

Uncontrolled

FROM PAGE 12

an uncontrolled diabetes can cause a sudden drooping of it, which is known as 'ptosis'. It can cause paralysis of the muscles of eyes, resulting in squinting. Uncontrolled blood sugar can also cause early cataract, at a very young age," said Dr Sabrina Rahmatullah, a consultant Vitreo-Retina and Phaco Surgeon of Bangladesh eye Hospital.

"As diabetes is a microvascular disease, which means it affects small vessels of the body, it can damage small blood vessels of retina and cause dot shaped bleeding," Dr Sabrina said.

Diabetes can also affect the nerve which supplies visual information to our eyes, known as the optic nerve.

During the Covid-19 period, another eye problem -- Orbital mucormycosis -- is surfacing. It's a rare fungal infection that affects patients with altered immunity from diabetic ketoacidosis, said Dr Ferdous Akhter Jolly, associate professor of ophthalmology department, BIRDEM General Hospital and Ibrahim Medical College.

According to Dr Ferdous, other vision hampering complications in diabetic patients are bacterial corneal infection, frequent spectacle power change and increased incidence of glaucoma.

Prevention is the best remedy to prevent eye problems. So, proper control of diabetes through regular exercise, balanced diet, medicine for diabetes, control of blood pressure and cholesterol can help lower the risk for vision loss, Dr Ferdous said.

"Comprehensive dilated eye examination to check retina at least once a year and regular follow up can help patients prevent and delay vision loss," she added.

A patient suffering from DR must go for investigations and start treatment as advised by doctor as early as possible. Delay in starting treatment may lead to severe vision threatening complications and ultimately blindness.

Business icon

FROM PAGE 12

chairman of Anwar Group of Industries, The City Bank Limited, Bangladesh Finance and Investment Company Ltd, and founder director of City General Insurance Company Limited.

Hossain, the renowned industrialist and successful business icon, was the chairman of the DCCI Foundation for a long time.

Hossain established Anwar Silk Mills in 1968, the first Bangalee owner of silk mill in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and started marketing the 'Mala Sari' made from the factory that became a much-talked about product at that time.

Rest of Covid

FROM PAGE 12

Triggered by the Delta variant of the coronavirus, the positivity rate rose to its highest -- 33 percent -- on July 24.

New Covid-19 cases and deaths have also been declining recently.

Yesterday, the health directorate reported 172 deaths and 7,248 new cases across the country.

With this, the total number of deaths is 24,719 and confirmed cases 14,40,644.

Of the yesterday's dead, 94 were male and 78 were female.

The highest number of deaths -- 67 -- were in Dhaka division, followed by 47 in Chattogram, 16 in Khulna, 15 in Sylhet, 10 in Mymensingh, eight in Rajshahi, five in Barishal and four in Rangpur.

New mermaid

FROM PAGE 12

has a cap-like structure similar to an umbrella, has been named *Acetabularia jalakanyaka*, after the word 'jalakanyaka' which means 'goddess of oceans' or 'mermaid' in the Sanskrit language.

It is the first species of the genus *Acetabularia* discovered in India, Felix Bast, a scientist and professor from the Central University of Punjab in India, told The Independent.

"The newly discovered alga is so stunning; it has caps with intricate designs as if it were umbrellas of a mermaid," said Bast, who is also a lead author of a study into the new species.

"Having such a giant cell is advantageous for molecular biologists who study cellular processes; they can see it and manipulate it with naked eye. For this reason, *Acetabularia* is considered a model organism," the scientists said in a statement.

The marine alga's DNA was analysed and compared with that of other plants in the lab for the study. The results of the analysis have been accepted for publication in the Indian Journal of Geo-Marine Sciences.

Bast said he first stumbled upon the alga during a family trip to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in May 2019 and thought it was a variant of a known species.

After looking at the unique designs on the plant's cap-like structures, however, he brought samples to the lab for analysis.

"After meticulous taxonomic work that lasted for more than one and a half years, it turned out to be a new species," Bast said in a statement.



A banner that reads, "The state has failed, people are dead" is displayed as protesters drape sacks, used to represent the bodies of people who have died from Covid-19, from the Democracy Monument during a demonstration calling for the resignation of Thailand's Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha over the government's handling of the coronavirus crisis in Bangkok yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Death toll in Myanmar crackdown passes 1,000

Says advocacy group

AFP, Bangkok

Myanmar's security forces have killed more than 1,000 civilians since the military ousted Aung San Suu Kyi from power six months ago, an advocacy group said yesterday.

The country has been in turmoil since February 1, when the armed forces seized power in a lightning coup, triggering dissent as protesters demanded a return to democracy.

Security forces responded with bloody crackdowns, using live rounds against civilians. But anti-junta mobs -- some of whom have formed self-defence groups -- are still taking to the streets daily in

flash marches.

Activist group Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) -- which verifies the deaths and mass arrests under the regime -- said the number of people killed by security forces reached 1,001 yesterday.

The actual number is likely far higher, said AAPP's joint secretary Ko Bo Gyi.

"As long as the military is in power, they will continue to kill youths, professionals like doctors and teachers, men, women and children," he said.

"They are not only killing our lives but the country's future and

democratic hopes."

Ko Bo Gyi -- whose group has been named an "unlawful" organisation by the junta and is currently in hiding -- also accused authorities of "weaponising" Covid-19 as the country weathers a deadly surge.

So far, Myanmar has recorded more than 360,000 cases and 13,623 deaths from Covid.

The health crisis has been aggravated by a lack of formal medical care as many hospitals have been emptied of staff joining nationwide strikes against the junta.

Patients are also reluctant to go to military-run hospitals, creating long lines for oxygen and medical supplies

in pharmacies across Yangon.

The junta has repeatedly justified the coup by alleging widespread fraud in last year's election, and given much lower civilian death tolls.

Authorities also said in June that more than 90 members of the security forces have been killed in clashes.

Deposed leader Suu Kyi is facing a raft of criminal charges, from possessing illegal walkie-talkies to violating the state secrets act.

Army chief Min Aung Hlaing was installed as the prime minister of a "caretaker" government, which the junta has dubbed the State Administration Council.

Rohingyas testify about the horrors they faced

FROM PAGE 12

many other women in their village and then burned their homes to the ground.

The women themselves were victims of sexual violence by security forces in the Rakhine State before they fled to Bangladesh in 2017. The names of the victims are being withheld for safety purposes.

This is the first hearing after the BROUK in 13 November petitioned to Argentinean courts to open an investigation into the role of Myanmar's civilian and military leaders in committing genocide and crimes against humanity against the Rohingya.

Nearly 8 lakh Rohingyas fled the military crackdown in Rakhine in 2017. Earlier too, there were several waves of Rohingya influx since the 1980s from the state.

Under the principle of universal jurisdiction, such crimes can be

investigated anywhere in the world regardless of where they were committed. The hearing on 17th August, 2021 forms part of this process in which the Argentinian judiciary is considering whether to take up the case.

During the hearing, the President of the of the Appeal Court Ojea Quintana said they will issue a prompt decision in the coming days. BROUK will take the case to the Argentinian Supreme Court, if necessary, Ojea said.

Since 2019, developments at the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have added momentum to international justice for the Rohingya genocide. At the same time, many experts -- including the UN Fact-Finding Mission in Myanmar -- have urged states to pursue universal jurisdiction cases against the Tatmadaw and its allies.

"This is the first time anywhere in

the world that a Rohingya has a chance to sit in person in front of a court of law, impartial and independent, to talk about the crimes against us," said Tun Khin, President of BROUK, at the hearing.

This is also a reminder to the world that justice is the only way to break the cycle of violence in Myanmar. The same military that has tried to wipe out the Rohingya as a people are now in control of the country since the coup, he said.

"The Tatmadaw must face the consequences of their murderous actions. This week's hearing is not just for the Rohingya, but for all our brothers and sisters in Myanmar who have suffered through military abuse."

If the case is accepted by the Argentinian judiciary, it will be the first universal jurisdiction case related to the Rohingya crisis anywhere in the world.

The case in Argentina will cover

the full range of crimes committed entirely in Myanmar against the Rohingya, including mass murder, enforced disappearances, widespread torture, sexual violence, and mass imprisonment. This is different to the ICC case, which is limited to only crimes which have at least partially been committed on Bangladeshi territory.

Among those named in the case are Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, the Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief, currently self-appointed Prime Minister of Myanmar, and other high-ranking military officials.

