

BANGLADESH
UPDATE



12,606
New cases in 24hrs



13,35,260
Total cases



22,150
Deaths



11,72,437
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



4,285,724
Deaths



202,015,297
Total cases

195 countries okay key UN climate report

AFP, Paris

Representatives from 195 countries yesterday approved a critical UN science report that will provide the most comprehensive and up-to-date assessment yet of the state of Earth's climate.

"Today, #IPCC's latest #ClimateReport -- #ClimateChange 2021: The Physical Science Basis -- was approved and accepted in a historical first virtual approval session," the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change tweeted yesterday.

The report is set to be released on Monday.

IPCC delegates have been locked in virtual negotiations for two weeks, vetting a 30-page "summary for policymakers" - line-by-line, word-by-word -- of an underlying scientific report years in the making.

"This was such an amazing experience, so proud to be a small part of this great team and what we have achieved," German climatologist and IPCC contributor Friederike Otto said on Twitter.

On the heels of deadly floods in India, China and northern Europe as well as asphalt-melting heatwaves in North America and southern Europe, the IPCC's report assesses the latest climate science.

The world has changed since its last comprehensive assessment in 2014.

With increasingly sophisticated technology allowing scientists to measure climate change and predict its future path, the report is expected to make for harrowing reading.

It will project global temperature

changes until the end of the century under different emissions scenarios.

Based almost entirely on published research, it could forecast -- even under optimistic scenarios -- a temporary "overshoot" of the 1.5C target of the Paris Agreement, and upwardly revised estimates for long-term sea-level rise.

It is also expected to reflect huge progress in so-called attribution science, which allows experts to link individual extreme weather events directly to man-made climate change.

While the underlying IPCC report is purely scientific, the summary for policymakers is negotiated by national representatives, and therefore subject to competing priorities.

Belgian climate physicist and former IPCC co-chair Jean-Pascal Ypersele, who was party to the negotiations, said the talks were guided by the underlying science.

"I can testify that the authors of the #ClimateReport had the last word on every sentence in the SPM, which really was a Summary FOR (and not BY) policymakers," he said on Twitter.

The report comes less than three months ahead of the COP26 climate talks in Glasgow, which are seen as vital for humanity's chance of limiting the worst impacts of global warming.

French climatologist Corinne Le Quere congratulated the delegates for finalising "the text of what I think will be one of the most important scientific reports ever published".

There will be two further parts to the IPCC's latest round of climate assessments, known as AR6.

Delta drives rise in deaths

FROM PAGE 1

Health experts in Bangladesh too have expressed concern over the overall Covid situation and said the country's healthcare system is grappling with an increased number of infections and deaths caused by the variant.

They also criticised the government for suddenly reopening export-oriented factories amid the ongoing lockdown, saying the restrictions apparently have not been much successful in putting the brakes on the surge in cases due to the government move.

Thousands of workers had to return to their workplaces, mainly in Dhaka, Narayanganj and Gazipur, following the sudden announcement that the factories would reopen on August 1. They had gone to their village homes to celebrate the Eid-ul-Azha with their loved ones.

Most of them suffered miserably on roads as public transport remained suspended amid the lockdown. They could hardly follow the health guidelines.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, experts suggested that the government must expand its inoculation campaign and ensure that people maintain health safety guidelines properly. Otherwise, a "big disaster" lies ahead, they warned.

"The government should scale up its vaccination programmes and give vaccines to as many people as possible," said Prof Dr Mohammad Shahidullah, chief of the government's National Technical Advisory Committee (NTAC) on Covid-19.

Following the health guidelines is equally important, he said, adding, "People must adhere to the guidelines properly and Covid tests should be increased."

DAILY UPDATE

A total of 248 people -- 138 men and 110 women -- died from Covid in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, according

to a DGHS press release.

On Thursday, the country witnessed the highest daily deaths -- 264.

In the last seven days, 1,647 people died across the country. As many as 12,606 infections were reported during the period, taking the total number of infections to 13,35,260, said the release.

