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Your Right to Know

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"The enforcement of the law to protect the images of some individuals has gone to such an extent that people have to write things with caution, fear backlash."

EMINENT JURIST SHAHDEEN MALIK



"There is nothing called civil society nowadays. Because, [we] are becoming victims of different types of harassments when [we] try to speak up."

BAPA PRESIDENT SULTANA KAMAL

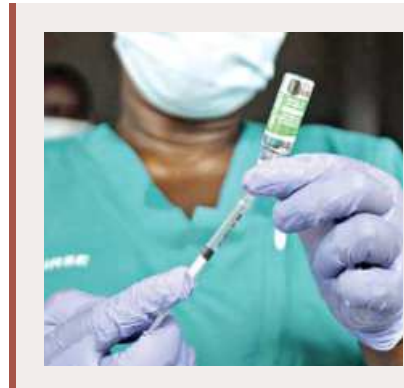


"We will not allow terrorist organisations and IS to set up next to our border and strike other countries and the region."

IRANIAN PRESIDENT EBRAHIM RAISI

CHALLENGE OF JABBING 2Cr A MONTH

Manpower crisis lies at the crux



- Immunisation manpower already overstretched
- 15,000 health assistants administering jabs nationwide
- No cold chain engineer in 30 dists
- Dhaka has 5 cold chain technicians against the required 20
- Govt moves to recruit 11,500 health assistants

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Inoculating two crore people against Covid-19 every month from October will be extremely challenging if the manpower crisis in the government's regular immunisation campaign is not solved immediately, health officials warn.

They said the workforce and logistics under the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) are already overstretched mainly for its active engagement in the nationwide Covid-19 vaccination, which came as an additional duty.

Now ramping up the Covid campaign without addressing the manpower

issue might hamper both the Covid-19 vaccination and the EPI, the officials said, demanding immediate appointment of at least 11,000 health assistants.

Bangladesh's EPI for children has set a gold standard in the world, health officials pointed out.

Around 15,000 field-level EPI health assistants were assigned for the Covid-19 inoculation on February 7. From ensuring home quarantine in districts to collecting samples for tests, entering data to the system to administering jabs, these health assistants, along with lab technicians, are also tasked with jabbing 2.5 to 3 crore kids

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INTO THE SMOG... Smoke emanating from brick kiln chimneys that blemish the skyline at Muktarpur by the Buriganga in Dhaka. The city is considered one of the worst in the world in terms of air quality. There are rules and laws to protect the environment, but they seem to exist mostly on paper.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BNP leaders want to wage movement

They don't want to take part in polls

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

In the three-day series of meetings, almost all the BNP leaders suggested the party's top brass not to participate in any elections under the incumbent government.

They supported waging movement to compel the government to hold the elections under a non-partisan interim administration.

During the meeting between September 14 and 16, the vice chairmen, advisers to the party chairperson, joint secretary generals, organising secretaries and other top leaders of the front and associate bodies were present.

A total of 249 leaders participated in the series of

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CONSTABLE RECRUITMENT

Mired in muck

PHQ fires 18 N'ganj cops over forgery; junior officers raised alarm but were 'silenced' by then SP, who remains off the hook

STAR REPORT

The Police Headquarters has fired 18 Narayanganj constables over serious irregularities in their recruitment and recommended departmental action against at least 10 inspectors and sub-inspectors for their "false" verification reports or recommendations.

The PHQ, however, did not recommend any action against the ultimate decision-maker, the SP, despite allegations of impropriety.

The Daily Star came to know about the irregularities recently after obtaining an internal police enquiry report, submitted by a three-member PHQ team on October 20 last year.

The constables were appointed in 2019 by the then Narayanganj superintendent of police Muhammad Harun Or Rashid under a district quota. Two of them recently moved the High Court challenging their dismissal.

Current and former police officials said

although it was not always possible for a supervisor to monitor everything, Harun could not simply shrug off his responsibility.