"For decades, the Myanmar military has with impunity tried to wipe the Rohingya out as a people. With Myanmar both unwilling and unable to investigate itself -- especially since the coup -- the international community must step in and support all justice efforts," said Tun Khin.

3 cases filed against city BNP leaders

FROM PAGE 12

leaders and activists and around 3,000 unannounced on charge of assaulting and injuring police personnel and damaging properties.

The accused include Abdus Salam and Rafiqul Alam Mojinu, convener and member secretary of Dhaka south city unit BNP, and Amanullah Aman and Aminul Huq, convener and member secretary of its Dhaka north city unit.

Besides, two contractors of metro rail project filed two cases against unnamed people.

Md Shohidullah, deputy commissioner of Tejgaon division, said, "So far, 47 accused have been arrested. We are trying to arrest the

others."

Abdus Salam, admin and security officer of Metro Rail Project Line-6, lodged a case against 100 to 150 unidentified people, accusing them of assembling illegally with a motive to kill, causing grievous injuries and damaging goods worth Tk 30 lakh.

The attackers vandalised six vehicles of the project and caused injuries to four people.

Another case was filed by Abdus Salam Fakir, security supervisor of Contract Package-4 of Italian-Thai Development Company, against 80 to 120 unknown people for attacking the metro rail project, throwing brick chunks at police on duty at the metro rail site and causing damage to

properties.

MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company LTD, said cases were filed as six vehicles used for carrying equipment for metro rail project were damaged by the attackers.

He said the attackers tore down the fence of the construction site in Bijoy Sarani area and entered the site. "When workers asked why they have entered the restricted area, the attackers beat up our workers."

One of the workers had to be hospitalised, Siddique said.

On Tuesday, BNP men and police clashed during a programme, leaving dozens of party leaders and activists as well as law enforcers injured.

The clash happened around 10:30am when members of the newly formed convening committees of the party's Dhaka north and south city units went to place wreaths at the grave of party founder Ziaur Rahman at Chandrima Udyan.

The BNP and police blamed each other for the clash.

The BNP had said the law enforcers attacked them without any provocation while Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal claimed that police were compelled to use teargas after being attacked by the BNP men.

On August 2, the party announced convening committees for its two Dhaka city units.

CAAB notice sparks confusion

FROM PAGE 12

Lumpur over phone.

"We will make an announcement clarifying that travellers don't need to come to the high commission for permission," he added.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Kamrul Islam, general manager (public relations) of US-Bangla Airlines in Dhaka, said they were allowing to fly home only those Bangladeshi travellers who took both shots of Covid vaccines.

In reply to a query, Kamrul said he was not aware of special permission mentioned in the CAAB circular.

Earlier, those wishing to return home would need to undergo PCR tests for Covid before departure and book rooms at hotels in Bangladesh for 14-day quarantine.

The CAAB circular has created big troubles for hundreds of Bangladeshi migrants, who either came out of jail recently or have been jobless for

months amid lockdown in Malaysia.

One of them is Jahid Hossain, who is finding it hard to survive in Johor Bahru after losing his job a few months back.

He went to the high commission in Kuala Lumpur and obtained a travel permit on Tuesday as his work permit had expired.

"I had a ticket for a flight home on August 20. But my travel agent suddenly said I was not allowed to return home because I'm not fully vaccinated. I got shocked as the ticket was cancelled," he said.

Yesterday, he rushed to the high commission to obtain special permission to catch a flight home.

"After hours of wait, we were told around 5:00pm that we would not need special permission. I then informed my travel agent about it. The agent said he would manage a ticket at the end of this month or early next month," Jahid, who is from Tangail,

told this newspaper over phone.

He said he was staying at a hotel in Kuala Lumpur's Kota Raya area since Monday and that he would have to fork out more money in case he has to extend his stay there.

"I was already in trouble as I lost my job. Now, I am facing even more troubles to return home. This is so sad. No one feels the pain of the migrants," he lamented.

Moudud Molla, a Bangladeshi student in Malaysia, said he has a relative there who must return home before going to Saudi Arabia next month.

"I went to the high commission yesterday with an application for special permission to allow my relative to fly home. An official there received the application..."

Around 5:00pm, commission officials told more than 100 Bangladeshis waiting there that they would not need any special

permission to return home.

