

Thousands

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climate change.

At one dam, authorities released water fearing the walls would collapse.

The floods have also threatened a Unesco World Heritage-listed reserve that is home to the largest concentration of one-horned rhinos.

Tens of thousands of people are stuck in villages cut off by the floods and the state governments said more than 400,000 had been moved to higher ground.

Sixteen-year-old Anuwara Khatun said she and her family have spent nearly a week on the roof of their home at Ghasbari in Assam's Morigaon district.

"The water level has been rising for five days now," she told AFP by telephone from her stricken village on the banks of the Brahmaputra.

"A lot of families are stuck on their roofs. There is a shortage of essential supplies so we only eat once a day. There is no hygiene here."

Santosh Mandal moved his family to a sandbank in Bihar's Supaul district after his village was flooded.

"There is no clean water to drink, food to eat and the children are crying for milk. We are praying for help because the government has yet to send relief," Mandal said.

The Bihar government has sent rescue boats to get people to safety but these are concentrated in the worst-hit districts.

The Bihar and Assam governments said more than 12,000 people were in relief camps.

The Bihar government opened up the Valmiki Gandak dam, warning people in nearby villages to move away, after 16 centimetres (six inches) of rain fell in 24 hours.

About 70 percent of the 430-square-kilometre (166-square-mile) Kaziranga National Park in Assam is underwater, threatening its rare one-horned rhinoceroses as well as elephants and wild boar.

Himanta Biswa Sarma, Assam's chief minister, yesterday made an "urgent appeal" for traffic to avoid a key highway through the reserve.

He said animals that seek shelter on the highway were now at risk.

How long

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they start to show symptoms of Covid-19. Other studies have suggested a range of 1-3 days.

2. A person is definitely contagious when they are showing the symptoms. Covid-19 symptoms are familiar to us all by now. There are high chances that the infection will first appear as a low-grade intermittent fever since the body starts to fight the virus, and that increases body temperature. Soon enough, multiple other symptoms appear, such as dry cough, fatigue, body chills, loss of taste or smell, or both, etc. During symptomatic state -- which can last 14 days, sometimes even more -- a Covid patient will surely be contagious and they must isolate completely.

3. Covid symptoms can disappear quite early as your body starts to recover. But that is not a free ticket to venture outside. The viral load takes at least 7 days to shed. To stay in the side of caution, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) prescribes meeting all three of the following conditions:

A. It has been 10 days since patient first developed symptoms.

B. They have not had a fever for 24 hours and have not used fever-reducing medications.

C. Their other symptoms of Covid-19 are improving.

Doctors, however, prescribe that the most reliable way to know you are out of danger is to get a Covid test done on your 14th day.

For most people, the virus leaves with 14 days of infection, and they return a negative test. However, there have been some cases where viral residuals stay back in your system long after the infection, which keeps returning a positive test. This is no cause for concern, since the viral residuals are not live, and often take time to leave your body but they surely do.

Teen stalker

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As the latter failed to give the money, the suspects killed him by drowning.

Arju had an eight-month-old baby and was the breadwinner of the family.

SP Liton said Baijid is a resident of Bilharibari area of Gurudaspur, Natore.

Jamil Akhtar, senior assistant superintendent of police (Singra circle), said on the day of the killing, Baijid and two of his friends rented a boat for Tk 700 which they used to take the victim in the middle of the marsh.

On Saturday, police found Arju's body floating in Hardama area of Gurudaspur. His father Adam Ali filed a murder case with Gurudaspur Police Station.

Police arrested Baijid early yesterday.

Adam said, "My son had no enemies in the area, so we could not guess who might have killed him. On the day of his death, Baijid and his friends rented a boat from Arju. Based on this information, the police investigated and arrested them. My eight-month-old grandson cries all the time. I demand exemplary punishment of the killers."



Villagers take shelter on higher grounds in a flood affected area of Morigaon district in India's Assam state yesterday. The flood situation in Assam is worsening after over 1.33 lakh people across 11 districts were affected, said a bulletin issued by the state's disaster management agency. PHOTO: AFP

Biman Capt Nawshad passes away

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following the emergency landing of BG-022 on Friday, said a hospital source.

