sabotage as there was no gas or

vandalised it. On the same day, his inlaw's house in Baganbari area was also set on fire and their car was burnt. His office was also set on fire

and burned to ashes. Describing

yesterday's incident, Al Mamun Sarkar

said that he has been staying at the in-

laws' house with his family members

the damaged house after the incident.

Milon Mia, a guard, was at the kitchen

When he returned from the market,

he saw fierce smoke flying in the air.

Instantly, Milon Mia informed him

On information, firefighters

Mamun Sarkar said renovation

reached the spot and brought the fire

work on his house was started a

Necessary furniture for the house

was already bought. All furniture

including beds, sofas and wall

cabinets were burnt to ashes in the

He said, "A man named Syed

"The day before yesterday he made

objectionable' remarks about my

He further said, "He posted a

Facebook post about this house

yesterday [Friday]. It can be done by

those who dislike me or have political

Nazrul Islam has been slandering me

on Facebook for the last one month.

month after the Hefajat mayhem.

market at the time of the incident.

Only one guard has used to live at

since the arson by Hefajat.

through his mobile phone.

under control.

fire, he added.

father-in-law's house.'

electricity connection in the house. Earlier, on March 28, Hefajat-e Islam activists set fire to the house and

Covid-19: UK urges pregnant women to get vaccinated

British health authorities have urged more pregnant women to get coronavirus jabs after a national study found the Delta variant appeared to increase their risk of severe symptoms.

Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent, chief midwifery officer for England, wrote to GPs and midwives on Friday urging them to encourage expectant mothers to get a jab as new data showed an increase in severe illness among those hospitalised with virus symptoms.

She said she was calling on pregnant women to "protect themselves and their babies".

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and the Royal College of Midwives have also recommended vaccination of

recommends pregnant women get Moderna and Pfizer vaccines because they have been given to over 130,000

pregnant women in the United States. A paper based on national data compiled by the UK Obstetric Surveillance System, published online on July 25, found that the proportion of pregnant women admitted to hospital with moderate to severe infection rose "significantly" after the Delta variant became dominant in

The paper by University of Oxford researchers found that pregnant women hospitalised during the Delta wave were more likely to get pneumonia, with a third requiring respiratory support.

"It is very concerning that admissions of pregnant women to hospital with Covid-19 are increasing and that pregnant women appear to be more severely affected by the Delta variant of the disease," said the study's Public Health England has said it chief investigator Marian Knight, professor of maternal and child population health at the University of

Concert for Bangladesh

came to me with sadness in his eye/ He told me that he wanted help before his country dies...Now I'm asking all of you to help us save some lives." Then, with the full emotional weight of his voice, Harrison started hollering the one word that he wanted his audience to take away from the performance: "Bangladesh".

It was reported that over 40,000 people joined the concerts, which raised around 250,000 dollars for Bangladesh relief.

THANT WARNS COUNCIL OF INDIAN-PAKISTANI CLASH

UN Secretary General U Thant warned that a major conflict could break out between India and Pakistan, which "could all too easily expand".

The warning was made in a memorandum for Security Council members amid growing pessimism among diplomats and officials about the situation. U Thant expressed his concern about the danger of big power involvement if the deteriorating situation erupted into fighting and Pakistan turned for support to China and India to the Soviet Union.

U Thant said, "I am deeply concerned about the possible consequences of the present situation, not only in a humanitarian sense but also as a potential threat to peace and security and for its bearing on the future of the United Nations as an

"breakthrough infections" from Delta

- unlike the case with earlier variants -

they might now be just as likely as the

unvaccinated to pass the disease on to

increased risk of transmission and

raised concern that, unlike with other

variants, vaccinated people infected

with Delta can transmit the virus,"

CDC head Rochelle Walensky said in

US President Joe Biden said on Friday

"in all probability" new guidelines or

restrictions would be imposed in the

Asked if Americans should

expect new recommendations from

health authorities or new restrictive

measures, the president responded,

"in all probability," before leaving

the White House by helicopter for the

are once again on the upswing, with

the World Health Organization

announcing an 80 percent average

increase over the past four weeks in

five of the health agency's six regions,

a jump largely fuelled by the Delta

Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said health

systems in many countries were now

being overwhelmed: "Hard-won gains

are in jeopardy or being lost," he told

The head of the WHO, Tedros

Worldwide, coronavirus infections

United States in response to a resurgence

a statement.

weekend.

variant.

of Covid-19 cases.

"High viral loads suggest an

Covid 'war has changed'

effective instrument for international cooperation and action.'

He further stressed that outside relief would not suffice to resolve the problem and that a political settlement was required.

