




“We were outplayed the whole time but I think for test cricket to survive, we need Bangladesh to be a thriving nation.”

New Zealand cricketer Ross Taylor after Bangladesh's shock victory at Mount Maunganui



“Terrorists continue to damage property... and use weapons against civilians. I have given the order to law enforcement to shoot to kill without warning.”

Kazakhstan's President Tokayev after dozens killed in protests



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The forbidden forest life



P5

Why destroy when you can preserve?



P10

Similar focus promised for 2nd Test



P9

When the mind says yes



Smoke billowing out of a steel reolling mill at Munshikhola in the capital's Shyampur. People in the area remain exposed to health hazards due to such toxic fumes but the authorities are doing very little to stop the assault on environment. Air pollution is responsible for millions of deaths worldwide each year, with the worst health outcomes occurring in developing countries. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Jabs for 1cr per month

Says PM, urges all to get vaccinated quickly



UNB, DHAKA

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the Covid-19 vaccination was going on in full swing and a mass vaccination drive was launched to inoculate one crore people per month.

She said the country had to go through a grave crisis in 2020 and 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic and that crisis is yet to be over.

“Amid the crisis, a new variant is spreading fast in various countries of the world. We have to be careful right now and follow the health guidelines. I’m requesting those who haven’t yet taken vaccines to get vaccinated quickly.”

Hasina was addressing the nation marking the third anniversary of her current government formed following the 11th parliamentary election held on December 30, 2018.

State-owned Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar aired the PM’s address simultaneously.

The Awami League president formed the government for the third consecutive term on January 7, 2019 after her party’s landslide victory in the national polls.

Hasina said some 12,95,80,000 doses of Covid vaccines have been provided and 7,58,00,000 people have already received the first dose and 5,35,82,000 got the second shot.

“The administration of a booster dose started last month. At present, we have more than 9 crore doses in our hand.”

She said all should remain alert so that no one can play with the fate of the people of Bangladesh and stop its remarkable journey to economic development.

Hasina said many people cannot tolerate it as Bangladesh is now moving fast on the development highway. “So, anti-Bangladesh and anti-independence forces, both at home and abroad, are hatching conspiracies to stop this progress.”

In her 28-minute speech, the PM said the anti-Bangladesh and anti-liberation forces were trying to confuse people in social media with false, fabricated and imaginary information to misguide the development partners abroad.

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## Brace for fresh Covid combat

Fresh directives issued to deal with Omicron spread, spike in cases; antigen test must for passengers from India

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

The government has instructed Covid-19 patients to undergo treatment in their district hospitals as it issued a set of directives to combat the recent spike in coronavirus infections and deaths.

The fresh instructions also include mandatory antigen test for those coming from India through different land ports irrespective of having Covid-19 vaccination certificate. It will also be applicable for suspected Covid-19 patients for hospitalisation.

The directives came following a meeting of the Directorate General of Health Services with all civil surgeons and divisional health officials on Wednesday

where the health minister was present.

Officials said hospitals were asked to take full preparations as the Covid cases started rising over the past one week, thanks to the worldwide invasion of Omicron variant of the virus and lowering of the safety measures.

Covid-19 patients must be treated where the patient is diagnosed, and without proper explanations, no patient can be sent to Dhaka as it will do nothing but increase the chance of spreading Omicron.

“Patients of other districts cannot be sent to Dhaka without the forwarding of the hospitals concerned. Doctors should mention why the patient is needed to send to Dhaka. All the district hospitals are equipped to treat Covid

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## Positivity rate highest in 15 weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country yesterday recorded 5.67 percent Covid-19 daily positivity rate, the highest in the last 15 weeks.

On September 20 last year, the positivity rate was 5.66 percent.

The rate crossed 30 percent mark in July and started dropping from August. It later went down to one percent.

Following the emergence of the new Covid variant Omicron, the daily cases started rising in Bangladesh like many other countries of the world.

Yesterday, Bangladesh recorded 1,146 new Covid cases in 24 hours preceding 8:00am, taking the total caseload to 1,591,093, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

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## REGULAR MIGRATION TO GREECE DOORS OPEN next month

JAMIL MAHMUD

Migrant workers from Bangladesh may soon be able to go to Greece by legal means as the two countries are expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding in this regard next month.

Bangladesh and Greece signed a “declaration of intent” in November 2020 in Athens, aiming to “increase cooperation” for the safe and regular migration of workers.

Expatriates’ Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad recently told The Daily Star that the declaration of intent was the first step towards the MoU.

“We are hoping that we will have a Memorandum of Understanding by the end of February,” he said.

Once the MoU is there, the next step will be to work out a standard operating procedure, he added.


The MoU will ensure the migration of Bangladeshi workers as well as skilled professionals to Greece.

One of the objectives of the MoU will be to prevent illegal migration and human trafficking, said Ashud Ahmed, Bangladesh ambassador in Athens.

Bangladeshis often risk perishing in the sea to reach Greece and several other European countries by boat through the Mediterranean. But many end up in detentions.

Greece is home to an estimated 30,000 Bangladeshis, many of whom are undocumented and asylum-seekers, according to officials at the Bangladesh embassy in Athens.

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**In the absence of a formal agreement, Bangladeshis often seek irregular migration through various routes to reach Greece.**

**At present, Greece is home to about 30,000 Bangladeshis, many of whom are undocumented and asylum seekers.**

**Bangladeshis are mainly working in agriculture and hospitality sectors in Greece. Some have their own businesses.**

**A total of 7,574 Bangladeshis crossed sea, land routes to enter Europe illegally between January and November last year.**

## Apex court to get new judges anytime

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Since the Supreme Court’s Appellate Division has been facing an acute shortage of judges, some new judges will be appointed anytime soon for gearing up its functions and increasing the rate of case disposal.

“So far I know the honourable president will elevate some judges from the High Court Division to the Appellate Division very soon. But I cannot specifically say how many will be promoted to the Appellate Division this time,” Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star recently.

Asked whether new judges will be appointed to the HC which also has a shortage of judge, the law minister said, “I don’t know about it.”

The number of apex court judges stood at four

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