

AFGHANISTAN WAR
Taliban seize sixth provincial capital following a weekend blitz across the north
SEE PAGE 6

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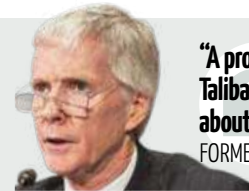
REGD. NO. DA 781 | Vol. XXXI No. 199 | SRABAN 26, 1428 BS | 16 PAGES PLUS LIFESTYLE PRICE : Tk12.00



"The strict lockdown has been relaxed for the sake of people's lives and livelihoods, but it may be imposed again if covid situation worsens."
ROAD TRANSPORT AND BRIDGES MINISTER OBAIDUL QUADER



"This report must sound a death knell for coal and fossil fuels, before they destroy our planet."
UN CHIEF ANTONIO GUTERRES ON LANDMARK CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT



"A prolonged civil war is a more likely outcome than a swift Taliban takeover of the entire country. They're being very smart about this. They're not launching major strikes into Kabul."
FORMER US ENVOY TO AFGHANISTAN RYAN CROCKER

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Special drive now uncertain

May not start Aug 14 for crisis of shots; trial runs like the ongoing one next month

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The government is not likely to launch the planned special vaccination programme from August 14 as inadequate vaccine doses mire the current inoculation drive against Covid-19.

However, the current six-day pilot programme, will continue until August 11, officials said, adding that a similar campaign might be launched in September to administer the second dose to individuals who got the first one.

Meanwhile, the usual vaccination campaign will continue, they said.

Ever since the government announced giving the jabs to people turning up at the nearly 4,000 special vaccination centres with NID cards, the sheer number of people willing to get the shot has been overwhelming vaccinators across the country for the last three days.

"We will launch a similar six-day campaign in September to give them the second dose," Shamsul Haque, member

"Now we are securing the second dose of the vaccines because a large number of people have got the first shot in the current special campaign."

MEMBER SECRETARY OF THE VACCINE DEPLOYMENT COMMITTEE AT THE HEALTH DIRECTORATE
SHAMSUL HAQUE

secretary of the Vaccine Deployment Committee at the health directorate, told The Daily Star.

The current programme was launched with a target of inoculating 32 lakh people, but the target was achieved in the first two of the six days.

As people turned up at vaccination centres in droves, many facilities across the country ran out of their daily allocated doses within two to three hours of starting the day.

People stood in mile-long queues on roads, crowds jammed themselves into vaccination centres and brawls broke out, turning into potential superspreading events. Besides, thousands returned without jabs.

Health officials said the special vaccination drive planned to launch from August 14 might be postponed due to a crisis of doses.

"Now we are securing the second dose of the vaccines because a large number of people have got the first shot in the current

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



The Bangladesh players pose for a selfie following the fifth and final T20I against Australia which the Tigers won by 60 runs to wrap up the series 4-1 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ATTACK ON BANK OFFICIALS

Police probe clears Sikder brothers

Report now with court

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER and EMRIL HASAN BAPPI

Police dropped the names of Ron Haque Sikder, managing director of Sikder Group, and his brother, from the investigation report of a case filed against them abducting, torturing and opening fire on two Exim Bank officials over permission for a loan.

Investigation Officer Md Ripon Uddin, also a sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of police, on July 29 submitted the probe report before the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court, saying that both parties had settled the matter out of court.

The court will decide whether to accept the probe report after the regular

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



DECISION TO ALLOW PUBLIC TRANSPORT

'Arbitrary', may worsen the surge

Say health experts; transport leaders too caught off-guard

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the Delta variant of Covid spreading across the country, the government decision to allow buses to run at full capacity from tomorrow has baffled health experts.

"They fear such an 'arbitrary' decision based on suggestions from the law enforcement agencies may drive up virus infections, which will be evident after two weeks.

Besides, transport leaders expressed surprise at the government directive allowing only half of any transport fleet to operate, saying it would lead to rush of passengers.

According to a government circular issued on Sunday, local administrations and the law enforcement agencies will decide on the operation of public transport after discussions with transport owners and workers.

Asked about the logic behind the decision, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam said, "It is based on suggestions from the law enforcement agencies."

He was speaking at a press briefing after a cabinet meeting at the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6



Covid shots given at home in Chattogram

Probe launched

ARUN BIKASH DEY And FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN, Cg

While people all over the country have been waiting in line for hours to get Covid-19 jabs during the mass vaccination campaign, which began three days ago, many in the port city have been found getting the facilities illegally at their homes.