SHADES OF THE VIETNAM WAR The New York Times today reported that the Pak army was largely confined to the towns and roads and the guerrilla rebels

were in control of the countryside.

It commented, "A visitor to East Pakistan can drive through much of the region without observing anything abnormal. Yet many foreign diplomatic observers have been tempted to, compare the Bengali situation with the opening phase of the Vietnam war, and some of the parallels -- such as those listed above are unmistakable.

"Neighboring India from the outset has provided a haven, training and material support for the Bengali rebels, as North Vietnam did for the Vietcong. Even the lush, rice growing terrain of the Ganges River delta, making up most of East Pakistan, is similar to that of the Mekong River delta in Vietnam. Rebel posters blossom briefly in Dacca and other towns, warning civilians to leave before the Liberation Army (Mukti Bahini) opens a bloody new offensive," said The New York Times.

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

The global health body's top

emergency expert Mike Ryan

told reporters that vaccines were

preventing serious illness and death:

We are fighting the same virus but a

Even in rich countries that were

In Britain, where the Delta variant

among the first to roll out vaccination

caused a sharp surge in infections in

recent months despite one of the world's

fastest inoculation campaigns, a panel

advising the government said protection

from vaccines was likely to wane over

time, meaning vaccination campaigns

The surge in Delta variant cases

is rattling parts of Asia previously

relatively successful in containing

Covid-19, such as Vietnam, which

curbs on movement in several cities

where police cordoned off the central

business district to prevent a protest

against a strict lockdown that will last

announced a record number of

4,058 infections in the past 24 hours.

Olympics organisers reported 21 new

COVID-19 cases related to the Games,

bringing the total to 241 since July 1.

Tokyo's metropolitan government

Cases also surged in Sydney,

will from tomorrow impose strict

COUNTRIES TIGHTEN

nevertheless still effective

virus that has become fitter."

campaigns, cases have surged.

would probably last for years.

RESTRICTIONS

and provinces.

until the end of August.



To reduce the longstanding waterlogging issue at Bhabadaha, the authorities are pumping out stagnant water with 20 pumps. The photo was taken recently.

WDB initiative 'impractical'

FROM PAGE 16

said Tauhidul Islam, executive engineer of WDB Jashore. Fourteen of those pumps run round the clock except during load-shedding.

He claimed due to this experimental project, the water level reduced by at least one metre compared to the previous year.

The DPP (Development Project Proposal) for installing 10 high-power pumps, each of which has the capacity to drain up to 40 cusecs of water, is completed and sent to the central WDB office for the water resources ministry's approval, he said.

The cost of the installation and renovation of some canals is estimated at Tk 50 crore and the tenure of the project is three years, Tauhidul added.

However, experts and local activist say WDB is ignoring the tidal river management (TRM) approach, proven to be the most effective way of relieving waterlogging in the region.

Through this approach, an embankment is built around a beel leaving two cut-points for water to enter and recede from. When the water recedes during low tide, it takes the sediment deposited on the riverbed in a process of natural excavation.

with involved Activists movement to get Bhabadah waterlogging solved, and experts have

termed WDB's water pumping project

While water recedes due to the use of the water pumps, it is very nominal against the level of water receding needed to have an impact, said Kamruzzaman, former chairman of Nehalpur union in Jashore's Monirampur upazila. The union is one of the areas most affected by waterlogging.

Besides, rainfall so far this year has been lower in Bhabadah region than in previous years and if normal levels of rainfall occur, areas will go underwater as usual and the pumps will become useless, said Kamruzzaman, who has long been involved in the Bhabadah

People living in the villages adjacent to the 52 beels spent money from their own pockets to pump out water from the crop fields to cultivate paddy this immediate past Boro season, he said.

Currently, there is no alternative to TRM to solve the waterlogging, he

Biswas, an adviser of the Bhabadah Water Mitigation Movement, said the waterlogging problem started in the late '80s due to excessive sedimentation amid lack of upstream water flow, which pushed sediment downstream.

The Mukteshwari, Teka, Hari, and waterlogging, he added.

Sree rivers, which originate mainly from the Bhairab river, pass through the Bhabadah region and play a vital role in draining out rainwater and saving the region from water stagnation.

However, high tide carries excessive sediment and deposits these on the riverbed, raising it over time, before receding again during low tide.

Once the riverbed rises, so does the water level of the surrounding beels and blocks drainage, leading to the whole region becoming perennially waterlogged.

Zahirul Haque Khan, deputy executive director of the Institute of Water Modelling, said while the water can be drained using the pumps, the river cannot be saved in this process.

"I heard water has been removed by using the pumps but the siltation that causes the river bed to rise cannot be managed this way," he said.