The Covid positivity rate yesterday was 26.25 percent while the overall positivity rate stood at 16.6 percent.

Meanwhile, Prof Be-Nazir Ahmed, former director (disease control) of the DGHS, said the health department was working extremely hard to tackle the unprecedented health crisis and that doctors and other health professionals were already exhausted.

"They have been working extremely hard. They are burned out ... I'm really concerned about the coming days," he told this paper.

Though the government extended the countrywide "strict lockdown" till August 10, a huge number of people are coming out of homes with several city streets witnessing traffic congestions.

Emphasising the importance of an effective lockdown, Dr Mohammad Shahidullah said, "Lockdown harms financially. But there is no alternative to it either. If the situation deteriorates in the future, we will suggest area-wise lockdown instead of enforcing it across the country."

Since April 5, the government has been enforcing restrictions in phases to curb the spread of the virus.

However, it decided to lift the lockdown after August 11. Following an inter-ministerial meeting on Covid-19 on Tuesday, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque said shops and offices would reopen on August 11.

Operation of public transport will also resume on a limited scale, he added.

Lockdown shocks vegetable farmers

FROM PAGE 1

farmer in Bogura, who is staring at losses of at least Tk 30,000.

Before the lockdown, he was selling the courgettes he grew on his 25 decimals of land at Tk 20 a kilogramme. Now, he gets at best Tk 7.

But the farmers' woes do not just end with the big hole in their wallets. Many might not be able to cultivate vegetables in the winter season.

One such farmer is Kishmat Ali, who grew green peppers on 26 decimals of land in Jamalpur.

He fears a loss of Tk 70,000 as the price of the crop has plummeted by half.

"How would I be able to cultivate next season?" a downcast Kishmat asked.

And yet, given the supply constraint because of the countrywide movement control order, the prices of vegetables are high in the kitchen markets, putting middle-class consumers and the poor, already hit hard by the pandemic, in a tight corner.

This week, most of the common vegetables are selling between Tk 30 and Tk 40 per kg at different kitchen markets in Dhaka.

Mubarak Ali, a wholesale trader of Karwan Bazar wholesale market, bought pointed gourds at only Tk 3 per kg from the Boro Bazar vegetable market in Jashore last week.

But he had to spend Tk 9 for each kg as transport and other costs to bring the vegetable to Karwan Bazar.

Normally, about 50 trucks loaded with vegetables from the Boro Bazar come to Dhaka daily, according to Mubarak, also the president of South Bengal Vegetable Traders Cooperative Society.

Amid the lockdown, the number of trucks has come down to 10-12, meaning the fares have hit the roof.

The government should have thought about the farmers when planning for the lockdown, said Mohammad Jahangir Alam, a professor of the department of agribusiness and marketing at Bangladesh Agricultural University.

There are about 80 lakh vegetable farmers all over the country, according to the DAE's estimates.

Their losses would have been minimised had the government taken steps to avoid disruptions in the supply chain during the lockdown, he said.

Then, Jasim from Jashore would not have let the fruits of his labour rot out in the fields.

Out of sheer anger and frustration, he stopped plucking the gourds.

"This is an unmitigated disaster," said a frustrated Jasim, who is fearing a loss of at least Tk 40,000 this season.



The Shimulia ferry ghat in Munshiganj sees a huge rush of passengers on the weekend yesterday as people from southern districts are heading towards the capital breaching health safety rules. The situation was almost similar at Banglabazar ferry ghat in Madaripur across the Padma. A total of 10 BIWTC ferries carried passengers and vehicles on the Shimulia-Banglabazar route throughout the day.

PHOTO: STAR

Tigers take historic series

FROM PAGE 1

tried to paddle over short fine leg but only managing to find the fielder in the circle.

