting till the 42nd over en route his fourth ODI ton to seal Bangladesh's commanding victory.

Strong finish at the death: Failing to capitalise on a flying start due to a lack of firepower in the lower-order is a problem Bangladesh have been struggling with for years. However, after Liton's well-paced ton revived Bangladesh's innings, cameos from Afif Hossain and Mehedi Hasan Miraz ensured the Tigers posted a commendable total.

Getting early breakthroughs: Pacers Mohammad Saifuddin and Taskin Ahmed need to be credited for their aggression and accuracy on a pitch that had a green tinge and lots of purchase for fast bowlers. After the duo combined to remove Zimbabwe's openers inside five overs, young pacer Shoriful Islam left his mark by sending back Dion Myers in the 11th over.

The Shakib effect: Although there was no respite from his poor run of form with the willow, Bangladesh's premier all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan turned up with the ball in hand. The left-armed spinner was the epitome of how a spinner could use guile and precision to make an impact on a pace-friendly wicket. He ran through the Zimbabwe middle order, picking up the crucial wickets of Brendan Taylor and Regis Chakabva on way to his third five-wicket haul in ODIs.

BOXES THEY DID NOT TICK

Getting the toss right: Although the coin flip depends totally on luck, its importance in giving Zimbabwe the initial edge is undeniable. Understanding the pitch and taking the right decision is key and although Bangladesh lost the toss, they were certainly on the right track as Tamim had mentioned his intention to bowl first on a seaming wicket. Perhaps luck will be on his side in today's second ODI and the southpaw will again make the right call.

Instability in the middle-order: Had it not been for Liton's timely ton, the absence of batting mainstay Mushfiqur Rahim, may have cost the Tigers dearly. Shakib and Mohammad Mithun both got starts but threw their wickets away while Mosaddek Hossain hit a 15-ball five. With Nurul Hasan Sohan, who has vast experience in the domestic circuit, in the squad, the team management could opt for some slight tinkering to the middle-order to bring about greater stability.

Lacking the patience to stick around: This is something that the Tigers need to work on immensely. Even if Tamim's failure to curb his desire to cut a bouncing delivery that was way too close to his body can be excused, what Shakib and Mithun did were unpardonable. Both players seemed to be in a hurry to score quick runs and perished after playing rash, unnecessary shots. The agonising part for fans was that they once again failed to convert after a decent start.

Despite a few drawbacks, Bangladesh were able to stage a comeback and win comprehensively. But the truth is that a low-ranked Zimbabwe's lack of ability played a role in that outcome. The pertinent question now is how far Bangladesh can go in

regards to displaying a relatively flawless performance in their second game today.



Bangladesh's ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan is congratulated by Zimbabwe captain Brendan Taylor on taking five wickets at the end of the first ODI at the Harare Sports Club on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP



BASHUNDHARA KINGS RETAIN TITLE

Bashundhara Kings players and officials celebrate their title triumph in Women's Football League at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday. The defending champions thrashed Jamalpur Kacharipara Ekadosh 18-0 to confirm their second title on their second appearance in the league. They won all 13 of their matches so far having scored 107 goals and conceding only one. The two-time champions will look to cap off another remarkable campaign with a victory against Nasrin Sports Academy in their last match of the campaign tomorrow.

PHOTO: BFF

'Important to highlight small contributions'

Bangladesh's second ODI against Zimbabwe today

SPORTS REPORTER



Following a convincing win in the first ODI, Bangladesh will look to seal the three-match ODI series as Tamim Iqbal and his troops take on the host Zimbabwe in the second ODI in Harare today.

Liton Das showed great maturity, after Bangladesh lost four wickets upfront including skipper Tamim Iqbal and experienced Shakib Al Hasan, as the right-hander went on to smash his fourth hundred to help his side post a winning total of 276 for 9. Young Afif Hossain also chipped in with a quick 45 off 35 and Mehedi Hasan Miraz scored 26 as Bangladesh added 48 runs off the last five overs.

According to Tamim, the relatively younger players performing is a positive sign for the team in the upcoming days.

"We were in trouble at one stage and something that I always say is that the juniors will also have to perform with responsibility. Yesterday (Friday) was an ideal situation where Liton

played a very responsible knock.