A highly-placed source in Kingsway Hospital said Capt Nawshad breathed his last yesterday while he was on ventilation support, reports our Delhi correspondent.

Later, his ventilation support was removed in the presence of the pilot's family members, the source said, wishing not to be named.

The source said it would take at least a couple of days to take his body to Dhaka because a lot of formalities are to be completed.

He said family members of the pilot and Biman's country manager in Delhi have been waiting at the hospital for the deceased's death certificate.

Capt Mahbubur Rahman, president, Bangladesh Airlines' Pilot Association, a platform of pilots in Biman, told The Daily Star that preparations are going on to bring back his body as soon as possible after completing all formalities.

Born in 1977, Capt Nawshad

joined Biman in 2002.

At first, he acted as first officer of A310 and Boeing 777. Later, he became pilot of Boeing 737, Capt Mahbub said.

In December 2016, Capt Nawshad emergency landed a flight of Biman at the Dhaka airport successfully after a tyre of the aircraft's left landing gear burst saving lives of around 149 passengers on board. The flight was on its way to Chattogram from Muscat.

Later, International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations, the global voice of professional pilots, gave an appreciation letter to Capt Nawshad for his successfully landing the aircraft with a burst tyre.

Capt Nawshad's late father Abdul Quaiyum was also a captain of the national airliner and he acted as pilot of F-28 aircraft. He died in February, said sources in Biman.

"He [Nawshad] was undoubtedly an efficient pilot who admired his profession. He loved flying," recalled Capt Mahbub while talking to this correspondent.

"Capt Nawshad once acted as

my co-pilot. As a pilot, he was well-reputed and was also a very good person," Capt Shoaib Chowdhury, a senior pilot of Dreamliner 787-8, told this paper.

He was survived by his wife, two daughters, one son and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

Carrying 124 passengers on board, the Dhaka-bound Biman flight from Muscat made an emergency landing at Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in India's Nagpur on August 27 when its pilot Capt Nawshad suffered a massive cardiac arrest in mid-air.

The plane was near Raipur when it contacted Kolkata AIC for an emergency landing and was advised to land at the nearest airport, Nagpur.

Capt Mostakim Pias, who was the co-pilot of that flight, landed at the Nagpur airport safely.

On Saturday, Roshan Fulbandhe, assistant general manager of Kingsway Hospital, said, "Capt Nawshad's condition is severe ... he is surviving with full ventilation support ... he suffered brain hemorrhage and bleeding profusely... he remains

unconscious."

He said initially the pilot suffered a cardiac arrest onboard the flight and after that he was taken to the emergency ward of the hospital with "unresponsive and unconscious" condition.

Roshan said an angiogram was done which brought out 60-70 percent blockage in his two arteries. As per the cardiac arrest protocol, the patient was then put on ventilator.

CONDOLENCE

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahbul Ali, Biman MD and CEO Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal, and Bangladesh Airlines' Pilot Association, among others, expressed deep shock at the demise of Capt Nawshad.

In a condolence message, the PM prayed for the salvation of the departed soul and expressed deep sympathy for the family members of the deceased.

The Biman MD and CEO and all employees and officials of Biman expressed deep shock at the death of Capt Nawshad.

Efforts for its weakening intensify

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opinions on the draft.

The recommendations will be discussed and decisions will be made in the meeting, he told The Daily Star, adding that the draft can be changed if needed.

The finalised draft will then be sent to different committees before it is placed in the cabinet for approval, he said.

The process to amend the law was delayed a little because of the pandemic.

In September 2018, the Jatiya Sangsad passed the Road Transport Act following widespread student demonstrations for road safety. But the government did not put the law in effect until November 2019.

Soon after the act was passed, transport workers went on strike demanding changes to the law.

Against this backdrop, a committee of the ministers of law, home, and railways was formed on February 17, 2019, to see how the act could be implemented.

When the government took an initiative to enforce the law in November 2019, transport associations called strikes again demanding changes to several sections of the law.

The government then decided not to put several sections of the act into effect.