"One of the officials there told me that the CAAB circular was cancelled," Moudud said.

Talking to this newspaper from Malaysia over phone, migrant rights activist Mohammad Harun-Al Rashid said such a circular and subsequent sufferings of the migrants suggest a lack of coordination within the government.

"Migrants are already in trouble and the authorities need to take care of them instead of doing anything that pushes them into further vulnerability," he said.

Malaysia, home to about eight lakh Bangladeshis, has been seeing a rise in Covid infections over the last few months.

A large number of Bangladeshi migrants are in hardship due to joblessness, underpayment or non-payment of salary amid Covid-induced lockdown there.

AL legislators

FROM PAGE 12

guerrillas, and misleading the world as to the nature of the refugee situation, he added.

He further said that to date his government had not been successful in getting its case across to the international press of the many constructive things that they were attempting to do in East Pakistan. "Pakistan government makes the information available but the New York Times doesn't print it. In order to put their case forward they have to buy space in American newspapers," lamented Yahya.

President Yahya went on to discuss his plans to associate Bangalees in administration of the province by clearing 88 of the former Awami League representatives to National Assembly. Asked if it was possible that more than 88 might be cleared, he said all the others were being specifically charged with crimes but that it was possible that they could clear themselves of these charges and then take their seat in the next National Assembly. He said only some 15 or 16 of the 88 were presently in Dhaka and they were being protected by the government since they feared for their lives. The rest of the 88 were either in the countryside or in India. He did not know how many of them would come forward to claim their seat but he supposed he would have to set some kind of a deadline on this.

Referring to Yahya's comment regarding civilian participation in the Government of East Pakistan, the US Ambassador suggested that any announcement which Yahya planned to make on this subject should carry with it a restatement of the entire "package" which the Government of Pakistan had promulgated to date, and that the same should be so tailored as to get maximum news impact both in Pakistan, India and in the Western world. Yahya replied by stating that, "I think this is an excellent suggestion and I'll do it."

OPERATION SHALDA RIVER

The freedom fighters of K Force today ambushed three boats carrying Pakistani troops. Twenty Pakistani soldiers were killed in the operation. The freedom fighters took control of the area.

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

Court clears

FROM PAGE 12

Alomgir Hossain, an official of General Recording Office at Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court, told The Daily Star.

Soon after the order, complainant of the case, and also the victim's sister, told The Daily Star that she would challenge it in a higher court.

Injustice was done to her sister, she said.

On Tuesday, the complainant submitted the no-confidence petition with the court, seeking further investigation into the case.

At Tuesday's hearing, the complainant said Investigation Officer Abul Hasan had told her that he would press charges against the accused under section 302 (murder) of the Penal Code and section 9 (1) (rape) of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

But the IO, also officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station, did not inform her before submitting the probe report to the court, she had mentioned earlier.

The investigator had submitted a false report without examining vital witnesses and tried to sabotage the case from the very beginning, she stated in the petition.

The closed-circuit camera in the victim's building held very important evidence as it would be possible to identify the accused through video footage captured by the camera, but the IO did not seize the footage, she said in the petition.

Citing the forensic report, the complainant further said in the petition that the DNA of a male was found on the victim's clothes, but the investigator did not take any steps to conduct a DNA test on the accused to match his sample with that found on the clothes.

The IO acted against the law by saying in the probe report that such a step would be "unreasonable", the petition said.

The IO tried to save the accused by hiding evidence of rape although the medical and forensic reports said the victim was raped before death. The IO did not arrest the accused for interrogation, allowing him to influence the probe, the petition said.

The IO showed negligence in the probe and did not try to unearth the mystery of the victim's rape and murder. Instead, he unethically tried to assassinate the victim's character in the probe report, it added.

On July 19, Abul Hasan submitted the probe report to Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court and appealed to it to relieve Anvir of the charges of abetting suicide.

About not conducting a DNA test of the lone accused in the case, the IO said in the report that it is not reasonable to collect and test a suspect's DNA samples solely on the basis of the complainant's allegations, without any supporting evidence.

The case was a "matter of factual error" as no evidence against Anvir was found in the probe, the report said.

On April 26, police recovered the body of the 21-year-old college student hanging from the ceiling fan of her bedroom in Gulshan.