"Afif's innings was crucial, as had he not played that knock in that situation we may have scored 30-40 runs short and wouldn't have reached 270 plus. Even Miraz's innings of 20 odd runs was also vital for us because if we had quickly lost one more wicket



after the departure of Mahmudullah Riyad bhai then we would've been in trouble. So I think it is equally important to highlight the small contributions as well," said Tamim ahead of the second ODI yesterday. Meanwhile, there were few injury

concerns in the side where Tamim is still carrying a knee injury while Liton had also hurt his wrist during the first ODI while batting. Left-arm seamer Mustafizur Rahman, who picked up an ankle injury during the two-day warm-up game ahead of the Test series and also missed the first ODI, is still doubtful for today's game.

"I am set to play the three ODIs with this injury but I think I will be able to manage it. As far as I know, Liton's condition is much better than before and will probably be available for tomorrow (today). Mustafizur is still 50-50 and we will be able to assess his condition properly by afternoon. Apart from that, everyone is fit in the team," he added.

Although Bangladesh won the first game with a huge margin of 155 runs, and yet, according to the 32-year-old there is still a lot of room for improvement with the bat, especially in the top-order. Tamim however, did express his satisfaction over the bowling department as they bundled out Zimbabwe within a small total of 121 runs where Shakib picked up his third five-wicket haul in ODIs.



Members of Australian contingent stretch as they wait to take the Covid-19 antigen test after arriving at Narita International Airport ahead of Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in Japan yesterday. Meanwhile, Tokyo Olympics organisers on Saturday reported the first case of Covid-19 at the athletes' village, along with 14 other new cases connected to the Games that begin next week, raising fresh doubts over promises of a "safe and secure" event. The latest cases were a blow to the local organisers and the International Olympic Committee, who have insisted the Games will not become a super-spreader event.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SL kick off series against India's newbies today

AGENCIES



A bunch of fresh faces will be desperate for a fair T20 World Cup audition when India's different-looking yet formidable white-ball squad face an under-fire Sri Lanka in the six-match limited overs contest, beginning with the first ODI at the R. Premadasa Stadium in Colombo today.

Sri Lanka are second to bottom with only one victory in nine matches and would be aiming to improve their standings on the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League points table.



The suspension of Kusal Mendis and Niroshan Dickwella due to bio-bubble breach in UK along with injury to former skipper Kusal Perera puts Sri Lanka in a tight spot. Newly-appointed skipper Dasun Shanaka will have the huge task on his hands of overturning the hosts'



poor form in the ODI format. India also have a squad brimming with new faces, as many of the big names are currently camped in England, preparing for the upcoming five-match Test series. Led by the vastly experienced Shikhar Dhawan, the visitors

still have ample quality in their ranks and the likes of Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Hardik Pandya, Yuzvendra Chahal, and Manish Pandey will have the responsibility of guiding the youngsters on the tour.

Winning any international series will be paramount but one can expect a few combinations being tried out during a series which got delayed by five days due to COVID-19 scare in the Sri Lankan camp. The series comprises three ODIs and as many T20s.

If Sri Lanka can manage to win the series, that will be an achievement in itself after a disastrous tour of England.

Mohammedan thrash Baridhara

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club consolidated fourth spot on the Bangladesh Premier League table with a 4-1 thrashing of Uttar Baridhara Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The win took the Black and Whites to 32 points from 18 matches, four clear of Chattogram Abahani while Baridhara remained in ninth position with 15 points from 17 matches.

Amir Hakim Bappi gave Mohammedan the lead in the 19th minute with a powerful left-footed shot from the top of the box after Souleymane Diabate's cross was only half-cleared by the Baridhara defence.

However, national team striker Sumon Reza equalised for Baridhara five minutes later -- his seventh of the campaign -- with a diagonal shot from inside the box as the Mohammedan defence was caught napping on Mostafa Karhaba's throw-in. Diabate restored Mohammedan's lead with a towering header on a corner from Rakib Khan Evan on 36 minutes before Anik Hossain's volley from the top of the box gave Mohammedan a 3-1 lead in the stoppage time of the first half.

