



Most dists lack Covid testing facilities

Two more die

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most districts still lack access to Covid-19 testing facilities, despite government efforts to expand them amid rising cases and deaths.

According to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at least two people died of Covid-19 in the 24 hours till yesterday morning.

During this period, 18 people tested positive from 312 samples, raising the total number of cases to 331 this year. So far, seven people have died of the disease.

Amid the rising cases, health authorities said yesterday that they have supplied test kits to 40 government hospitals.

However, as of Monday, only 15 health facilities were conducting tests, up from just three private hospitals on June 1.

Of these facilities, 10 are in Dhaka, two in Chattogram, and one each in Cox's Bazar, Mymensingh, and Sylhet, leaving most districts without access to Covid-19 screening.

Only two of these are government-run hospitals.

Prof Halimur Rashid, line director of Communicable Disease Control at DGHS,

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Mushfiqur Rahim flashes a broad smile, with unmistakable joy and relief quietly evident, after reaching his 12th Test century on the opening day of Bangladesh's first Test against hosts Sri Lanka in Galle yesterday. The 38-year-old, unbeaten on 105, ended a seven-Test lean patch and reminded everyone why he is nicknamed 'Mr Dependable', combining with captain Najmul Hossain Shanto (136*) in a 247-run unbroken fourth-wicket stand that lifted the visitors from early trouble to a commanding 292 for three.

PHOTO: AFP

Ishraque holds meeting with DSCC ward secretaries

Denies carrying out mayoral duties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite not being officially sworn in, BNP leader Ishraque Hossain, for the second day yesterday, took up the role of "mayor" of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC).

Following Monday's controversial assumption of mayoral duties, he visited Nagar Bhaban yesterday and held a meeting with secretaries from all 70 wards, where he reportedly issued administrative instructions.

Ishraque, however, denied performing "mayoral duties".

Prior to the meeting, he joined a sit-in led by his supporters in front of the building, demanding the resignation of LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiyan.

Ishraque arrived at the DSCC headquarters around 12:30pm, while

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'Spectacular' Viking burial site found in Denmark

AFP, Aarhus

In an accidental find, a 10th-century burial site believed to have belonged to a Viking noble family has been discovered in northern Denmark, packed with a "spectacular" trove of ancient objects, a museum announced yesterday.

The discovery came when pearls, coins, ceramics and a box containing a gold thread were unearthed during construction work near Lisbjerg, a village located seven kilometres north of Aarhus, Denmark's second-largest city.

Archaeologists found the site contained around 30 graves dating from the second half of the 10th century, when the famous King Harald Bluetooth reigned, said the Moesgaard Museum in Aarhus.

According to the museum's archaeologist Mads Ravn, the graves are most likely linked to a noble family from the Viking Age -- which lasted between the eighth and 11th centuries -- whose farm was discovered less than a kilometre from the burial site in the late 1980s.

HOLEY ARTISAN CASE

Damage to nation's image, brutality considered Says HC on sentencing convicts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court, in the full text of its verdict on the Holey Artisan Bakery attack case, said it sentenced seven convicts to imprisonment until death considering the brutality of the 2016 terrorist act and the damage it caused to the country's global image.

"Considering the brutality of the murders, the terrorists' overall cruel behaviour, and the tarnishing of Bangladesh's image abroad, we believe justice will be served by sentencing each of the seven convicts to life imprisonment [till natural death]," said the HC bench of Justice Shahidul Karim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman in the 229-page judgment.

The full verdict, uploaded to the Supreme Court website yesterday, opens the door for the state and the convicts to

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Israeli tank fire kills 59 in Gaza aid crowd

221 injured; IDF acknowledges firing in Khan Younis site, says it is investigating

REUTERS, Gaza

Israeli tanks fired into a crowd trying to get aid from trucks in the Gaza Strip yesterday, killing at least 59 people, according to medics, in one of the bloodiest incidents yet in mounting violence as desperate residents struggle for food.

Video shared on social media showed around a dozen mangled bodies lying in a street in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip. The Israeli military acknowledged firing in the area and said it was looking into the incident.

Eyewitnesses interviewed by Reuters said Israeli tanks had fired at least two shells at a crowd of thousands, who had gathered on the main eastern road through Khan Younis in the hope of getting food from aid trucks that use the route.

