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CLIMATE-ADAPTABLE AMAN Khulna farmer develops 6 varieties

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

After chasing his dream for over a decade, 46-year-old Aruni Sarkar, a farmer from remote Gangarampur village of Khulna's Batiaghata upazila, finally succeeded in developing high-yielding and climate-adaptable varieties of Aman paddy.

He claims that his varieties would change the fate of poverty-hit farmers in southern coastal region where saline water intrudes.

The newly developed six types of Aman paddy have been named "Alo Dhan", "Locos Dhan", "Aruni Dhan", "Ganga Dhan", "Maitri Dhan", and "Lakshimbhog Dhan".

The new varieties have been made through hybridisation of multiple traditional varieties of paddy.

The main features of these paddy are their salinity tolerance, high yield and the ability to ripen faster, said Aruni.

The traditional Aman paddy can survive around one week under saline water. But the new variants can survive over two weeks, he claimed.

Even, the traditional Aman paddy can tolerate 1 dS/m (decisiemens per metre) -- a unit used to measure the degree of salinity in land. But the new ones can tolerate up to 3 dS/m, claimed Aruni.



Aruni Sarkar

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Rubble is what remains after the Azimnagar Union Health and Family Welfare Centre in Harirampur upazila of Manikganj went into the Padma yesterday. Inset, the building being devoured by the river a day before. Story on page 5.

PHOTO: ZAHANGIR ALAM BISWAS

Janmashtami today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Janmashtami, a major festival of the Hindu community marking the birth of Lord Sri Krishna, will be celebrated across the country today with due religious fervour and gaiety.

However, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, all rituals and programmes will be arranged inside temples where health safety guidelines are expected to be maintained. A decision has been taken to cancel all processions and rallies this time.

The religious affairs ministry issued a press release yesterday saying that all religious rituals will be arranged following health protocols and maintaining social distancing but processions and rallies will be halted due to the pandemic.

The day is observed as a public holiday.

In separate messages, President Md Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, and other distinguished personalities and organisations greeted the members of the Hindu

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CTTC arrests first female Ansar Al Islam operative

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

She was the first female operative of militant outfit Ansar Al Islam, self-radicalised by online content.

Although she was in charge of the outfit's media wing, she also had a connection with the military wing and was ready to go for Jihad anytime at home or abroad.

And the Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit yesterday said it arrested the female operative, identified as Zobaida Siddiqua Nabila, 19, an HSC candidate of a college in Bhola's Lalmohon upazila.

Based on information, Nabila was arrested from her relative's home in Dhaka's Badda area on Thursday, said CTTC officials.

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ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

Bangladesh mission opened in New Delhi



KM Shehabuddin, chief of the Bangladesh mission in New Delhi, and others before the mission which formally opened in New Delhi on August 30, 1971.

AUGUST 30, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJAN

BANGLADESH MISSION IN NEW DELHI

The Bangladesh mission was formally opened in New Delhi today. In the solemn, simple and touching flag-hoisting ceremony the green-red-gold flag broke at the mast with a choral rendition of the Bangladesh national anthem. The ceremony started with recitations from the Holy Quran, the Gita, the Bible and the Tripitaka.

The mission was housed, temporarily, at the residence of KM Shehabuddin, the Bangladesh government representative in New Delhi.

Before hoisting the flag, Shehabuddin read out a statement in which he expressed the determination of the people of Bangladesh to drive out the Pakistani enemy from their land. "We have shed much blood and are ready to give more," he added.

He thanked India for her sympathy and support to the new state, and asked all nations to stop assistance, both military and economic, to Pakistan.

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'The country cannot be run like this'

Says Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gonoforum President Dr Kamal Hossain has said the people are thinking of freeing the country from corruption and misrule as the country cannot be run like this.

The eminent jurist has urged the people to forge unity to launch a movement.

He was speaking at a discussion at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, marking the founding anniversary of Gonoforum.

"[We have to] establish effective democracy. Parliament should be formed with the peoples' representatives who will run the country..."

"The country cannot be run like this. Bright future awaits it.

"Unity among the people should be

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Gun that killed Billy the Kid fetches \$6m



AFP, Los Angeles

The pistol used to kill the notorious outlaw Billy the Kid in the days of the American Wild West has been auctioned for \$6.03 million, a world record for a firearm.

The Colt single-action revolver owned by sheriff Pat Garrett had been estimated at \$2-3 million and saw "lively bidding" on the phone, online and in the room in Friday's sale, the auction house Bonhams said.

"It stands as a relic of one of the most important and well-known stories of the Wild West,"

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Covid deaths cross 26,000 mark

STAR REPORT

Eighty-nine more people died from Covid-19 in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, said a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services.

The total number of Covid-19 deaths in the country now stands at 26,015, and the death rate is 1.74 percent.

At least 3,948 new infections were recorded during the period, taking the number of people infected to 14,93,537,

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PRAYER TIMING AUGUST 30

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:30 12:45 4:45 6:33 8:00
JAMAAT 5:05 1:15 5:00 6:36 8:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

BSF shoots 2 Bangladeshis dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Lalmohirhat

Indian Border Security Force personnel early yesterday shot two Bangladeshis men on the border in Patgram, Lalmohirhat, and kept their bodies.

Yunus Ali, a resident of Burimari area of Patgram, and Sagor Chandra, of Jaldhaka area in Nilphamari, were gunned down on Bandermatha border around 4:30am, according to Camp Commander Billal Hossain of 61 Border Guard Bangladesh and Officer-in-charge Omar Farooque of Patgram Police Station.

Yunus and Sagor and about eight others were smuggling in Indian cattle from Changrabandha area in Cooch Behar district of West Bengal when the patrolling BSF men opened fired on them.

The duo died at the scene while the others managed to flee. BSF men then took away bodies.

Camp Commander Billal said a letter was sent to the BSF asking for the bodies to be returned.



People, who do not have NID cards, throng the election office on the C&B Road in Barishal yesterday to get their NID cards. Some went there to make corrections to their cards. Many are asking for the cards as it makes it easier to get vaccinated.

PHOTO:
TITU DAS

COVID PANDEMIC Delta doubles hospital risk

Says UK study

AGENCIES

The Delta variant of the coronavirus that causes Covid-19 doubles the risk of hospitalisation compared with the Alpha variant it has supplanted as the dominant strain worldwide, researchers reported in The Lancet on Saturday.

Only 1.8 percent of the more than 43,000 Covid-19 cases assessed in comparing the two variants were in patients who had been fully vaccinated. Three-quarters were completely unvaccinated, and 24 percent had received only one jab of a two-dose vaccine.

"The results from this study therefore primarily tell us about the risk of hospital admission for those who are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated," said co-lead author Anne Presanis, a senior statistician at the University of Cambridge's MRC Biostatistics Unit.

Researchers analysed healthcare data from 43,338 Covid-19 cases in England from March 29 to May 23 of this year, including vaccination status, emergency care, hospital admission and other patient information.

All virus samples underwent whole genome sequencing, the surest way to confirm which variant had caused the infection. Just below 80 percent of the cases were identified as the Alpha variant, and the rest were Delta.

About one in 50 patients were admitted to hospital within 14 days of their first positive Covid-19 test.

After accounting for factors that are known to affect susceptibility to severe illness -- including age, ethnicity, and vaccination status -- the researchers found the risk of being admitted to hospital was more than double with the

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