We recommend three methods including some dredging of the river as a short-term measure, TRM as a midterm measure, and starting circular flow from upstream to solve the waterlogging problem," Zahirul said.

WDB is doing the pump project on their own initiative whereas TRM is a well-planned and proven method that can manage the sediment of the river, keep it navigable, and ease

Woman sues

rivals with me."

On Friday morning, the chairman asked the woman to visit his house for the recovery of the borrowed money, the OC said, quoting the case

When she reached his house, none of his family members was present and he raped her taking the chance.

The woman was sent to Bogura Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital for her forensic examinations, the police officer said.

Meanwhile, in Rajshahi's Bagmara upazila on Friday night, police arrested a youth for raping a 10-year girl alluring her by offering a fish.

The victim's father filed a case against Sumon Chandra, 19, of the same upazila, in this regard, said the district police.

According to the case statement, Sumon called the girl to his house on Friday afternoon when his family members were away.

fish for her aquarium if she visited him. As the girl visited him, he raped Hearing the victim's scream,

He told her that he would give her

villagers rushed to Sumon's house and rescued her.

Sumon managed to escape but was later held the same day

Light behind

FROM PAGE 16

the middle of another galaxy, 800 million light years away.

Those X-rays kept to a strange pattern: after the bright, flaring X-rays, there would be smaller and later ones. which appeared in different "colours' than those more obvious ones.

The X-rays looked as if they were being reflected from the other side of the black hole, noticed Stanford University astrophysicist Dan Wilkins. But such an event would seem highly unusual, given black holes are more famous for destroying light than being a source of it.

"Any light that goes into that black hole doesn't come out, so we shouldn't be able to see anything that's behind the black hole," he said in a statement.

But it was another, less famous characteristic of black holes that meant those X-rays could be seen. "The reason we can see that is because that black hole is warping space, bending light and twisting magnetic fields around itself," Wilkins explained.

The discovery of light from the other side of a black hole was predicted by Einstein's theory of general relativity. But it has never actually happened before, and the discovery marks the first time that light has ever been directly observed coming from behind a black hole.

The study, 'Light bending and X-ray echoes from behind a supermassive black hole', is published in Nature

Rhino killings on the rise in South Africa

AFP, Johannesburg At least 249 rhinos were killed the

first six months of this year in South Africa, the environment minister said yesterday, partly pushed by the easing of lockdown curbs that increased movement of poachers. South Africa is home to nearly

80 percent of the world's rhinos but their horns are prized in traditional medicine in Asia, and poachers have continued to mount an onslaught on the species.

The figure represents 83 more rhino killings compared with the same period in 2020.

Helena wringed money through illegal IPTV people awarded her with various titles the staff without giving salary and remuneration, he said, adding that 20like "Pallimata", "Mother Teresa" and

and foreign correspondents for the IPTV channel that she founded in 2018, according to Khandaker Al Moin, director of Rab's legal and media wing.

She appointed 70-80 staff and correspondents and took money from most of them, he said at a media briefing held at the Rab headquarters in the capital.

"We have found some receipts of monev deposit.'

With the ID cards provided, the local and foreign correspondents went asked some of her office staff who said that Helena was aware of it.'

Joyjatra Television was "spreading misleading propaganda and information" on digital platforms to defame important personalities and create panic and confusion in the public mind, Moin said.

"She first got befriended with important people of the state and later extorted money by blackmailing them. She took pictures with them at different times and spread them through social media only for this purpose.

Helena had a strong IT cell consisting of 15-20 people who maintained her social media platforms and ran publicity campaigns for her, according to Moin.

"Her ultimate goal was to earn name and fame so that everyone knows her," he said, adding that during interrogation, she said that

Moin said she has made negative

remarks about the important personalities, which has put the state in an embarrassing situation. "It's a matter of concern that she was

heard saying on Facebook live that she didn't even care any minister." The 49-year-old businesswoman inserted herself into public discourse

recently with a Facebook post to form "Bangladesh Awami Chakrijibi League", a group with no official links to the ruling party. She claimed to be the organisation's president. episode prompted her

expulsion from the subcommittee on women's affairs that she had joined six months earlier as well as from the advisory council of Cumilla (north) unit of AL. After her arrest on Thursday, the Rab

conducted a raid at the IPTV station and sealed it off. During the raid, which included

from the officials Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, Rab found illegal satellite TV equipment though she was running the channel as an IPTV. IPTV is a service that provides

television programming and other video content through the internet using the internet protocol as opposed to traditional cable or satellite signals.

Helena also sacked many of

25 people work for the IPTV. During primary interrogation,

Helena said that she and her husband, Jahangir Alam, own five garment factories, 15-17 flats in Uttara, Mirpur and Gulshan areas and five-six cars, according to Moin.

