

Media Synthesis Report

on

**Fake COVID-19 certificates and fraudulence in
COVID Treatment**

প্রথম আলো

The Daily Star

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FINDINGS

a) A gang

Fake COVID-19 certificates sold at Tk 4-7 thousand

A ring was operating within and outside of the capital's Mugda General Hospital to collect COVID-19 certificates and later forged those for selling to people. The Rapid Action Battalion has recently busted a ring, recovered nearly one hundred fake certificates and held four members of the ring in this connection. Police has been investigating the case and found that the ring was using long queues of COVID-19 test seekers as an opportunity to lure some of them to buy counterfeit COVID-19 certificates. RAB personnel detained the four people on June 15 from a photocopying shop in Mugda on charge of printing fake COVID-19 negative and positive certificates.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/108973/fake-covid-19-certificates-sold-at-tk-4-7-thousand>

Fake Covid Reports: Cops track down dozen syndicates

Some hospital staffers involved in it; each report sold for Tk 5,000-9,000

While the coronavirus itself is a cause for grave concern in the country, some people are out there making business by putting others at further risk of infection by selling fake Covid-19 certificates. Law enforcers claimed to have detected around a dozen syndicates, who are selling fake certificates during the pandemic. They provide a printed "Covid-19 negative/positive" certificate or an E-mail as per desire, for Tk 5,000 to Tk 9,000. In cooperation with some hospital staffers, these syndicates mainly target those in need of a Covid-19 negative certificate to go abroad, said officials of police and Rab. They have medical staffers, graphic designers and IT experts involved in their gangs. For the certificates, they mainly use DGHS or IEDCR pads.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/news/fake-covid-reports-cops-track-down-dozen-syndicates-1920021>

b) Regent Hospital

Fake Covid-19 certificates: DGHS directs Regent Group to shut down its hospital branches in Mirpur, Uttara

The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has directed the authority of Regent Hospital to close the Uttara and Mirpur branches of its hospital immediately. "We have asked them to close the hospitals immediately," Aminul Hasan, director (hospital) of DGHS said, adding that, "Patients of those hospital would be shifted to the hospital in Bashudhara. If necessary, patients will be shifted to Kuwait Bangladesh Friendship Hospital." The move comes after the head office of Regent Group and its hospital in Dhaka's Uttara were sealed off on charges of issuing fake Covid-19 test certificates and collecting money from Covid-19 patients.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/coronavirus-deadly-new-threat/news/fake-covid-19-certificate-regent-group-head-office-two-hospitals-sealed-1926529>

Seven Regent Hospital employees remanded in a case filed over fake COVID-19 certificates

A Dhaka court on Wednesday placed seven Regent Hospital employees on a five-day remand in a case filed over their alleged involvement in issuing fake COVID-19 test certificates.

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/seven-regent-hospital-employees-remanded-in-a-case-filed-over-fake-covid-19-certificates>

DGHS claims health ministry high-ups directed it to sign Regent Hospital MoU

Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) has claimed that it took initiative to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Regent Hospital as per directives from the top authorities of the health ministry. DGHS came up with the claim on Saturday in a press statement. The statement was made to clarify DGHS' stand about the fraudulence of Regent Hospital owner Md Shahed and JKG Group.

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/crime-and-law/dghs-claims-health-ministry-high-ups-directed-it-to-sign-regent-hospital-mou>

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As per announcement on Md. Shahed's Facebook, a female join at Mirpur branch but she escaped after a month and a half. She had to work the rest of the day except sleeping. She was the only physician in this hospital. Necessary medical supplies were also not there. But the Department of Health found confidence in this fragile hospital. According to agreement between Regent and Health Department termed this as a state-of-the-art hospital.

What were in the Agreement

The agreement further states that the Regent has all types of services in its two hospitals in Mirpur and Uttara. There is a laboratory for testing and a radiology department. They have a hotel called 'Milina'. There are 36 rooms for health workers to stay in quarantine. They have three ambulances, which are engaged in patient transportation at all times. The regent was supposed to provide free medical treatment to any patient sent by the health department. All expenses will meet by the health department.

<https://www.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/article/1670473/%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B9%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%A6%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%AD%E0%A6%99%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%97%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%9C%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%A8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%9F-%E0%A6%B9%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%A4%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B2-%E0%A6%9B%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B2->

[%E0%A6%85%E0%A6%A7%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%A6%E0%A6%AA%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%A4%E0%A6%B0%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B0](#)

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The RAB led by Executive Magistrate Sarwar Alam raided the hospital. The hospital would have given COVID-19 'positive' and 'negative' certificates without testing, said Sarwar Alam. Sarwar Alam told reporters that they have received evidence of three types of allegations and crimes. They used to give fake reports without testing the samples, they were supposed to provide free medical services as prescribed by the government, but they have taken lakhs of taka per patient and have submitted a bill of more than Tk 1.96 crore to the government. The RAB executive magistrate said, "Regent Hospital has so far treated 200 COVID patients." The third offense of the hospital authorities was that there was an agreement with the government they would test the COVID for free for admitted patients. But they have tested free samples 4,200 patients from IEDCR, ITH and NIPSOM.

<https://www.banglatribune.com/others/news/631756/%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%9C%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%A8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%9F-%E0%A6%B9%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%A4%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B2-%E0%A6%95%E0%A7%8B%E0%A6%AD%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%A1-%E0%A6%A1%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%A1%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%95%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%9F%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%A1-%E0%A6%B9%E0%A7%9F-%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%87%E0%A6%B6%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%BE%E0%A7%9F>

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Regent Group Chairman Mohammad Shahed provided low quality masks and PPE to the government. These protective materials were supplied by an organization called Albert Global Garments Factory Limited. He does not have a garment factory by this name. He started this scam by opening a Facebook page.

<https://www.banglatribune.com/others/news/633269/%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%95%E0%A7%87-%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%AE%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%A8%E0%A6%AE%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%A8%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%B0-%E0%A6%AE%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%95-%E0%A6%93-%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%AA%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%87-%E0%A6%B8%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%AC%E0%A6%B0%E0%A6%BE%E0%A6%B9-%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%B0%E0%A7%87%E0%A6%9B%E0%A6%BF%E0%A6%B2>

c) JKG Health Care

Fake Covid-19 certificates: JKG chairman Dr Sabrina on 3-day remand

JKG Health Care Chairman Dr Sabrina Arif Chowdhury, also a government official, was placed on a three-day remand by a Dhaka court today in connection with a case filed over issuing fake Covid-19 test reports.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/jkg-chairman-dr-sabrina-chowdhury-on-3-day-remand-1929657>

44 booths set up for collecting COVID-19 samples

A private voluntary organisation, getting the green light from the government, has installed a total of 44 booths to collect samples from suspected coronavirus patients in Dhaka and Narayanganj. The organisation -- JKG Healthcare -- collects around 300 to 350 samples daily from six places of Dhaka and Narayanganj and later sends them to government laboratories for testing.

<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/44-booths-set-up-for-collecting-covid-19-samples>

d) Shahabuddin Medical College Hospital

Unauthorised Covid-19 tests: Assistant director of SMCH, two others detained

Three people, including an assistant director of Shahabuddin Medical College Hospital (SMCH), were detained on charges of conducting unauthorised antibody tests on patients to detect Covid-19 and test report forgery. A mobile court, led by Executive Magistrate Sarwoer Alam, conducted a drive and found the anomalies. The hospital authorities have been deceiving patients in the name of detecting Covid-19 through rapid test kits which are not approved by the government yet.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/top-news/news/unauthorised-covid-19-test-assistant-director-shahabuddin-medical-college-hospital-detained-1932837>

RAB arrests Shahabuddin Medical College Hospital MD

The Rapid Action Battalion on Monday night arrested Shahabuddin Medical College Hospital managing director Foysal Al Islam hours it filed a case against hospital authorities. RAB officials said they would seal off the hospital and file a case against its authority as they unearthed yet another COVID-19 testing forgery scam there while they also found other irregularities.

<https://www.newagebd.net/article/111711/rab-arrests-shahabuddin-medical-college-hospital-md>

e) Pabna's Rooppur Medicare Clinic

Fake Covid-19 certificates: Pabna's Rooppur Medicare Clinic sealed off

The local health department authority 16 July 2020 sealed off Rooppur Medicare Clinic, in Ishwardi upazila of Pabna, for issuing fake Covid-19 certificates and charging patients for treatment.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/fake-covid-19-certificates-pabna-rooppur-medicare-clinic-sealed-off-1931305>

f) DGHS

DGHS chief Azad quits amid scams

Amid severe criticism and scams related to Covid-19 tests, Prof Abul Kalam Azad has stepped down as the director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). He tendered his resignation letter to the public administration ministry yesterday, Abdul Mannan, secretary of Health Services Division,
<https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/dg-dghs-abul-kalam-azad-resigns-1933977>