"All of a sudden, they let us move forward and made everyone gather, and then shells started falling, tank shells," said Alaa, an eyewitness, interviewed by Reuters at Nasser Hospital, where wounded victims lay sprawled on the floor and in corridors due to the lack of space.

"No one is looking at these people with

mercy. The people are dying, they are being torn apart, to get food for their children. Look at these people, all these people are torn to get flour to feed their children."

Medics said at least 59 people were killed and 221 wounded, at least 20 of them in critical condition. Casualties were being rushed into the hospital in civilian cars, rickshaws, and donkey carts.

» Injured victims lay sprawled on the floor of Nasser Hospital

» UN rejects the US-led aid distribution system

The United Nations rejects the US-led aid distribution system as inadequate, dangerous and a violation of humanitarian impartiality rules. Israel says it is needed to prevent Hamas fighters from diverting aid, which Hamas denies.

In a statement, the Israeli Defence Forces said: "Earlier today, a gathering was identified adjacent to an aid distribution truck that got stuck in the area of Khan Yunis, and in proximity to IDF troops operating in the area."

"The IDF is aware of reports regarding a number of injured individuals from IDF fire following the crowd's approach. The details of the incident are under review. The IDF regrets any harm to uninjured individuals and operates to minimise harm as much as possible to them while maintaining the safety

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SHARE SCAM ACC files case against Shakib, 14 others

BSS, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed a case against cricketer and former lawmaker Shakib Al Hasan and 14 others for allegedly embezzling Tk256 crore from the stock market through fraud.

ACC Director General Md Akhter Hossain disclosed the information at a press briefing at ACC's Segunbagicha headquarters. The case was filed by ACC Assistant Director Sajjad Hossain.

Deputy Registrar of the Department of Cooperatives Md Abul Khair Hiru has been named the main accused in the case. The other accused are his wife Kazi Sadia Hassan, Abul Kalam Madbar, Konica Afroz, Mohammad Bashar, Sajed Madbar, Aleya Begum, Kazi Fuad Hassan, Kazi Farid Hassan, Shirin Akhter, Javed A Matin, Md Jahed Kamal, Md Humayun Kabir, and Tanvir Nizam.

According to the ACC, the accused conspired to artificially inflate share prices for personal gain through illegal transactions, fraudulent trading, and market speculation. These actions caused heavy losses to general investors.

The group allegedly misappropriated

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Freedom Fighter Sakhina no more

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Freedom fighter Sakhina Begum, known for killing five Razakars with a machete during the 1971 Liberation War, passed away in Kishoreganj's Nikli upazila early yesterday. She was 92.

Her death was confirmed by her caregiver and niece, Fairunnesa Akhter.

Sakhina had been suffering from age-related ailments for a long time, she said.

Before her funeral

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Palestinians react beside people wounded in an Israeli strike while waiting for aid, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis, southern Gaza Strip, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

6 die on roads Mother, son among them

STAR REPORT

At least six people, including a mother and her three-year-old child, were killed and three injured in road accidents in three districts yesterday.

Of them, three were killed in Gazipur after a bus hit their CNG-run auto-rickshaw.

The accident took place in the afternoon when a Kishoreganj-bound bus hit the CNG-run auto-rickshaw in the Jamira Char area of Gazipur's Kapasia upazila, said Sohag Hossain, sub-inspector of Kapasia Police Station.

The deceased are Ratna Akhter, 23, of Kamalbuk village and her son Shayan, and Md. Tahidullah Mia, 25, of Krushtapur village under Kishoreganj's Itna upazila, he said.

Shayan and Tahidullah were brought dead to the Kapasia Upazila Health Complex, while Ratna was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition for advanced treatment, according to Krishna Kumar Das, the hospital's medical officer.

She succumbed to her injuries on her way to Dhaka, according to the SI Sohag.

Police are trying to identify the bus and arrest its driver, he said.

Over in Dinajpur, two people on a motorcycle were killed after a pickup hit their vehicle near the Rangamati BGB camp in Phulbari upazila.

The deceased were identified as Abu Taleb, 27, and Saju Islam, 33, both residents of Kaharul upazila, the police said.

The incident happened around 6:30am on the Dinajpur-Phulbari regional highway when the driver of a Dinaipur-bound pickup lost control of the vehicle and

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