



Global Covid cases cross 200m mark

US, Germany, France rebuffs WHO call for moratorium on booster shots; Japan extends curbs, Melbourne back in lockdown

AGENCIES

The number of Covid-19 infections recorded worldwide passed 200 million yesterday, an AFP count showed, as Germany, France and Israel said they will go ahead with plans to administer vaccine boosters, disregarding an appeal by the World Health Organisation to hold off until more people are vaccinated around the world.

The highly contagious Delta variant has driven the virus to return with a vengeance, the number of daily cases recorded worldwide rising by 68 percent since mid-June.

But as more of the world gets vaccinated against the coronavirus -- particularly in wealthy countries -- the number of deaths has increased at a slower rate, up 20 percent since the start of July, according to AFP's count.

MELBOURNE LOCKS DOWN

In Australia, which had initially fended off the virus by slamming shut its borders, almost two-thirds of the 25 million population were in lockdown yesterday as the country struggles to quash a Delta outbreak.

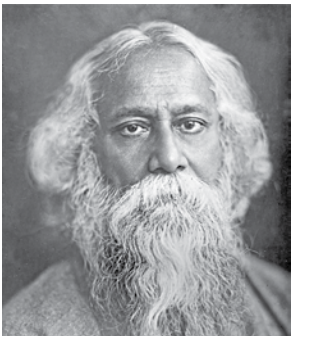
The country's two largest cities received a double blow in their efforts to retain "Covid Zero" status, with a record number of new cases in Sydney and Melbourne imposing

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



Nine-year-old Siam is all smiles as he could gather a good number of water lilies from a water body in Mujgunni area of Khulna. He takes these home for making curry. The national flower of the country blooms in water bodies in the rainy season.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN



Tagore's 80th death anniversary today

BSS, Dhaka

The nation is observing the 80th death anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore today recalling the great poet who did not leave any human emotion untouched in his works, especially poems and songs.

The day is being observed with a limited number of programmes due to the pandemic.

Tagore died at the age of 80 on August 7 in 1941, according to the Gregorian calendar. But his death anniversary is observed in Bangladesh on Sraban 22 of the Bangla calendar.

The cultural affairs
SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Tigers on verge of history

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will stand on the verge of history when they take on the visitors in the third T20I at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.



Although they were yet to register a single T20I win over Australia going into the five-match series, the Tigers are now in the box seat and chasing a first series win against Australia in any format after winning the opening two games.

A 23-run victory in the first T20I was followed up by a comprehensive five-wicket win in the second against an Australian side whose batting prowess has been dented in the absence of key players like David Warner, Aaron Finch, Glenn Maxwell, Steve Smith and Marcus Stoinis.

However, for a relatively inexperienced Bangladesh side, who are also missing key players like Tamim Iqbal, Mushfiqur Rahim and Liton Das, it was the youngsters who stood and delivered in the first two matches.

While there has not been any individual brilliance in the batting department yet, Bangladesh's bowling department remained compact and top-notch in the first two games.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

500 Indian MPs urge Thant to save Bangabandhu's life

AUGUST 6, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

MEMORANDUM TO THANT

About 500 Indian MPs from all parties, except the Muslim League, addressed a memorandum to UN Secretary General U Thant urging him to save the life of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The document warned that "if any attempt is made to try the great leader [Bangabandhu] by the military government of Pakistan, waves of terrible reaction will sweep Bangladesh and the Government of Pakistan will be held responsible for the consequences."

The copies of the memorandum would also be sent to heads of all governments and various diplomatic missions in New Delhi, said a spokesman.

NIXON'S POLICY SENSELESS: KENNEDY

US Senator Edward Kennedy charged the Nixon administration with following a senseless policy towards the East Pakistan refugee problem. Kennedy, who was also the chairman of the senate judiciary subcommittee on refugees, said it made no sense to provide the West Pakistan government with military supplies which helped create refugees, while spending millions of dollars to aid those refugees. Senator Kennedy made the criticism in response to President Richard Nixon's statement on August 5 opposing a House of Representatives measure that recommended cutting off

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1



'GUNFIGHT' WITH RAB Rohingya 'robber' killed in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A suspected Rohingya robber was killed in a "gunfight" with the Rab in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar early yesterday.