Alam began working in a garment factory in 1990 and later started his own venture in partnership with

So far, he owns five companies, Moin said

Anti-Corruption "There are Commission and the Criminal Investigation Department. They will look into these matters," Moin said, adding that Helena also runs the Joviatra Foundation through which she collected money from non-resident Bangladeshis.

After being tipped off, law enforcers conducted a raid at Helena's residence in Gulshan and arrested her.

Foreign liquor, walkie-talkie, foreign currency, casino items and deer hide were found at the property, according On Friday, a Dhaka court placed

Helena on a three-day remand in connection with a case Rab filed with Gulshan Police Station under the Digital Security Act.

She was also booked under the Narcotics Control Act, Special Powers Act and Wildlife Conservation Act.

Passport, birth certificate to be allowed Meanwhile, health officials said to data of the Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services

FROM PAGE 16

or passport. Our team is preparing a draft in this regard. The health minister will announce everything on August 6.

limit for the family members of the Covid-19 frontliners is 18. The county has been seeing a surge

in Covid deaths and infections for the last two months.

campaign from August 7. For this, the government has decided to set up around 14,000 vaccination centres in as many wards of different unions across the country.

those who have registered but have not received confirmation SMS will receive it in phases. "After completing the registration,

many people are waiting in the queue in each vaccination centre. Besides, we are administering vaccines to the migrant workers and others in emergency need on a priority basis. This is the reason for the délay. Everyone will get vaccine jabs gradually," a health official said wishing not to be named.

The government has so far received more than 2.39 crore vaccine doses from different sources, including 781,320 jabs of AstraZeneca vaccine from Japan yesterday.

people registered for vaccination. A total of 88,06,075 people have got the first jab and 43,39,386 people received the second shot, according

(DGHS). When the inoculation drive began on February 7, health officials had said

they were capable of administering 3.60 lakh jabs a day. But they have not been able to do so. The drive revolved mainly around

AstraZeneca vaccine supplied by India's Serum Institute, the largest vaccine producer in the world. It came to a grinding halt after New Delhi suspended vaccine export in the last week of April amid a massive surge in Covid infections in that country.

Bangladesh suspended administering the first dose AstraZeneca vaccine on April 26.

Vaccination of the first jab of Covid vaccines resumed in the country on a limited scale last month following the arrival of Sinopharm and Pfizer

Protests mark 6 months FROM PAGE 16 amount to crimes against humanity

information".

Bands of university students rode motorbikes around Mandalay waving red and green flags, saying they rejected any possibility of talks with the military.

"There's no negotiating in a blood feud," read one sign.

The army seized power on Feb 1 from the civilian government led by Aung San Suu Kyi after her ruling party won elections that the military argued were tainted by fraud. The country's electoral commission dismissed this allegation.

New York-based Human Rights Watch yesterday said the violent suppression of protests and arrests of coup opponents included acts that violate international humanitarian conventions.

"These attacks on the population

for which those responsible should be brought to account," Brad Adams, the group's Asia director, said in a statement.

Junta spokesman Zaw Min Tun could not be reached to respond to the allegations.

The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners activist group says at least 6,990 people have been arrested since the coup and accuses the armed forces of killing 939 people. The military says the number of protesters killed is far lower and members of the armed forces have also died in violence. It says its response has met international norms in the face of threats to national security.

The army has branded its opponents terrorists and says its February takeover was in line with the constitution.

alternatives may be the birth certificate

The government in phases has lowered the vaccination cut-off age to 25 for all citizens. However, the age

To save lives and curb the infections, the government has planned to launch a massive countrywide vaccination

Currently, the vaccination programme is being run through 1,005 points across the country.

As of yesterday, a total of 1,49,83990

to take the unprecedented step of intervening to try to upend his 2020 election loss to President Joe Biden. The fact that the Justice Department

"Just say that the election was corrupt + leave the rest to me and the R. Congressmen," Trump told Jeffrey Rosen, referring to Republicans, in a Dec. 27 phone call days before Rosen was appointed acting attorney general.

The notes showed Rosen told Trump the department could not and would not "change the outcome of the

Trump gets double blow Reform Committee painted a damning congressional scrutiny. Democratic-led House picture of Trump as he desperately Representatives Ways and Means sought to get the Justice Department

Trump had taken inappropriate advantage of U.S. tax laws. Handwritten notes taken by Acting Deputy Attorney General Richard Donoghue in December and released

on Friday by the House Oversight and

Committee has said it wants the

tax data in part to examine whether

let congressional investigators obtain the notes marked a dramatic shift from the Trump administration's repeated assertion of executive privilege to skirt