The issue came to the fore when one Md Hasan, 31, on Sunday posted a photo on his Facebook profile in which he was receiving a shot in a home instead of a healthcare facility, on his Facebook profile on Sunday.

After many such photos were seen, the administration began an investigation.

According to law

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

Some now paying bribes for jabs

Poor number of Covid doses being delivered to vaccine centres

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is a shortage of vaccines, centres are being provided with only a limited number of doses, and many people are waiting in line but returning unvaccinated.

But for the right amount of money, slipped from one palm to another, one can cut the line at certain centres.

During the countrywide mass vaccination campaign, ward commissioners and their officers have been activated to provide the vaccinations.

At Radda MCH-FP Centre in Mirpur-10, our correspondent observed how crowds were unable to get in through the door without paying Tk 200-300.

Thongs of angry vaccine-seekers gathered in front of the closed gates of the centre and a brawl broke out yesterday. "I came here yesterday [Sunday] to get the vaccine, but I was told that they were out of vaccines, so I was asked to come back today [Monday], and I did. But I am not being let in through the gates," said a woman.

Another man described how a vaccine seeker standing behind him cut the line by paying a "volunteer." "He came out and showed me his vaccination card," said the man.

People paying were being let in through a pocket gate at the back, observed our correspondent.

The "volunteers" taking money from the vaccine

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Tigers wrap up series with thumping win

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Bangladesh ended the series as they began, dominating proceedings with the ball as they condemned Australia to their lowest-ever T20I score of 62 all out to clinch the five-match series 4-1 with Shakib Al Hasan cleaning up the tail.

The 60-run victory under lights at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday was also the Tigers' second-largest T20I victory in terms of runs.

It was a historic series win for the Tigers in what was their first bilateral T20I series against the Aussies. Having taken an unassailable lead in the series by winning the first three T20Is at Mirpur, Bangladesh reasserted their dominance in yesterday's fifth T20I after the minor blip of losing the fourth on Saturday.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

CASES AGAINST PORI, OTHERS

No progress as probe keeps changing hands

MUNTAKIM SAAD

The probe in the cases filed against Pori Moni, two models and some others has been hindered due to frequent changes in the agencies in charge of the investigation.

In a span of just a week, three investigation agencies were given charge of the cases against Pori, models Faria Mahbub Piyasha and Moriom Akter Mou, their associates Mishu Hasan, Masudul Hasan Jisan, film producer Nazrul Islam Raz and sacked Awami League leader Helena Jahangir.

After local police, Detective Branch and the Criminal Investigation Department, the Rapid Action Battalion now wants to investigate 10 cases filed against Pori Moni, Raz, Mishu, Jisan and Helena.

A legal expert opined that the repeated change of the investigation officers will bring no progress but instead create an anomaly for the prosecution.

Speaking to The

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



Waiting for hours in line to get their shots on the third day of the ongoing mass vaccination campaign, people complained about irregularities and chaos, adding that following health safety rules was impossible due to the heavy crowd. The photo was taken yesterday from Radda MCH-FP Center in Mirpur.

PHOTO: STAR

IPCC CLIMATE REPORT

Grim picture painted for Bangladesh

Warns world of disaster unless serious, massive steps taken

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Bangladesh is likely to face more frequent and more intense heavy rainfalls, flooding, and cyclones due to global climate change in the coming days, predicted the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

The IPCC report titled 'Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis' released yesterday said climate change will bring multiple changes in every region. Coastal areas will see continued sea level rise throughout the 21st century, there will be more frequent and severe coastal flooding in low-lying areas and there will be coastal erosion.

"Due to global warming, frequency of category 4, category 5 cyclone will increase in Bangladesh. Due to this, frequency of storm surges will also rise and the coastal areas will be badly affected," Professor AKM Saiful Islam, one of the lead authors of the IPCC report, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He also said heavy rainfall will take place in the country and subsequently more flooding will be expected.

"The frequency and intensity of heavy rain and flooding will increase in the country which will impact on the agriculture too."

The Buet professor also said sea level will continue to rise and salinity will increase in the Bangladesh's coastal areas.

Last year, Bangladesh suffered its second longest and worst flood since 1998, which lasted for over 40 days. In 2018, it saw the highest water levels during floods in history, a record that got broken the next year.

Environmentalists said the frequency of flood and cyclones has increased in the country in recent years.

The IPCC report said most of these impacts are irreversible and hence cannot be remediated even if

MORE ON PAGE 6

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3