The dead is Nurul Alam Nuru, 40, chief of a robbery gang named after him, Rab claimed.

The "gunfight" took place beside a hill near the makeshift Rohingya camp in Damdamia Nature Park around 1:00am, said Lt Commander Mahbub Hasan, company commander of Rab-15.

A Rab team rushed to the spot on information of robbery and abduction. Sensing their presence, the robbers opened fire, forcing the law enforcers to retaliate, he added.

Nuru was injured in the "gunfight". As his accomplices retreated, Rab members took Nuru to Teknaf Upazila Health Complex where doctors

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

India builds world's highest road in eastern Ladakh



NDTV ONLINE

India's Border Roads Organisation has constructed the world's highest road in eastern Ladakh at an altitude of 19,300 feet.

The road has been constructed at an altitude higher than the Mount Everest base camps - the south base camp in Nepal is at an altitude of 17,598 feet, while the north base camp in Tibet is at 16,900 feet.

To put this in another perspective, most large commercial aircraft fly at 30,000 feet and above, so this road is at an altitude that's more than half

SEE PAGE 10 COL 6

Bangladeshi youth shot dead in US

UNB, Dhaka

A 28-year-old Bangladeshi youth was shot dead by an unidentified gunman at South Philadelphia in Pennsylvania of United States on Tuesday night, his friends and police said.

The youth was identified as Moazzem Hossain Saju, son of Shams Uddin in Sylhet's Beanibazar upazila. He lived with his family in Northeast Philadelphia of Pennsylvania.

Mashukul Islam Khan,
SEE PAGE 10 COL 6



PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 6

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:20 12:30 5:00 6:47 8:15
JAMAAT 4:55 1:15 5:15 6:50 8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

2 AL men killed in Laxmipur, Gaibandha

STAR REPORT

Two Awami League men were killed in Laxmipur and Gaibandha on Wednesday night.

The victim of Laxmipur is Harunur Rashid Harun, 55, general secretary of ward-6 of Bashikpur union unit AL in Sadar upazila.

Quoting witnesses, police said Harun was watching Bangladesh versus Australia cricket match on television, sitting in a grocery shop of the union's Fathe Dharmapurvillage on Wednesday night.

Around 9:00pm, six to seven unidentified criminals came to the shop in a CNG-run auto-rickshaw and opened fired in the air.

At one stage, they started stabbing Harun indiscriminately. The attackers fled the scene, leaving Harun critically injured.

Harun was first taken to a local private hospital. Later, he was shifted to

SEE PAGE 10 COL 3



Covid patient Siraj Uddin, 70, being taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. His wife said they brought him to Dhaka from Narsingdi after failing to get him hospitalised when he developed breathing difficulties.

PHOTO:
ANISUR RAHMAN

Allegations serious if reports true

Says Indian SC on Pegasus snooping scam

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India's Supreme Court yesterday said the allegations of Pegasus-related snooping are serious if the reports on it are true.

A bench of Chief Justice N V Ramana and Justice Surya Kant asked some questions at the outset from senior counsel Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Editors Guild and senior journalists N Ram and Sashi Kumar.

"Before going into all that, we have certain questions. No doubt, the allegations are serious, if the reports are true," Justice Ramana observed and raised the issue of delay, saying the matter had come to light way back in 2019.

"Reports of snooping came to light in 2019. I do not know whether any effort was made to get more information," he observed, adding that he did not want to say that it was an impediment.

The top court said it was not going into the facts of each case and if some people claimed that their phones were intercepted then there is the Telegraph Act under which complaints can be filed.

This was the first time that the Pegasus issue came up before the Indian Supreme Court since the controversy broke last month.

"I can explain. We do not have the access to many materials. The petitions have information about 10 cases of direct infiltration into phones," Sibal said.

The top court asked the petitioners, including Editors
SEE PAGE 10 COL 1