A maiden from Nasum in the fourth over -- the first of the series -- and Fizz conceding three runs in the final over of the Powerplay saw Australia reach 20 for one, but Marsh released the pressure with a swept four and an inside-out six over cover against Nasum. Australia looked in control with Marsh then picking Shakib Al Hasan and Shoriful for boundaries.

With Australia gaining momentum at 68 for one in 12 overs, it appeared the game was going the visitors' way and when Shoriful dropped McDermott off Mustafizur in the first ball of the 13th over, the match was slipping away.

It was then that Fizz began to have his say, bowling a one-run over. The turnaround materialised and Shakib -- who played his first ever match for Bangladesh 15 years ago in an ODI in Harare -- was the one who initiated it, breaking the 63-run stand and casting opener Ben McDermott for a 41-ball 35. The Tigers were further buoyed when Shoriful struck in the 15th over. Moises Henrique departed for two trying to go over the infield and as the required run-rate crept over nine it was suddenly Australia who felt the pressure.

Fizz and Co then prevailed to notch what is a historic series win. Shoriful bagged two for 29 runs while Shakib and Nasum ended with one each.

Earlier, skipper Mahmudullah's 54-ball 53 took the Tigers to 127 for nine on another tough day for the batsmen. The end of the innings would be marked by Aussie pacer Nathan Ellis getting a hattrick on debut.

Having won the toss and electing to

bat, Bangladesh did not have the best of starts after rain had delayed the toss by an hour and 30 minutes. Ashton Turner created opportunities with Soumya Sarkar still searching for form and survived a stumping appeal before he was dropped by Carey at square leg.

Next over, Josh Hazlewood created all sorts of trouble for Soumya who dabbled at a few deliveries in the corridor of uncertainty with the ball angling across him. Soumya managed to get off strike on the fifth delivery.

Hazlewood struck next ball with a delivery that seamed slightly after pitching and then sort of held its line with Mohammad Naim only managing to nick it through to the wicketkeeper to depart for one.

Having survived the earlier over, Soumya's slog sweep did not connect on the first Adam Zampa delivery next over and the Aussies got the leg-before decision as it rapped his pads. Soumya departed for an 11-ball two, unable to overturn the decision.

Mahmudullah promoted himself up the order and faced with a slow outfield and the ball seaming a bit, the Tigers had their most experienced duo out in the middle in these conditions. It would result in their most meaningful partnership as Shakib and the skipper kept the runs ticking, reaching 28 for two at the end of the Powerplay.

The eighth over of the innings, bowled by Marsh, saw Mahmudullah and Shakib pick up 15 runs with the former finding the gap between mid-on and long-on for a four before Shakib found the ropes twice with a cheeky scoop and a well-controlled cut shot.

With Shakib looking good and the partnership contributing 44 off 36

deliveries, the Tigers were set back again when the left-hander holed out at long-off after a fluent 17-ball 26 as he tried to make room to hit a Zampa delivery over mid-off.

Aff Hossain, the hero of the last match, looked promising once again, hitting a flighted Agar delivery over mid-on for six. Bangladesh were moving along nicely but Australia created their own chances with skilled fielding.

Aff, looking good on a 13-ball 19, tried to steal a risky single after dabbing the ball to mid-off but Carey hit the bull's eye with only one stump to aim at and the Tigers were down to four for 76 runs after 12 overs.

The next two overs produced just five runs and a wicket as Shamim Hossain tried to heave across the line to a Hazlewood length delivery and holed out to midwicket after an eight-ball three. Nurul Hasan then looked well set for a steady knock, hitting Zampa over long on for a maximum but Australia fielders were right on the money again when a slight confusion from Nurul while running to the danger end saw him well short of the crease as Henriques effected a direct hit.

Mahmudullah had kept the score ticking with plenty of singles and with the outfield being slow, picked his gaps a few times to run doubles. Having only struck one boundary in the first 45 deliveries faced, he found the ropes thrice more to bring up his fifty in the final over before perishing to a full-length Ellis delivery.