The three-minister committee held several meetings with the transport leaders and recommended several changes to the law, one of the ministers told The Daily Star last year.

The law, if amended as per the draft, will lose its jurisdiction to hold a driver responsible for causing injuries by reckless and negligent driving. The

jurisdiction will only be applicable when someone dies in an accident.

The educational qualifications required to obtain a driving licence will also be changed. Drivers, who will operate registered three-wheelers, will get licences if they have a class-five certificate, instead of class eight, says the draft.

Educational qualifications to obtain licences for driving other vehicles will remain unchanged.

However, these qualifications won't be required if a licensed conductor or supervisor can gather skills as a driver by working for at least 10 years in vehicles and can pass the driving competency tests, according to the draft.

WHAT DO THE WORKERS ASSOCIATIONS SAY?

Bangladesh Road Transport Workers Federation is not content

with the draft and sought some changes.

Osman Ali, general secretary of the federation, said they sought changes in 34 sections of the act and said if their demands are not met, they will start demonstrating.

"We have seen the draft and found that our demands were not met in many instances. We have conveyed the message," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

The draft is not final and they will follow the outcome of today's meeting, he added.

Rhondaker Enayet Ullah, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners Association said except one or two, most of the issues the workers association raised have been covered.

"It may not be possible to get 100 percent of what we demanded," he said.

Booster shots 'not a luxury'

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An increase in Covid-19 transmission rates across Europe over the last two weeks, combined with low levels of vaccination in some countries, was "deeply worrying", he said.

The World Health Organization warned yesterday that another 236,000 people could die from Covid in Europe by December 1.

The warning comes as the world passed the grim milestone of 4.5 million deaths from Covid since the start of the pandemic, according to an AFP tally yesterday.

Infections rates are ticking up globally again, as the highly transmissible Delta variant takes hold -- especially among the unvaccinated -- preying on populations where anti-virus measures have been relaxed.

VACCINE SUPPLY JUMPS
India's rising output of Covid-19 vaccines and the inoculation of more than half its adult population with at least one dose are raising hopes

the country will return as an exporter within months, ramping up from early next year.

After donating or selling 66 million doses to nearly 100 countries, India barred exports in the middle of April to focus on domestic immunisation as infections exploded, upsetting the inoculation plans of many African and South Asian countries.

India's daily vaccinations surpassed 10 million doses on Friday, with national vaccine production more than doubling since April and set to rise again in the coming weeks. New production lines have been set up, a vaccine developed by Cadila Healthcare won recent approval, and commercial production of Russia's Sputnik V is starting in India.

The Serum Institute of India (SII), the world's biggest vaccine maker, is now producing about 150 million doses a month of its version of the AstraZeneca shot, more than twice its April output of about 65 million, a

source with knowledge of the matter said.

"No fixed timeline on exports but the company hopes to restart in a few months," said the source, who declined to be named without approval to talk on the matter.

SII, which has previously indicated exports could resume by year-end, did not respond to a request for comment. DEATH LINKED TO PFIZER JAB
New Zealand reported its first recorded death linked to US drugmaker Pfizer's Covid-19 vaccine, the health ministry said yesterday, after a woman suffered a rare side-effect leading to inflammation of the heart muscle.

The report comes as the country battles an outbreak of the Delta variant after nearly six months of being virus free. It followed a review by an independent panel monitoring the safety of the vaccines, reports Reuters.

Moderna Inc's Covid-19 vaccine contamination woes in Japan have

widened with another million doses being temporarily suspended, after foreign substances were found in more batches and two people died following shots from affected lots.

The suspension of Moderna supplies, affecting more than 2.6 million does in total, comes as Japan battles its worst wave of Covid-19 yet, driven by the contagious Delta variant, with new daily infections exceeding 25,000 this month for the first time amid a slow vaccine rollout.

Intensive care cases in Australia's New South Wales will hit a peak in October as Covid-19 infections accumulate, said the premier of the country's most populous state, which reported record daily new infections yesterday.

New South Wales, the epicentre of Australia's current outbreak, declared a record 1,290 new cases as the nation struggles to contain the highly contagious Delta variant.

Court set

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run. Mozammel, Arafat, Abdullah and Asadullah are behind bars.

A total of 24 prosecution witnesses gave deposition before the tribunal, said the state lawyer.

During the closing arguments on August 23, the prosecution told the court that they were able to prove the charges against the accused and sought capital punishment for them.

The defence sought acquittal of its clients while placing its arguments.

On April 25, 2016, Xulhaz and Mahbub were hacked to death inside Xulhaz's Kalabagan home in the capital.

Minhaz Mannan Emon, elder brother of Xulhaz, filed a murder case accusing some unidentified assailants with Kalabagan Police Station the same day.

Inspector Muhammad Monirul Islam of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit of police on July 23, 2019, submitted the case's charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court of Dhaka against eight Ansar al Islam members, including Zia, in the case.

On November 19 last year, the Anti-Terrorism Special Tribunal framed charges against them.

On February 10 this year, the same tribunal sentenced Zia, Akram, Mozammel and Abdullah to death for murdering Jagriti Prokashoni publisher Faisal Arefin Dipan inside Aziz Super Market in the capital's Shahbagh area.

On February 16, Zia, Akram, Mozammel and Arafat were sentenced to death for killing writer-blogger Avijit Roy near the TSC of Dhaka University.

Scientists bottle

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environmental contamination.

Insecticides can also accidentally kill the predators that feed on pests like aphids, thereby inadvertently compounding the problem in the long run.

"It is not uncommon [for us] to use our senses to avoid risky situations," said paper author and entomologist Sara Hermann of the Pennsylvania State University.

"If a building was on fire, we as humans could use our senses of sight or smell to detect the threat," she added, as an example.

"There is evidence for such behavioral responses to risk across taxa that suggest prey organisms can detect predation threats, but the mechanisms for detection aren't very well understood, especially with insects."

"Insects rely on olfactory cues to find food, mates and places to live, so this is a great opportunity to investigate how to use these smells to manipulate their behaviour," agreed paper co-author and fellow Penn State entomologist Jessica Kansman.

Small, sap-sucking insects, aphids (sometimes also dubbed "blackfly" or "greenfly") are a particularly destructive pests that can carry and spread plant diseases, but often prove difficult for home gardeners and farmers alike to combat.

"Aphids are crazy bugs," Dr Hermann told the Times. "We always see the females and they reproduce asexually. That's why they're such bad pests as they don't need a male and can continually have babies."

The minute menaces breed rapidly -- meaning that, when insecticides are employed against them, populations can easily recover if even a small number are missed.

And aphids commonly occupy the undersides of leaves or the space in-between plant petals where sprays may prove unable to reach.

In their study, Dr Hermann and colleagues demonstrated that aphids and other plant-eating, or "herbivorous", insects will steer clear of fields and gardens if they catch a whiff of predators like ladybirds on the air.

In addition, it appears that aphids also slow their reproduction rates and increase the frequency with their young grow wings when exposed to the odour cues given off by ladybirds.

Tight security, shops shut as S Sudan warns against protests

AFP, Juba

Security forces patrolled South Sudan's capital Juba yesterday and many shops were shut as the authorities warned of a tough crackdown against anyone joining a planned anti-government protest.

The world's newest nation has suffered from chronic instability since independence in 2011, with deepening discontent prompting a coalition of civil society groups to urge South Sudan's leadership to step down, saying they have "had enough".

The demonstration was set to take place the same day as President Salva Kiir inaugurated a newly created national parliament, a key condition of a 2018 peace deal that ended South Sudan's brutal civil war that killed nearly 400,000 people.

arms to be used against Pakistan and allowing time on BBC and British television for anti-Pakistan propaganda.

UNICEF MOVES TO PROVIDE SHELTER TO 3M REFUGEES

Nearly three million Bangladeshi refugees in India would have a roof over their heads by the beginning of September, UNICEF announced. A

UNICEF statement said many Bangalee refugees lacked the most elementary form of shelter from the monsoon rains. Among UNICEF materials now arriving in India were some 1,75,000 tarpaulins, each capable of giving protection to around 15 people.

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