DGHS DG Azad's appointment cancelled

The government on 23 July 2020 cancelled the appointment of Directorate General of Health Services director general Abul Kalam Azad. Public administration ministry in a notification made the announcement. It said that the appointment of Azad as the DG of DGHS has been cancelled with effect from July 21, 2020 upon his application. Azad submitted his resignation to the public administration ministry on 21 July 2020 amid widespread criticism over corruption in the health sector.
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/111907/dghs-dg-azads-appointment-cancelled>

DGHS director (hospital) being transferred

After Prof Abul Kalam Azad stepped down as director general of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) yesterday, its Director (Hospital) Aminul Hasan is now being removed from the post amid severe criticism over Covid-19 tests.
<https://www.thedailystar.net/dghs-director-hospital-now-being-transferred-1934461>

Khursid Alam made new DG of DGHS

The government on 23 July 2020 made Dhaka Medical College surgery professor Abul Bashar Mohammad Khursid Alam as the new director general of Directorate General of Health Services. Khurshid Alam's appointment comes hours after the public administration ministry cancelled the appointment of outgoing DGHS director general Abul Kalam Azad.
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/111907/khursid-alam-made-new-dg-of-dghs>

Minister for stern action against messed up DGHS wings

Health minister Zahid Maleque on Wednesday said that the Directorate General of Health Services wings, which faced criticism during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, would be inspected and stern action would be taken against the officials. The minister made the comment replying to a query if the director for hospital wing Aminul Hassan would be removed from his post amid criticism over his role during the crisis.
<https://www.newagebd.net/article/111836/minister-for-stern-action-against-messed-up-dghs-wings>

g) Destination Italy

151 Bangladeshis refused entry to Italy

Italy did not allow 151 Bangladeshi passengers to enter into the country today who were on board a Qatar Airways flight from Dhaka. Qatar Airways will fly the Bangladeshi passengers back to Dhaka on 9 July 2020. "We did not know of the Italian government's decision that no passengers from Bangladesh would be allowed to enter into Italy," the official said.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/country/news/151-bangladeshis-refused-entry-italy-1927329#:~:text=Qatar%20Airways%20will%20fly%20the,Italy%2C%22%20the%20official%20said.>

Italy bars entry to passengers from Bangladesh till October 5

In a major setback for many Bangladeshi expatriates waiting to return to their workplaces in Italy, the European country today put restriction on entry of passengers from Bangladesh into its territory till October 5. Earlier on July 7, the Italian government imposed the restriction for a week after a significant number of passengers of a special flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines tested positive for Covid-19 once they landed at the airport in Rome on July 6. The passengers had documents certifying that they had tested negative for Covid-19 and were safe to travel. Later, Italy on July 8 denied entry to around 151 Bangladeshi passengers -- on board a transit flight of Qatar Airways -- into the country and sent them back to Dhaka.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/italy-bars-entry-passengers-bangladesh-till-october-5-1927589>

h) Health Scams and aftermath

Fake Covid Certificates: Public health, country's image abroad at stake

The fake Covid-19 tests have not only posed a risk to public health but also put the Bangladeshi expatriates in trouble. Many expatriates might face problems returning abroad if other countries have a poor impression of Bangladesh's testing and overall handling of the pandemic. Japan, Italy and South Korea have already restricted the entry of Bangladeshis after some of them, with documents certifying that they didn't have the coronavirus, tested positive after they arrived in those countries.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/frontpage/news/fake-covid-certificates-public-health-countrys-image-abroad-stake-1927393>

Regent and JKG scams: Is this the face of a new normal in healthcare?

Nowadays, we often hear the term "new normal", which refers to the coping strategy in the post-Covid-19 era. Will this be the new normal healthcare in the post-Covid-19 era in Bangladesh? Hopefully not. But these two scandals are not isolated incidents; scams like these have long been feeding on the healthcare system. The DGHS seems to have finally woken up a bit as it cancelled Covid-19 testing approvals awarded to five different hospitals on various grounds. But neither the health ministry nor the DGHS

can avoid their share of responsibilities in the blunder, and engaging in a blame game is futile. Those who are responsible for this must be brought to justice.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/news/regent-and-jkg-scams-the-face-new-normal-healthcare-1930413>

i) Covid-19 certificate for traveler

Covid-19 certificate must for travel abroad from July 23

The government on 18 July 2020 decided to implement its earlier decision that all passengers need to show Covid-19 negative certificates -- from government-authorised testing centres -- at the airports before leaving the country, from July 23. "As per directives of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), all departing passengers from Bangladesh must show Covid-19 negative certificates from government-listed 16 testing facilities -- done no more than 72 hours before their international flights," said Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh (CAAB) in a circular.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/coronavirus-deadly-new-threat/news/covid-19-certificate-must-travel-abroad-from-july-23-1932361>