The debutant then removed Mustafizur (0) and Mahedi (6) in successive deliveries and completed a hattrick on debut to finish with three for 34.

Target revised down to 32 lakh

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The DG said the special vaccination campaign would be conducted in union, municipality and city corporation areas. "People aged over 50, who could not register for the vaccination, can also take the shots this time."

He said people aged 50 years and above, women, differently abled people and those living in remote areas will get priority in this special campaign.

The DG said the vaccination drive would be carried out in all unions, municipalities and city corporation areas. The doses will be administered in remote areas on August 8 and 9, while the forcibly displaced Rohingyas aged over 55 will be inoculated on August 10 and 12.

Although there is a crisis of vaccines, the government is determined to vaccinate all citizens of the country, the DG said.

He urged the people to come forward and take the shots leaving all sorts of "negative thoughts and superstition" regarding vaccination behind to win the fight against the virus.

"You have heard various comments coming from different places. Various issues have come up. We are aware of those things. We will try so that those don't happen again," he said.

The vaccination programme will be carried out simultaneously in 4,600 unions, 1,054 municipalities and 433 wards in city corporation areas across the country with the help of 32,706 vaccinators and 48,459 volunteers.

Stating that around 30 lakh people were vaccinated in the last 10 days, the DG said, "This special drive is a pilot project to us. We will take lesson from this and move forward with our overall vaccination plan."

He said, "We want to test our

capabilities. We want to see how many vaccine jabs we can give to people at the grassroots."

The DG said one crore ninety-nine thousand people received the first dose of the vaccine in the country.

Currently, China's Sinopharm vaccine doses are being administered in rural areas and district towns while the Moderna vaccine shots in city corporation areas.

Mass inoculation against Covid-19 remained suspended in Bangladesh for over two months due to a shortage of doses. The country suspended administering the first dose of the vaccine on April 26. Registration of people for vaccination was suspended nine days later.

The government resumed administering the first dose on June 19 on a limited scale and then gradually expanded it.

Police quiz TV director Chayanika

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"Since we started the investigation, we saw that through drug dealing and other crimes, the activities were going on to ruin the children of upper-middle class families. As we interrogate Pori Moni, we find the names of individuals in this racket. One of them was Jimmy," Harun said.

Around 6:45pm, Chayanika's car was stopped by police on Panthapath minutes after she attended a live programme at a TV station. She was on the passenger seat of the vehicle.

Witnesses said as Chayanika refused to go to the DB office, policemen, some in plainclothes, got into the car. A female officer got into the passenger seat with her before the car left for the DB office on Minto road.

Chayanika had cast Pori Moni in her 2020 film Bishwashundori.

In June, when Pori Moni, whose real name is Shamsunnahar Smrity, at a press conference alleged that businessman Nasir U Mahmood tried to rape and murder her at Dhaka Boat Club. Chayanika was beside Pori Moni at the press conference and conveyed her support for Pori Moni.

Earlier in the day, Joint Commissioner Harun said everyone

involved with the illegal businesses of actress Pori Moni will face legal action.

He then said arrested movie producer Nazrul Islam Raz used to have an insignificant job before he started organising parties at night with different models.

Harun then implied that Raz used the models as escorts for wealthy individuals. "We got information from him."

Rab raided Pori Moni's Banani residence on Wednesday and detained her.

Officials said they recovered drugs and liquor from her flat.

As Rab personnel knocked on the door of her flat, Pori Moni went on Facebook live and said she had called Harun and told him that she wouldn't open the door unless he told her to.

"He [Harun] later called me and said that none of them [DB] had come," the actress said on the live video.

Pori Moni and Raz were shown arrested the next day in two separate cases filed by the Rab.

Raz will also be sued under Pornography Control Act, Rab said.

Rab said Pori Moni used to host regular parties at her flat, where Raz supplied foreign liquor and drugs.

Both of them along with their two associates have each been placed on four-day remand.

Rab earlier said the suspects were in a gang that used to organise parties attended by models at different flats in Gulshan, Banani and Baridhara areas where people used to take drugs.

The suspects then took photos of the well-off guests of the parties and blackmailed them later into paying hefty sums.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday placed arrested model Faria Mahbub Piasha on an eight-day remand in three separate cases filed with Gulshan, Bhatara and Khilkhet police stations under the Narcotics Control Act.

In another development, the Criminal Investigation Department has been tasked with the investigation of seven cases filed against Pori Moni, expelled Awami League leader Helena Jahangir, Piasha and model Moriom Akter Mou, CID Chief Mahbubur Rahman told The Daily Star.

Rab Additional Director General (operations) Col KM Azad, told The Daily Star on Thursday: "After interrogating the arrestees, we have got the names of some more people said to be involved in the racket."

Russia formally outlaws Navalny organisations

AFP, Moscow

Russia has formally banned organisations established by jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny as the opposition says the authorities are trying to stifle dissent ahead of parliamentary elections.

In June, Russia declared Navalny's organisations extremist and barred his allies from running in the polls.

Yesterday, the justice ministry added the names of three entities linked to Navalny -- including the Anti-Corruption Fund -- onto its list of banned organisations.

Navalny's regional offices and the Foundation for Protection of Citizens' Rights were also banned.

"Well, we've been put on a list of banned organisations!" the Anti-Corruption Fund said on Twitter. "But that's ok! They've banned us a million times before."

Earlier this year Navalny's regional offices disbanded to shield staff from possible prosecution and many of his allies have left the country.

But Navalny's senior associates have vowed to continue working to transform Russia and rid it of corruption. They have urged supporters to keep supporting their work by donating anonymously.

Navalny, who barely survived a poisoning with a Soviet-designed nerve agent last summer, was imprisoned for two and a half years on old embezzlement charges in February.

In a message from prison late last month, Navalny called on supporters to mobilise ahead of September parliamentary polls and punish members of the ruling party by voting them out of power.

Pandemic pushes millions more Mexicans into poverty

AFP, Mexico City

Millions more Mexicans have fallen into poverty because of the coronavirus pandemic, with people living in one of the country's top tourist destinations hit particularly hard, official data showed Thursday.

The number of people living in poverty rose by 3.8 million between 2018 and 2020, to 55.7 million -- 43.9 percent of the population, according to the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy.

Dengue infections

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current month, which indicates the fast-rising trend of the disease.

As the capital's public hospitals are overwhelmed with Covid patients, those with dengue were finding it hard to get admission there.

The growing number of dengue cases since last month has been an additional pressure for the hospitals.

Though most of the patients who were hospitalised have so far been released, 1,010 are still undergoing treatment at hospitals in Dhaka, and 38 outside the capital, the DGHS data shows.

DGHS spokesperson Dr Md Nazmul Islam said the dengue situation could turn alarming again, but it would be possible to face the situation if necessary measures are taken immediately.

"We have seen the dengue epidemic in 2019, and in 2021, we are in a similar situation," said Nazmul, also a director (disease control) of the DGHS.

At least 2,286 people were hospitalised across the country in July while the number was 272 in June. Forty-three were infected in May.

Meanwhile, Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh through a video message yesterday urged city dwellers to provide information about Aedes mosquito larvae or the breeding sources logging into their website or calling their control room numbers.

"We will take immediate steps to destroy the breeding sources after getting the information," said the DSCC mayor.

He said their teams led by ward councillors are going door to door after getting information from DGHS to destroy the Aedes mosquito larvae and breeding sources.

The DSCC mayor added that they are also conducting combing operations and they are monitoring the operation from their control rooms.

He said if any resident of DSCC area gives information about Aedes mosquito larvae or source in the website <https://forms.gle/gPamcWqJNfTDZvir6>, the city corporation will destroy those larvae and sources free of cost after getting the information.

He also asked residents to give information in this regard to their control room numbers (0170990888 and 029556014) if they want.