

DHAKA: A Dhaka University professor along with two others is facing sedition charges for allegedly defaming Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the founding father of Bangladesh, and distorting the history of the 1971 Liberation War. Aminul Islam Bulbul, the president of the

central committee of the Muktiyuddha Mancha, filed a written complaint against Professor Morshed Hasan Khan, Daily Jai Jai Din Editor Kazi Rokonuddin Ahmed and Daily Naya Diganta Editor Alamgir Mohiuddin at the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Ziaur Rahman on Thursday.

FIRE ENGULFS US WEST COAST

Over 500,000 people in Oregon flee encroaching flames; 10 dead

DEADLY wildfires in heavily populated northwest Oregon were growing, with hundreds of thousands of people told to flee encroaching flames while residents to the south tearfully assessed their losses.

People evacuated statewide because fires had climbed to an estimated 500,000 people, which is more than 10 percent of the 4.2 million people in the state, the Oregon Office of Emergency Management reported late Thursday.

One fire approached Molalla, triggering a mandatory evacuation order for the community of about 9,000 people located 30 miles (48 kilometers) south of Portland.

With two large fires threatening to merge, some firefighters in Clackamas County, which includes Molalla, were told to disengage temporarily because of the danger. Officials tried to reassure residents who abandoned their homes, and law enforcement said patrols would be stepped up to prevent looting.

The local fire department said on Twitter: "To be clear, your firefighters are still working hard on the wildfires in Clackamas County. They are taking a 'tactical pause' to allow firefighters to reposition, get accountability & evaluate extreme fire conditions."

Meanwhile, Northern California wildfire that destroyed a foothill hamlet has become the state's deadliest blaze of the year with 10 people confirmed dead and the toll could climb as

searchers look for 16 missing people. The North Complex fire that exploded in wind-drive flames earlier in the week was advancing more slowly Friday after the winds eased and smoke from the blaze shaded the area and lowered the temperature, allowing firefighters to make progress, authorities said.

However, the smoke made for poor visibility and fire helicopters couldn't fly Thursday. In most parts of the state, red flag warnings of extreme fire danger because of hot, dry weather or gusty winds were lifted.

Meanwhile residents of the small Oregon town of Phoenix, near the California state line along Interstate 5, walked through a scene of devastation after one of the state's many wildfires wiped out much of their community. A mobile home park, houses and businesses were burned, leaving

twisted remains on charred ground. Many of the residents were immigrants, with few resources to draw on.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency estimated that 600 homes were burned by the fire that started in Ashland and tore through Phoenix, the Mail Tribune of Medford reported.

Oregon officials haven't released an exact death count for the wildfires but at least four fatalities have been reported in the state. One person was killed in wildfires in Washington.

Oregon officials were shocked by the number of simultaneous fires, which stood at 37 Thursday, according to the state Office of Emergency Management.

Gov. Kate Brown said more than 900,000 acres (364,000 hectares) - greater than the size of Rhode Island - have burned in Oregon in the past three days - nearly double the territory that burns in a typical year.

Back in Phoenix, Marty Curtis considered herself lucky. Her house was spared and she escaped with her cat, Louie.

A police car rolled through the streets with a loudspeaker blaring "evacuate now."



Flames wreak destruction at Brazil Jaguar reserve

DAVID BILLER AND MARCELO DE SOUSA Rio de Janeiro

Wildfire has infiltrated a Brazilian state park known for its population of jaguars as firefighters, environmentalists and ranchers in the world's largest tropical wetlands region struggle to smother record blazes.

The fire had surrounded the Encontro das Aguas (Meeting of the Waters) park in the Pantanal, located at the border of Mato Grosso and Mato Grosso do Sul states, but for a time rivers helped keep the blazes at bay.

Then wind carried sparks into the park and flames have been wreaking destruction for over a week.

There is little outlook for any near-term help from rainfall, said the Mato Grosso firefighters' spokeswoman, Lt. Col. Sheila Sebalhos.

"The forecast isn't good," Sebalhos said by phone from the state capital of Cuiaba, after spending weeks in the fire zone.



DASHBOARD

- UK universities prepare to reopen
France sees highest daily Covid infections with nearly 10,000 cases
Florida to reopen bars, pack restaurants
One of Pope's top collaborators Filipino
Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle tests positive
Czech Republic coronavirus cases spike again
Young protesters force Nepal to manage virus crisis in a better way

Colombia: 7 dead during anti-police protests

AGENCIES Bogota

At least seven people were killed in violent protests against police brutality in Colombia's capital Bogota, the police said.

The protests were triggered after the death of a man at the hands of police on Tuesday, Xinhua news agency.

Lawyer Javier Ordenez, a father of two, was repeatedly tasered by police before he died later in hospital, according to media reports.

Addressing reporters on Thursday, deputy chief of police, Gustavo Moreno, accompanied by Defence Minister Carlos Holmes Trujillo, said that more than 140 people were injured in the protests - 87 officers and 55 civilians - while 70 others were arrested.

Protesters set fire to 17 police stations and posts in different parts of the city, and vandalized 77 vehicles and 25 public transit buses, setting nine of them on fire, according to the authorities.

