



Yellow, green, pink, red, blue -- the mesmerising rows of freshly coloured fabric are hung to dry in an open space beside a textile mill in Narayanganj Sadar upazila. Due to the pandemic, many of these mills were on the verge of closure. Now that things have returned to normal, business is running quite colourful. This photo was taken recently.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Durga Puja begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Bangalee Hindu community, began yesterday with Maha Shasthi puja at temples across the country amid festivity and religious fervour.

It is believed that Goddess Durga on this day descends on the earth with her four children -- Ganesha, Kartikeya, Lakshmi and Saraswati.

Maha Saptami puja will be held today, Maha Ashtami, Kumari and Sandhi puja on Monday, Maha Nabami on Tuesday and Bijoya Dashami on Wednesday. In separate messages, President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina conveyed greetings to the Hindu community people on this occasion, reports BSS.

This year, puja will be celebrated at 32,168 mandaps across the country, including 242 in the capital, according to Bangladesh Puja Ujapan

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

635 dengue patients, highest in a single day

UNB, Dhaka

Another dengue patient died in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising this year's death toll from the mosquito-borne disease to 56.

Besides, 635 patients, highest in a single day this year, were hospitalised with the viral fever as cases keep rising, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The latest death was reported from Barishal, raising the death toll in the division to 5.

The dengue death toll in Dhaka remained unchanged at 27 and in Chattogram at 24.

Of the new patients, 518 were admitted to different hospitals in Dhaka.

A total of 2,158 dengue patients, including 1,658 in the capital, are now receiving treatment at hospitals.

On June 21, the DGHS reported the first death of the season from the viral disease.

So far, the directorate has recorded 16,727 dengue cases and 14,513 recoveries this year.



Tortured by cops, deprived of justice

MUNTAKIM SAAD

Three years back, a fateful night turned his life upside down.

On February 10, 2019, two officers of Dhaka's Kotwali Police Station, in plain-clothes, raided the house of Rajib Kar Raju, a jewellery-shop worker, in the capital's Goalnagar area.

They took away 28 tolas of gold jewellery, worth Tk 11.58 lakh, and Tk 41,300 cash Rajib had saved for his mother's treatment.

Then they handcuffed and slapped Rajib, before taking him to the police station on a motorbike.

"At the police station, three policemen thrashed me with no remorse, while one of them pulled out my fingernail. Later, they demanded Tk 5 lakh for my release. I got out after paying Tk 2 lakh," read Rajib's written complaints, filed with Police Headquarters, home ministry, and IGP's complaint monitoring cell at different times.

A victim of brutal police torture, Rajib hoped that he would get justice and compensation.

But till date, he neither got back the looted gold nor the money. Justice now seems unattainable to him.

After repeated attempts, he filed a case with a Dhaka court against the three officers on March 2, under Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act.

The accused officers are Sub-inspector Mizanur Rahman (40), Assistant SI Farid Bhuiyan (35),

and SI Jalil (35).

"But since then, I got into a new trouble," Rajib told The Daily Star yesterday. He already received threatening calls from people.

Rajib also shared his ordeal of seeking justice for three years.

RECALLING THE TORTURE Remembering that horrific night, Rajib said, "After taking me to the station, SI Mizan and ASI Farid hit me severely with a cricket stump."

Rajib claimed that he still has the transaction slip he got after taking out the money from his account.

"Police alleged that they picked me up because I snatched gold from an Indian citizen. But they haven't been able to produce him before me as of yet," Rajib said, adding that he is not sure why police targeted him.

After filing the complaint with



Later, ASI Farid and SI Jalil tortured me again. I was tortured with electric shock. I fainted. They took me to Mitford Hospital. After treatment, they took me to the station again. They then gave my phone back to call home for money. I got out after paying them Tk 2 lakh.



RAJIB KAR RAJU

Unable to bear the torture, he fell unconscious for some time.

"Later, ASI Farid and SI Jalil tortured me again. I was tortured with electric shock. I fainted. They took me to Mitford Hospital. After treatment, they took me to the station again. They then gave my phone back to call home for money," Rajib said, adding that he was released after the officers got Tk 2 lakh.

PHQ, an assistant superintendent of police investigated the incident some time between May 2019 and March 2020. But Rajib was not officially told anything about the findings.

