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COVID PANDEMIC

India red flags West Bengal's rising cases

STAR REPORT

Amidst mounting concerns over the detection of the new and faster-spreading variant of the Delta-plus coronavirus in certain parts of India, the country's health authorities have asked the West Bengal government to check the rising number of fresh Covid-19 cases in the state, particularly in Kolkata, following the Durga Puja festival.

The state government has prompted the Sonarpur-Rajpur Municipality authorities in south 24 Parganas district to shut down all markets and shops in all its 35 wards barring those dealing in essential commodities for three days from October 28 because of a surge in Covid cases in the last one week.

The step has been taken to break the chain of infections, said a state health ministry official.

Some micro-containment zones with restrictions on the movement of people and transport have been set up in parts of Purba Medinipur district.

West Bengal has been reporting about 800 new Covid-19 cases for the last one week after registering nearly 1,000 infections for a couple of days, according to the state health department data.

The state's cumulative tally of cases rose to 15,88,066, while the 15 fresh fatalities took the death toll to 19,081.

In a letter to West Bengal Health Secretary, Indian Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan expressed concern over the rising Covid cases and said if the trend is allowed to continue unchecked, it may severely strain West Bengal's

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People, mostly students who just sat for the admission exams at Chattogram university, jostling to catch their train back home. While the Covid-19 pandemic is still prevailing around the world, health safety guidelines are hardly being maintained here. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

UK envoy for transparent, participatory next polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The next general election in Bangladesh should be held in a transparent and competitive atmosphere with participation from all political parties, said Robert Chatterton Dickson, the British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, yesterday.

"It is important that all the voices and all political parties are able to participate in the elections and are able to have confidence in the electoral process -- it would be good to have an election that is transparent and openly contested."

Dickson's comments came at the "DCAB Talk" organised by the Diplomatic Correspondent Association of Bangladesh (DCAB) at the Jatiya Press Club.

However, anything related to the election should be Bangladesh-driven and a Bangladesh-led process, he said.

"It is not the foreigners to say how the election should be held here. It is a

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CTG FLYOVER

Confusion ends as no crack found

STAR REPORT

The MA Manna Flyover in Chattogram will be opened for vehicular movement within two days as an expert team yesterday found no evidence of the cracks suspected to have formed in two pillars of its ramp.

"We examined the pillars and found no cracks," said Shahajahan Alam, a member of the expert team.

Shahajahan is the director of Design Planning & Management (DMP) Consultants Ltd, a private engineering firm that designed the flyover. He talked to The Daily Star around 4:40pm yesterday and the team inspected the spot in the morning.

"From a far distance, it looks like a crack. But in reality, this is not a crack," said the primary investigation report prepared by the team.

"This is a construction joint where foam was used but it has not been cleaned yet," it mentioned.

The five-member expert team was comprised of representatives from Chattogram Development Authority (CDA), DPM Consultants and Max Infrastructure Ltd.

The government body CDA

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ROAD TO FREEDOM
THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

'Urgent UN intervention needed'

OCTOBER 28, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

THE NEW YORK TIMES CALLS FOR URGENT UN INTERVENTION

The New York Times, in an editorial published today, stated, "The growing threat of war between India and Pakistan creates an urgent need for United Nations intervention -- but not on the terms proposed by Islamabad."

It added, "Any mediation effort by [UN Secretary General] U Thant or his representative should be in the first instance between the Pakistan government and leaders of the outlawed Awami League, the elected representatives of the people of East Pakistan -- not between Islamabad and New Delhi. Any call for a mutual withdrawal of forces must be accompanied by vigorous efforts to repatriate the refugees under conditions of justice and security."

PAKISTAN DENOUNCES TITO'S STATEMENT

Pakistan denounced the joint statement on Bangladesh issued by Yugoslavia President Josip Broz Tito and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as a "direct interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan". The joint statement called for political solution to the Bangladesh problem, acceptable to its elected members.

500 GIRLS LANGUISHING IN CAMPS

A top-ranking Awami League leader disclosed that about 500 Bangalee young girls were still in captivity in three concentration camps in East Pakistan under the control of the Pakistani military authorities. He further said the acting president and the prime minister of Bangladesh had already appealed to the leaders of the world to rescue these girls.

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Schoolgirl murdered brutally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Police recovered the slit-throat body of a schoolgirl in Tangail's Kalihati upazila yesterday.

The law enforcers also rescued a critically injured boy from the same location and sent him to a hospital.

The deceased is Sumaiya Akter, 15, daughter of Ferdous Rahman of Palima village in the upazila. She was a class-IX student at Elega High School.

The injured boy is Monir, 17, a transport worker and son of Meher Ali of Moshajan village in the same upazila.

Sumaiya's father said his daughter went outside the house around 6:00am yesterday to attend her coaching classes near her school in Elega municipality.

Monir's aunt Rozina Akter said her nephew left his house on Tuesday night, but did not return.

Barkat Ali, a councillor of Elega municipality, said locals informed police after seeing Sumaiya's body and injured Monir under the staircase of a house near Shamsul Haque College. Later, Monir was hospitalised, he added.

Razib Paul, a doctor of Tangail General Hospital, said Monir was referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) after giving primary treatment.

Hossain Mohammad Tareque, a doctor of DMCH's emergency department, said marks of injuries by a sharp object were found on the boy's neck, throat and head. "His condition is critical."

Molla Azizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Kalihati Police Station, said the schoolgirl's body was sent to Tangail General Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

The reasons behind the killing could not be known immediately, he said.




PRAYER TIMING OCTOBER 28

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:50 12:45 4:00 5:32 7:15
JAMAAT 5:25 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Scientists create world's first 'thinking' robot

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK



Japanese scientists have created the world's first 'thinking' robot that is able to steer its way around walls and obstacles.

The robot has brain-like neurons grown in the lab and when the cells were electrically stimulated, the machine successfully navigated a small maze.

A technique called 'physical reservoir computing' enabled it to make sense of the brain waves and dodge the barriers, researchers said.

Co-author Professor Hirokazu Takahashi said: "These nerve cells, or neurons, were grown from living cells."

"They acted as the physical reservoir for the

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Lawyer Baset Majumder passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abdul Baset Majumder, former president of the Supreme Court Bar Association and former vice chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council, passed away at 8:18am yesterday in the capital's United Hospital.

He was 83. Majumder, known as a lawyer for the poor, left his wife, two sons and two daughters and a host of admirers to mourn his death.

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain announced the suspension of all functions of the Appellate Division and High Court Division of the Supreme Court yesterday in honour of the veteran jurist, who was also a member of the advisory council of the ruling Bangladesh Awami

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A man sneaks through a gap created in the divider on a busy road to cross to the other side. These man-made gaps, made and used so mindlessly, pose a risk to human lives. The photo was taken in front Habibullah Bahar College in the capital's Shantinagar yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN