

# Khulna grapples with spiraling Covid cases

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

The number of death and positive cases of Covid-19 has been spiraling in Khulna division, turning the situation bad to worse.

As of yesterday, only three ICU beds out of 50 were vacant at two government hospitals -- including Khulna Medical College Hospital -- and two private hospitals, according to the hospital sources.

In July, 1,513 people died in the division while 202 in the first six days of August, said sources at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

A total of 36 deaths were reported in Khulna division yesterday and 34 on Thursday, according to DGHS.

Of the deaths, 10 were in Kushtia, nine in Khulna, six in Jhenaidah, five in Jashore, four in Meherpur, one each in Bagerhat and Narail, said DGHS.

The first infection in the division was detected on March 19 last year in Chuadanga. Now, total infections since the beginning in the division has crossed 98,000, said DGHS.

Analysing the data, it was found that the Covid-19 situation was relatively stable from the beginning of this year till March. However, since Eid-ul-Fitr, the infection rate has been increasing rapidly.

The highest 666 deaths in the division have been reported in Khulna district till yesterday since the pandemic started. Kushtia has the second highest tally of 608. Some 389 died in Jashore, 223 in

Jhenidah, 172 in Chuadanga, 130 in Bagerhat, 154 in Meherpur, 85 in Satkhira, 97 in Narail and 76 in Magura, said DGHS.

As of yesterday, 19,510 people tested Covid-19 positive in Khulna division. Of them, 1,262 were hospitalised and the rest are at home isolation, sources said.

In the last 24 hours till yesterday, 818 positive cases were reported from 3,246 samples in the division, putting the infection rate at 23.44 percent.

The total number of Covid infections in Khulna district stood at 24,690, signalling that the district is going through its worst Covid-19 situation till date, said Khulna Civil Surgeon Niaz Mohammad.

People from Bagerhat, Jashore, Narail, Meherpur, Chuadanga, Pirojpur, Gopalganj and other nearby districts throng Khulna city for better treatment, he said.

Contacted, Jashim Uddin Hawlader, health director of DGHS in Khulna, said, "The overall situation is still under our control; we are trying our best to provide services."

"Without active participation of all, it is not possible to curb Covid-19 infections," he said.

The city has 565 Covid-dedicated beds in three government and two private hospitals. As of yesterday, 305 were receiving treatment there, said the hospitals concerned.

The civil surgeon said in July, 358 people died including 220 at Khulna Medical College Hospital.

# No safari park in Lathitila forest: TIB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) on Friday called upon the government to revoke its plan to establish a safari park in Lathitila reserve forest in Moulvibazar.

Besides, the anti-graft watchdog urged the government to ensure accountability and exemplary punishment of those who threaten journalists for publishing news reports on the issue.

In a press release, TIB said Lathitila tropical evergreen forest is one of the country's significant forests, which is full of biodiversity. It questioned the rationality of undertaking such an environment-degrading plan in the name of tourism.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said the plan to build a safari park inside a reserve forest -- based on a survey conducted under the leadership of a former forest conservator who was arrested on allegations of corruption -- has put the overall objective of the initiative into question.

"Despite having a national forest and several eco-parks in Moulvibazar, to what extent is it necessary and rational to build a safari park in the tropical evergreen forest?" he asked.

Iftekharuzzaman said concerns that wildlife and environmental experts have raised is not unreasonable. If a safari park and various infrastructures are being built inside the forest, it might lead the wildlife to extinction and damage the biodiversity.

The entire forest could be destroyed in the long run, he added.

Moreover, if the safari park is established there, about 300 families of six villages and other locals who are dependent on the forest might be evicted, the anti-graft watchdog said.

TIB urged authorities concerned to evaluate opinions given by experts and locals.



# Former IGP Hadis Uddin dies of Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Hadis Uddin, former inspector general of police (IGP), died of Covid-19 while undergoing treatment at the ICU of Rajarbagh Central Police Hospital at 12:30pm yesterday. He was 72.

Hailing from Netrakona, Hadis left behind his wife, two sons and many relatives and admirers.

An officer of 1973 batch, he served as police chief from April 7, 2005 to May 7, 2005 with honesty, efficiency and reputation, said a statement of Police Headquarters.

His funeral was held at a mosque in the capital's Bashundhara Residential Area after Asr prayers.

He was buried at Banani Cemetery after the namaz-e-janaza.

IGP Benazir Ahmed expressed grief and sorrow over the death.

# Five nominated

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in Education, Culture and Sports; Pabna's Nurunnahar Begum in Agriculture and Rural Development; freedom fighter from Cumilla Principal Jobeda Khatun Parul in Politics; and Netrakona's Nadira Jahan (Surma Jahid) in Research.

The award giving ceremony will be held at the capital's Osmani Memorial Hall at 10:30am today, on the occasion of Bangamata's 91st birth anniversary. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs will organise it, where Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will join virtually as chief guest.

Begum Fazilatunnessa, PM's mother and wife of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, embraced martyrdom along with Bangabandhu and other family members in a brutal attack by some army personnel on August 15 in 1975.

She was born in Tungipara village of Gopalganj on August 8, 1930 and struggled for an independent Bangladesh alongside Bangabandhu.