Baridhara had several chances to reduce the arrears in the second half but Saiddoston Fozilov's failure from the spot and then a string of misses from Reza meant there was no coming back for Mahbulul Ali Manik's charges. They were instead punished for their profligacy by Yassan Ouatching in the 81st minute as Mohammedan ran out with a comfortable victory.

The second match of the day between Rahmatganj MFS and Bangladesh Police ended in a 1-1 draw.

Felix Chidi gave Rahmatganj a 13th-minute lead with a superb strike from the edge of the box but the lead was cancelled out by Christian Kouakou from the spot on 26 minutes.

The draw left Police in eighth position with 18 points from 17 matches while Rahmatganj remained in 10th position with 15 points from 18 matches.



3m Moderna shots arrive tomorrow

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States will send 3 million doses of the Moderna vaccine to Bangladesh tomorrow, taking its total supplies to 5.6 million doses.

Earl R Miller, US ambassador to Bangladesh, yesterday tweeted, "Pleased to announce another gift of 3 million doses of Moderna Covid-19 vaccine coming to Bangladesh from the American people via COVAX."

He said the US was committed to increasing the country's vaccine supply to beat the pandemic here and worldwide.

In early June, the US has supplied 1.06 lakh Pfizer vaccines and on July 3 it provided another 2.5 million Moderna vaccines to Bangladesh.

The vaccines are part of US President Joe Biden's commitment to donate at least 80 million doses from the US' own vaccine supply to the world.

He also committed to allocate 500 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine for distribution by COVAX to countries around the world.

Besides, two million doses of Sinopharm vaccines from China will be arriving shortly, according to a diplomatic source.

Under a commercial deal of supplying 15 million Sinopharm vaccines, China supplied 2 million Sinopharm jabs in early July.

Besides, China has gifted 1.1 million Sinopharm vaccines and has announced 1 million more as a gift to Bangladesh.

After a gap due to the halt of vaccine export from India in March after the Serum Institute of India's supply of 7 million of the contracted 30 million AstraZeneca vaccines, Bangladesh last week began a nationwide vaccination campaign amid rising infections.

The Indian government had also gifted 3.3 million AstraZeneca vaccines. Bangladesh has been desperately seeking to get the supply of at least 16 lakh AstraZeneca vaccines as some 16 lakh people have yet to get a second dose of the vaccine.

Japan, meanwhile, announced supplying 2.9 million AstraZeneca under COVAX. The date of its arrival could not be known yet.



A critical coronavirus patient Aklima Khatun gets down from an ambulance at Dhaka Medical College Hospital with the help of her loved ones. She travelled from Nawabganj for better treatment. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

RUPGANJ FIRE Citizens' body finds 'human remains' 10 days later

CID takes over probe

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A citizens' body yesterday claimed to have found human remains in the rubble of the fourth floor of the Narayanganj Hashem Food and Beverage factory that caught fire 10 days ago claiming at least 51 lives.

The Citizens' Investigation Committee, comprising of 19 eminent persons, reported this after visiting the spot at Narayanganj's Rupganj yesterday.

"While inspecting the fourth floor of the factory, we saw human bones there and the stench was all

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

PAY CUT ROW IN BIMAN Carrier 'losing money' for ticket cancellations

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman is getting an unusually high number of ticket cancellations and the national flag carriers claims it was due to pilots' threat of not operating additional flights.

Protesting Biman's decision to cut pays of only pilots to cope with the fallout of the pandemic, its pilots' association had issued a deadline of July 30 for Biman to withdraw its decision or else the pilots would stop doing extra work.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Mission staff reaffirm loyalty to Bangladesh

JULY 18, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MISSION STAFF INTERVIEWED BY SWISS REPRESENTATIVE

All the members of the Bangladesh mission interviewed by the Swiss representative Dr Bonard in Calcutta today refused to be repatriated to Pakistan and reaffirmed their allegiance to the Bangladesh government.

The Swiss representative conducted the interviews in an effort to

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2



'Criminal' killed in 'gunfight' with Rab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

An alleged criminal was killed in a "gunfight" with Rapid Action Battalion in Cox's Bazar town early yesterday.

The dead, Ashraf Ali alias Ashu Ali, 27, was from Forest Office Para of the town. He was accused in 12 cases, including a double

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Scientists listen to ground to track elephants

AFP, Paris



The "mini earthquakes" that elephants make by both walking and vocalising are not only a way to communicate with each other but can be used to track their movements, according to a study.