"Terming it confidential, a police official at Police Headquarters just phoned me and said the three were severely punished and transferred to the remotest districts," Rajib

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Five die from Covid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Another five people died from Covid-19 in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday taking the total death toll to 29,368, said a press release issued by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

During this period, 480 new cases of Covid were recorded, taking the overall tally of infection to 2,025,677.

A total of 3,141 samples were tested across the country. Among the eight divisions, Dhaka logged the highest number of cases, with 397 infections.

Meanwhile, the current covid positivity rate stands at 15.28 percent.

Another 443 people recovered from Covid-19 within this time bringing the total number of recoveries to 19,65,631, said the press release. The mortality rate remained unchanged at 1.45 percent and the recovery rate at 97.04 percent respectively.

Meanwhile, the overall number of global Covid cases is gradually nearing 623 million. According to the latest global data, the total case count mounted to 622,928,752 while the death toll from the virus reached 6,549,217 yesterday morning.

The US has recorded 98,232,353 cases so far and 1,084,803 people have died from the virus in the country, both highest counts around the world.

'Restrictions may ignite violence'

GM Quader on not letting parties to hold events

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Jatiya Party chairman GM Quader yesterday said if peaceful political programmes are restricted in the country, it may invite conflict and violence.

Quader, also deputy leader of the opposition in parliament, said if such a situation arises, it will be a bad sign for the next election.

"The ongoing violent politics is an ominous sign for the upcoming national elections. Given the circumstances, we are getting a message from the ruling party that the next election will be held using force and violence. It is unfortunate for

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

People will resist BNP if it creates chaos: Quader

BSS, Dhaka



Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said BNP will have to face fiery resistance from people if the party creates chaos in the country in the name of resisting election.

"The next election will be held as per constitution, not BNP's wish," Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said while addressing a rally in the capital.

Hajaribagh Thana unit of Dhaka south AL organised the event with its former acting president Hazi Mohammad Selim in the chair.

Referring to BNP Secretary General Mirza

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

Dhaka air remains 'unhealthy'

UNB, Dhaka

Dhaka's air quality continued to be in the "unhealthy" zone yesterday morning.

With an air quality index (AQI) score of 165 at 8:55am, the metropolis ranked third in the list of world cities with the worst air quality.

India's Delhi and Pakistan's Lahore occupied the first two spots, with AQI scores of 186 and 179, respectively.

An AQI between 101 and 200 is considered "unhealthy".

Similarly, an AQI between 201 and 300 is said to be 'poor', while a reading of 301 to 400 is considered "hazardous", posing serious health risks to residents.

AQI, an index for reporting daily air quality, is used by government agencies to inform people how clean or polluted the air of a certain city is, and what associated health

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



REVIVAL OF DHAKA CIRCULAR WATERWAY

Possibilities aplenty but concerns remain

DIPAN NANDY

Mizanur Rahman, popularly known as Mia Bhai, is the owner of a private company called Infinity Maritime.

They were well-known for helping passengers cross the Padma on the Mawa route, with their speed boats.

However, as the southerners rejoiced in the inauguration of Padma Bridge, it was bad news for Mawa's Mia Bhai. The opening of the bridge meant most of the people would not need his speedboats, to begin with. His fears came true, as his boats gradually became passenger less ever since.

When others in this sector almost gave up, Mia Bhai had an idea to bring his venture in and around the riverine Dhaka -- the buzzing capital of the country.

He saw an opening as not a single private company was yet to start any operations at the Dhaka Circular Waterway.

This resulted in the recent launch of a private speedboat service on the Dhaka circular waterway with 11 water vessels of Infinity Maritime.

"On one hand, the passengers will be benefited and on the other, my business will come back to life," he said to this correspondent.

Initially, speedboats will ply the two routes under the private initiative: Tongi, Abdullahpur-Kodda and Tongi/Abdullahpur (Gazipur) Ulukhul (Kaliganj).

Fare for the Tongi/Abdullahpur-Kodda route, which will take 25 minutes, is Tk 150, while that for the Tongi/Abdullahpur (Gazipur)-Ulukhul (Kaliganj) route is Tk 120, which will take 19 minutes.

State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury and State Minister for Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russel inaugurated services at Tongi river port on September 10.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