Harun, now posted at the cyber and special crime unit of detective branch (north) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, denied any wrongdoing and blamed his junior officers for everything.

Besides, no action has been taken against the inspectors and sub-inspectors in question -- they are still "facing departmental enquiry for inaccurate verification reports".

Contacted, incumbent Narayanganj SP Jayedul Alam said the PHQ already instructed them to take departmental action against the inspectors and sub-inspectors involved in the verification.

"As per the directives, we have initiated an investigation, which is ongoing. We will be in a position to talk about actions once the investigation has ended," he told this paper on Thursday.

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Evaly office to stay shut

Dhamaka merchants warn of legal action

STAR REPORT

The office of controversial e-commerce platform Evaly will remain shut until further notice as aggrieved customers and sellers continue to flock to the premises demanding their goods or refund.

"The office will reopen with permission following the completion of investigation by authorities," read a notice hung at the entrance of the Evaly headquarters on Dhanmondi road 14.

However, Evaly, in a post on its official Facebook page, wrote that its employees will work from home until further notice.

All Evaly activities will continue as usual under the arrangement, it said.

The company's Vice President Mahdi

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HEALTH GUIDELINES

Students compliant, guardians not

STAR REPORT

Most students have been wearing masks and sanitising their hands at the gates of schools and maintaining social distances in the classrooms.

But guardians, especially in the capital, still form crowds at the gates, correspondents of The Daily Star found observing 10 schools in the capital and many more elsewhere for a week since the reopening.

"Teachers found neglecting the health guidelines will face a penalty," Professor Amir Hossain, director (monitoring and evaluation) at the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, told The Daily Star.

All primary and secondary schools and colleges started resuming classes in person from September 12 after 543 days amid the pandemic.

Candidates of HSC and SSC exams of 2021 and 2022 and this year's PECE and its equivalent exams are now attending classes every day. Students of grades 1 to 4 and 6 to 9 are attending in-person classes once a week.

In visits made by the correspondents of this paper, it was found that health guidelines were mostly followed at Mirpur Girls' Ideal Laboratory Institute, Monipur High School and College (Shewrapara), Azimpur Government

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Defamatory, ill-motivated

Journo leaders say on BFIU seeking bank account details of 11

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists leaders have said seeking bank account details of 11 of them is "unprecedented, defamatory, and ill-motivated".

Speaking at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, they said such a move by Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) of Bangladesh Bank is an "attempt to put the media face to face with the government".

On September 12, the BFIU issued letters to all banks seeking details of bank accounts belonging to 11 journalists who head different journalist platforms.

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Govt to start giving Pfizer shots to kids in 20 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Health Minister Zahed Maleque yesterday said students aged between 12 and 17 years would receive Pfizer vaccine.

"All preparations have been made. The vaccination programme will begin within the next 15 to 20 days," the minister said during a view exchange meeting in Manikganj.

Earlier on September 2, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also said school students would be given coronavirus vaccine in line with the World Health Organization protocols.

Different vaccines for children are being trialled in different countries but the World Health Organization's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts endorses only the Pfizer/BionTech vaccine to be given to children as young as 12.

Earlier on September 1, Bangladesh received one million shots of Pfizer vaccine.

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Family members carrying the tin-roof of what was their house to a boat by which they would evacuate Binbina area in Gangachara, Rangpur. A swollen Teesta has been washing away entire neighbourhoods in the region in recent weeks.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

THE LAST GIRL standing

All but one female student of class 9 at a Kurigram school married off during pandemic



S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Nargis Nahar and eight other girls graduated from class eight together at Sardob High School in 2020 before the pandemic hit. After schools were shut down, she lost touch with her friends.

After over a year and half, Nargis was elated when the announcement of schools reopening came.

Prepared to begin her classes and meet her friends on September 12, she entered her classroom only to see that of the nine of them, she was the only one there.

Every day since then, she found herself to be the lone girl in her class.

Her eight other female classmates were married off after

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