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DSA chills journalism  
Says UN special rapporteur

**DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT**

The UN special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Irene Khan, has said Bangladesh's Digital Security Act imposes draconian punishments for a wide range of vaguely defined acts.

In a report submitted to the 15th session of the UN Human Rights Council, now underway in Geneva, she said fake news laws generally fail to meet the three-pronged

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Many in north do not have homes to return to

**STAR REPORT**

Hundreds of families in the country's northern region lost their land and houses to river erosion in the last two weeks.

Many of them have taken shelter on nearby roads, embankments or high places, while some are passing days on boats,

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Flood victims take shelter inside a roadside shack in Ayna Bazar of Sylhet's Balaganj upazila during yet another dreary, gloomy and rainy day yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Time to rebuild

People in Sylhet division need emergency support to restore their homes

**ZYMA ISLAM and DWOHA CHOWDHURY**

Laki village of Tawakkul union in Sylhet's Gowainghat upazila straddles a massive haor, silhouetting the emerald mountains of Cherrapunji.

This village was the first to be hit and face the full blow of the flood as its raging waves devoured homes.

Khanoma and her baby were sleeping inside her house when the waves struck – the force of which made it hard for her to open the door.

She stood on the bed, holding her baby above her head and screamed for help.

"My brother-in-law hacked open the thatched roof and pulled us out," she said. They made it just in the nick of time

before the waves crushed her mud house.

She estimated that she will need around Tk 2-3 lakh to fix the house -- and a year to earn that money.

Currently, she is taking shelter in her neighbour's house, which is essentially just concrete frames and a few half-done walls. Calf-deep mud makes up the floor.

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Covid positivity rate rises to 15.07 percent

3 more deaths reported

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

At least three people died from Covid in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, with the virus positivity rate rising to 15.07 percent.

The positivity rate was 12.18 percent on Friday.

Yesterday, 8,492 samples were tested across the country and the results of 1,280 of those came out positive.

This was the first time in the last four months that the infection rate crossed the 15-percent mark, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The country last saw the rate go above 15 percent on February 25.

With the three deaths -- two in Dhaka division and the other in Barishal --, the country's Covid death toll stood at 29,138 yesterday.

Of the three, two had received two shots of coronavirus vaccine each while the other received a single dose of the vaccine, shows DGHS data.

No death from the virus was reported for 26 consecutive days from May 25. The country has been logging at least one death from Covid since June 20.

BUSINESS

Reserves took no hit from Padma Bridge

In 2012, when the government decided to construct Padma Bridge with own resources, many feared that Bangladesh's forex reserves would take a big hit. But the bridge opened yesterday and the reserves grew by four times to \$41 billion from a decade ago.

Agrani Bank, the sole supplier of foreign currencies for the project, made payments of \$1.48 billion to contractors and consultants abroad as of May and will clear the rest \$920 million in the coming days.

STORY ON B1

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