President Md Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday paid glowing tributes to Bangamata Fazilatunnessa, reports BSS.

"Bangamata Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib is a pride of the Bangalee nation and a source of inspiration for womenfolk. She became Bangamata because of her sacrifice, compassion, cooperation and prudence," said President Hamid.

In her message, the PM said the nation has genuinely bestowed the Bangamata title on Fazilatunnessa Mujib because of her unparalleled sacrifice, cooperation and prudence. The ideology and examples set by her will remain as a source of inspiration for the Bangalee women throughout the ages.

Each awardee will get a medal made of 40 grammes of 18-carat gold, a replica of the medal, a cheque for Tk 4 lakh and a certificate of honour. The award will be considered as the highest state award for women in the "Ka" category, according to the women and children ministry.

Marking the birth anniversary, two e-posters have been released to be used in print, electronic, online and social media. The National Committee celebrating the birth centenary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has released the e-posters, said a press release.

# Aimed at

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he said. "I've been living in this area for a long time. It's a family neighbourhood and we try to keep it safe for our children."

"But I've been noticing presence of drug peddlers here, and had been protesting that." Later, the matter was reported to police, he added.

Dr Ali further alleged that Shamim and Hassan, a year ago, misbehaved with his neighbour Prof Habibullah as he too protested their drug peddling.

This newspaper also spoke with Prof Habibullah, who is currently working at National Curriculum and Textbook Board.

He said a group of youth led by Shamim and Hassan wanted to beat him with a stick in front of his house. "We did not say anything about it and kept quiet," he added.

The Daily Star could not reach Shamim or Hassan for comments as both of their mobile phones were turned off. Police said both are on the run after the incident.

Contacted, Harun-ur-Rashid, a sub-inspector of Ashulia Police Station, who visited the spot after the incident, said

Abul Hossen is being treated at Savar Enam Medical College Hospital under police custody.

Quoting locals, the SI said, "We heard that JU BCL leader Shamim Mollah fired the shots. There were seven of them in total."

"Abul Hossen is an associate of Shamim and Hassan. We got to know the names of five people. Efforts are on to arrest them and to know about the source of the weapon," said Rashid, also the case's investigation officer. "We are also quizzing Hossen."

He did not elaborate further. Asked, Jewel Rana, president of JU unit of BCL, admitted that Shamim is a BCL leader.

Regarding the incident, he said, "I'm yet to know the details. Organisational action will be taken against him if he's involved in the incident."

Meanwhile wishing anonymity, several students of JU alleged that besides being involved in drug peddling, Shamim often used to threaten journalists at the university, beat students and brandish firearms on the campus.

# Journo Shakir Ahmed no more

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Shakir Ahmed, a journalist of Sylhetview24.com, died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical college and Hospital on Friday night. He was 32.



He was a former correspondent at daily Bangladesh Today.

He left behind his wife, son, and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Family sources said he breathed his last at 9:30pm while undergoing treatment, due to heart and diabetes related diseases.

He was buried at his family graveyard in Madhabpur village.

# Even crematoriums

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"Bangladesh's eighth five-year plan mentioned the development of the marginalised population, including the hill tracts population. The provisions of this plan need to be reinterpreted and implemented in line with the provisions of SDGs," he said.

BIPF General Secretary Sanjeeb Drong highlighted the importance of inclusive development for indigenous people, saying that inclusive development does not always mean increasing per capita income or financial development.

It also means ensuring their safety and security, recognising their self-identity along with constitutional and legal identity, the guarantee of traditional land rights, and the establishment of their educational and cultural rights.

"We are saying that the country's per capita income has increased to

USD 2,227, but this doesn't register with indigenous people. Why do they lose their land or migrate to India? And why do indigenous women not get justice? Answers to these questions are equally linked with inclusive development," he said.

Advocate Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, joined the webinar as a panellist. He talked about the constitutional rights of indigenous people.

He said just like indigenous people, religious minorities are also lagging behind and facing an identity crisis.

Shamsul Huda, executive director of ALRD, said numerous sections have been implemented since the signing of the historic CHT Accord two decades ago. However, the major issue -- the land commission that was formed -- has not been implemented yet.

The commission lacks adequate workforce and budget. Those must be ensured for it to perform its duties, he said.

Nijera Kori Coordinator Khushi Kabir said numerous indigenous people fought for independence in 1971, and there was no discrimination back then. "Then why don't we respect them now?"

Rajshahi lawmaker Fazle Hossain Badsha, convener of parliamentary caucus on indigenous peoples and minority issues; Justice (ret'd) Mohammed Nizamul Huq, former justice of Supreme Court's Appellate Division and chief legal advisor of BLAST; Prof Sadeka Halim, dean of Dhaka University's (DU) Faculty of Social Sciences; Prof Rubaet Ferdous of DU's Department of Mass Communication and Journalism; indigenous rights activist Meinthin Promila, among others, also spoke at the event.



Once part of Jatrabari's Kutubkhali canal, this waterbody has been turned effectively into a large gutter due to construction work around it and then filled up with waste to the point no water passes through it. Only a few months ago, Dhaka South City Corporation had cleaned it up, but that effort has gone down the proverbial drain, judging by the looks of it. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

# Invitation to Bid (ITB) for IT and Office Equipment

Tender Ref. No. icddr,b/SCM/OTM/2021/36 Date: 08 August 2021

icddr,b leads the four-year TB implementation project titled "USAID's Alliance for Combating TB in Bangladesh (ACTB) Activity". icddr,b invites renowned equipment manufacturers and authorised agents/distributors of IT and office equipment to participate in a bidding process for supplying and installation of IT and office equipment for USAID's ACTB.

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

(Supply & Installation of IT and Office Equipment)

Pre-bid meeting will be held on 12 August 2021 at 12:00 p.m. through Microsoft Teams. Interested bidders should notify icddr,b about their interest in participating in the pre-bid session through an email to [supplychain@icddr.org](mailto:supplychain@icddr.org). The email must be sent by 11 August 2021 by 5:00 p.m. Please mention 'Bid reference' and 'Interested in Pre-bid participation' in the email subject.

Offerors shall submit password protected Technical and Financial offers through email to [supplychain@icddr.org](mailto:supplychain@icddr.org). Offers must be received no later than 22 August 2021 by 3:00 p.m. (BST). 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 of the proposals without assigning any reason whatsoever. This ITB will also form a part of the contract and will be binding upon the tenderer.



Senior Manager, Procurement  
Email: [supplychain@icddr.org](mailto:supplychain@icddr.org)

# 30 ambulances

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according to the Indian High Commission in Bangladesh. The remaining ambulances are expected to arrive in batches by the end of September.

"The ambulances are intended to support the government of Bangladesh's extensive effort to combat the Covid pandemic. They underline India's continuing and long-term commitment to partner the fraternal people of Bangladesh," the Indian High Commission said.

# Govt shut

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Noting that the prime minister has been working relentlessly to address many challenges the country is facing due to the pandemic, he said during this crisis, all political parties should be involved in saving lives and standing by the needy.

Quader called upon all to follow the health rules and help motivate people to get vaccinated.

He also emphasised on building a workforce suitable for the international labour market.

AL relief and social welfare secretary Sujit Roy Nandi, office secretary Biplob Barua and IDEB general secretary Md Shamsur Rahman, spoke at the event, chaired by IDEB president AKM Hamid.

# Oxygen for people in remote areas

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

With an aim to help people in rural areas, a welfare organisation on Friday distributed 8 oxygen cylinders and other medical equipment in Moulvibazar.

Hazipur Society handed over the equipment to local volunteer groups in post office area of Kulaura's Hazipur union.

Previously, they distributed seven oxygen cylinders, nebulisers and oximeters, among other equipment, said organisers.

"We are planning to increase our efforts to help people in need," said Maj (ret'd) Nurul M Chowdhury, president of the organisation.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Department of Public Health Engineering  
Office of the Superintending Engineer  
Sylhet Circle, Tophkhana, Sylhet

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি  
গাম শহরের উন্নতি

**Invitation for Enlistment & Renewal of Enlistment (2021-2022)**  
Memo No. 46.03.9100.013.07.41.15-55 Date: 04/08/2021

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh		
1. Ministry/Division	Ministry of Local Govt. Rural Development & Co-operatives, Local Govt. Division.	
2. Agency	Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE).	
3. Procuring entity name	Superintending Engineer, Sylhet Circle.	
4. Procuring entity district	Sylhet.	
5. Invitation for	Enlistment & Renewal of Enlistment.	
6. Invitation Ref. No.	CE, DPHE Office Memo No. 46.03.0000.001.35.001.13-234.	
7. Date	03/08/2021.	
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>		
8. Procurement method	Limited Tendering Method.	
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>		
	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
9. Application closing date and time	01/09/2021	5.00pm
10. Name & address of the office(s)		
-Application form availability	Office of the Executive Engineers, DPHE, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar.	
-Receiving application form	Office of the Superintending Engineers, DPHE, Sylhet Circle, Tophkhana, Sylhet.	
<b>INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT</b>		
11. Eligibility of applicant	a. Must have valid trade licence. b. Must have TIN. c. Must have bank solvency certificate. d. Others document as mentioned in Application Form.	
12. Price of application form (Tk)	500.00 (non-refundable).	
13. Enlistment/renewal fee (Tk)	New enlistment fee 5000.00+15% VAT and renewal fee 2000.00+15% VAT. Must be submitted in the form of Pay Order/Demand Draft in favour of Executive Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Division. Two separate POs/DDs to be submitted -- one for Enlistment/Renewal Fee and another for 15% VAT of Tk 750.00/300.00 respectively. If application is not accepted, the PO/DD will be refunded.	
<b>PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS</b>		
14. Name of official inviting application	M. Shaikh Sadi Rahmatulla.	
15. Designation of official inviting application	Superintending Engineer, DPHE, Sylhet Circle, Sylhet.	
16. Address of official inviting application	DPHE, Tophkhana, Sylhet.	
17. Contact details of official inviting application	0821727461 se.sylhet@dphe.gov.bd	
18. The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all applications.		