Police motorcycles and patrol cars were also targeted, and various ATMs looted, they said.

Trujillo said the government would beef up security by deploying hundreds of soldiers to the streets of Bogota. He called on citizens not to condemn the entire police force for the actions of two officers, who have been suspended.

Peru fights virus with wisdom of ancestors

RODRIGO ABD / Pucallpa

As COVID-19 spread quickly through Peru's Amazon, the Indigenous Shipibo community decided to turn to the wisdom of their ancestors.

Hospitals were far away, short on doctors and running out of beds. Even if they could get in, many of the ill were too fearful to go, convinced that stepping foot in a hospital would only lead to death.

So Mery Fasabi gathered herbs, steeped them in boiling water and instructed her loved ones to breathe in the vapors. She also made syrups of onion and ginger to help clear congested airways.

"We had knowledge about these plants, but we didn't know if they'd really help treat COVID," the teacher said.

"With the pandemic we are discovering new things." The coronavirus pandemic's ruthless march through Peru - the country with the world's highest per-population confirmed COVID-19 mortality rate - has compelled many Indigenous groups to find their own remedies.

Decades of under-investment in public health care, combined with skepticism of modern medicine, mean many are not getting standard treatments like oxygen therapy to treat severe virus cases.

In the Ucayali region, government rapid response teams deployed to a handful of Indigenous communities have found infection rates as high as 80% through antibody testing. Food and medicine donations have reached only a fraction of the population.

Many say the only state presence they have seen is from a group responsible for collecting bodies of the dead.

At a spot known as "Kilometer 20" near the city of Pucallpa, a new cemetery has sprung to life with the remains of about 400 people.

"We've always been forgotten," said Roberto Wikeff, 49, a Shipibo man who turned to Fasabi's treatments to help treat his COVID-19. "We don't exist for them."

Peru is home to one of Latin America's largest Indigenous populations, whose ancestors lived in the Andean country before the arrival of Spanish colonists.

Entire tribes were wiped out by infectious diseases introduced by the Euro-

peans. Today many live and work in urban areas, but others reside in remote parts of the Amazon that have few doctors, let alone the capacity to do complex molecular testing or treatment for the virus.

Wikeff said the 10 doctors, nurses and aides who usually staff a nearby clinic abandoned their posts when the coronavirus arrived.

The Shipibo had tried to prevent COVID-19's entrance by blocking roads and isolating themselves. But in May, he and others nonetheless came down with fevers, coughs, difficulty breathing and headaches.

A month later, he was still feeling ill and turned to Fasabi, who along with 15 other volunteers had set up a makeshift treatment center.

Microsoft accuses Russia of election meddling

FRANK BAJAK / Boston

The same Russian military intelligence outfit that hacked the Democrats in 2016 has renewed vigorous US election-related targeting, trying to breach computers at more than 200 organisations including political campaigns and their consultants, Microsoft said Thursday.

US political establishment, the company said. "What we've seen is consistent with previous attack patterns that not only target candidates and campaign staffers but also those who they consult on key issues," Tom Burt, a Microsoft vice president, said in a blog post.

Russian, Chinese and Iranian agents were halted by Microsoft security software and the targets notified, he said. The company would not comment on who may have been successfully hacked or the impact.

Greek refugees and migrants spend 3rd night under the stars

AGENCIES Mytilene

Thousands of refugees and migrants have spent a third night in the open on the Greek island of Lesbos after two successive nights of fires in the notoriously overcrowded Moria camp left them homeless.

Greek authorities have said the fires on Tuesday and Wednesday evening were deliberately set by some of the camp's residents angered by isolation orders issued to prevent the spread of the coronavirus after 35 residents were found to have been infected.

The camp had already been placed in lockdown until mid-September, after the first case had been detected - a Somali man who had been granted asylum and had left the camp, but who had returned to Moria from Athens.

Some awoke Friday after sleeping by the side of the road, having cut down reeds and used salvaged blankets to make rudimentary shelters to protect them from the night-time chill and the scorching day-time sun. Others used tents or had just sleeping bags to protect them from the elements.

Aid organizations have long warned about the dire conditions in the camp, which has a capacity of just over 2,750 people but was housing more than 12,500 inside and in a spillover tent city that sprang up in an adjacent olive grove.



Portland police can no more use tear gas

AGENCIES / Portland

The mayor of Portland on Thursday ordered police in Oregon's largest city to stop using tear gas for crowd control during the frequently violent protests that have racked the city for more than three months since the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

Mayor Ted Wheeler, a Democrat, was tear gassed when he went to a demonstration against the presence of federal authorities dispatched to the city to protect federal property.

He said he still wants police to respond aggressively to prevent violence and vandalism. Hundreds of people have been arrested since the protests started in May. "I expect the police to arrest people who engage in criminal acts. I expect the District Attorney to prosecute those who commit criminal acts. And I expect the rest of the criminal justice system to hold those individuals accountable," Wheeler said.

The protesters want city officials to slash the police budget and reallocate that money to Black residents and businesses.

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