African elephants not only make their presence known with a resounding trumpet, they also create

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



The wreckage of car after the north-bound vehicle from Dhaka rear ended a tipper truck on Dhaka-Tangail highway at Rasulpur area in Tangail Sadar upazila yesterday afternoon. One passenger of the car died on the spot and four others were injured.

PHOTO: STAR

FLOODS IN WESTERN EUROPE

Death toll rises to 157

Search on for dozens missing; climate change blamed

AFP, Erfstadt

Rescue workers scrambled yesterday to find survivors and victims of the devastation wreaked by the worst floods to hit western Europe in living memory, which have already left more than 150 people dead and dozens more missing.

Western Germany has suffered the most brutal impact of the deluge that also pummelled Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, leaving streets and homes submerged in muddy water and isolating entire communities.

With the death toll in Germany at 133 into the fourth day of the disaster, authorities said far more bodies were likely to be found in sodden cellars and collapsed homes. Some 19,000 rescuers have been mobilised.

"We have to assume we will find further victims," said Carolin Weitzel, mayor of Erfstadt, where a landslide was triggered by the floods.

In Germany's worst-hit states of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) and Rhineland-Palatinate, residents who fled the deluge were gradually returning to their homes

and scenes of desolation.

"We are mourning with all those who lost friends, acquaintances or family members," President Frank-Walter Steinmeier said on a visit to Erfstadt in NRW. "Their fates break our hearts."

More than 90 of the victims lived in the Ahrweiler district of Rhineland-Palatinate, including 12 residents of a home for the disabled who drowned in the rising waters.

Ahrweiler native Gregor Degen said he had been working in his bakery when the floods came.

"I got a very brief warning but it was basically already much too late and there was no chance to protect yourself," he said, showing a mark high on the wall where the deluge reached.

"We were nearly paralysed with fear." In neighbouring Belgium, the death toll jumped to 24 with many people still missing.

Prime Minister Alexander de Croo was heading for the scene of what he has called "unprecedented" flood damage in the Meuse River basin. He has declared Tuesday a day of official mourning.

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21 Rohingyas detained in Moulvibazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Twenty-one Rohingyas were detained in Moulvibazar yesterday morning after they entered Bangladesh from India illegally, police said.

The Rohingyas, including seven children, were held when they were about to board a bus in Moulvibazar bus stand area. They were

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 18

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-15 12-45 5-00 6-54 8-15
JAMAAT 4-50 1-15 5-15 6-58 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

কোরবানির পশুর হাটে সতর্কতা বিষয়ে

স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাননীয় মন্ত্রী

জনাব জাহিদ মালেক, এমপি মহোদয়ের আহ্বান

- করোনা ভাইরাস সংক্রমণ প্রতিরোধে ক্রেতা-বিক্রেতা সবাইকে সঠিক নিয়মে অবশ্যই মাস্ক পরতে হবে।
- ক্রেতাদের হাটে প্রবেশের পূর্বে ও বের হওয়ার সময় এবং বিক্রেতাদের হাটে অবস্থানকালীন সময় ঘন ঘন সাবান-পানি দিয়ে কমপক্ষে ২০ সেকেন্ড ধরে হাত ধুতে হবে।
- হাটে সব সময় কমপক্ষে তিন ফুট দূরত্ব বজায় রাখুন।
- শিশু, বৃদ্ধ ও অসুস্থ ব্যক্তির হাটে আসা থেকে বিরত থাকুন।
- করোনা ভাইরাসের লক্ষণ সমূহ (সর্দি, কাশি, জ্বর, শ্বাসকষ্ট) থাকলে বা বাড়িতে কেউ করোনা আক্রান্ত হলে হাটে আসা থেকে বিরত থাকুন।

যেকোন তথ্য পেতে ৯৬২৬৩, ৩৩৩ অথবা ১০৬৫৫ নম্বরে কল করুন

স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা বুরো, স্বাস্থ্য অধিদপ্তর
স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কল্যাণ মন্ত্রণালয়

স্মারক নং : ৩৭৮৫, তারিখ : ১৫/০৭/২১