

Acute blood crisis in Dinajpur hospitals

KANKAN KARMAKER, Dinajpur

An acute blood crisis is prevailing in hospitals in Dinajpur, affecting treatment of patients.

Taking the advantage, professional donors are charging up to Tk 1500 for a bag of blood, which should normally sell at around Tk 400, sources at Sadar Hospital and Red Crescent Hospital said. Blood of professional donors are not always safe, they added.

"We always face the problem in the region during summer", said a source at Dinajpur Medical College Hospital seeking anonymity.

This year the situation has turned serious because of less blood

collection by voluntary organisations earlier, he said.

Usually, members of political parties and voluntary organisations collected around 35 per cent of blood needed. But collection by them is far less this year, possibly due to political unrest, said other sources at the hospital.

On the other hand, campaign by local clubs, NGOs and government organisations for voluntary blood donation is virtually absent now.

The sources said that over 400 blood bags are needed every day in Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh districts, but around 30 per cent of it can be met now, leaving a huge shortage.

"Even common AB-positive blood is not easily available now, not to speak of blood of negative groups", one source said. "We are helpless. Many child patients who come for blood transfusions return disappointed. We can help only a few", said Said Akkas Ali, a technician at Dinajpur Sadar Hospital.

Seven year-old thalassemia patient Lokman Hakim was brought to the hospital from Birampur upazila. He needed O +ive blood, but his parents returned disappointed as they could not collect the blood despite desperate search for two days, he said.

Another thalassemia patient, 11 year-old Tonmoy from Baliadangi upazila in Thakurgaon, needs blood

transfusion. His condition is deteriorating at the hospital as the hemoglobin rate is dropping alarmingly, his father said.

To face the situation, Dinajpur Red Crescent Hospital has kept its blood bank open round the clock for donation. But a few donors are coming, said its technician Aslamur Rahman.

He said on Tuesday that the Red Crescent Hospital had stock of only 55 blood bags. At least 50 bags are needed daily, he said.

A doctor at Dinajpur Medical College Hospital said, "We have started exchange of blood for patients. Relatives must donate blood to get blood."

Trader abducted for ransom

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

A rice trader was abducted for ransom from near Ghurka Beltola market in Salonga upazila in Sirajganj district Tuesday night.

Joyal Abedin, 38, son of Chanu Mian of Chakgobindapur village was kidnapped by a gang of criminals when he was returning home from his shop in the market, family sources said.

Later, the criminals demanded Tk 6 lakh for his release and warned them not to inform police and journalists, they said.

When contacted, Officer-in-Charge of Solonga police station said he heard about the incident but a case was yet to be filed. He said they are trying to rescue him.

Incidents of abduction increased in the district, specially in Raiganj, Taras and Solonga upazilas in recent days.

Police records said at least 20 people were abducted in the three upazilas in last one year. Of them, four were killed and the rest bought their freedom.



PHOTO: STAR
No schooling, no work either... a teenager, like many others, pushing a loaded rickshaw on the slope of Mohanonda bridge in Chapainawabganj for survival.

'Scrap CHT peace accord for lasting peace'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The Somo Adhikar Andolon (SAA), an organisation of Bangalees in Khagrachhari, yesterday demanded scrapping of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace accord signed by Awami League government with Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghaty Samity (PCJSS) in 1997.

At a meeting held at the Officers Club in the town, leaders of the organisation put forward eight demands including probe into the Mohalchhari clashes between Bangalees and tribesmen earlier this month.

They said lasting peace will not be established in the hills unless the 'dis-

crimatory' peace accord is scrapped and land rights of all established through survey.

Besides ASS leaders, the speakers included Ramgorh Pourshava Chairman Belayet Hossen Bhuiyan, Matiranga Pourshava Acting Chairman Badsha Mia and Khagrachhari Pourshava Chairman Joyal Abedin.

They claimed that the allegations by tribesmen that Bangalees are occupying their lands are false and made with a motive to disturb peace in the hills.

The meeting took up a month-long agitation programme to realise the nine-point demand.



PHOTO: STAR
Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim addressing a rally at Faridpur High School ground in Gaibandha yesterday

Country to see upsurge if reform proposals not accepted: Nasim

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Awami League leader Mohammad Nasim yesterday said the government will have to face a situation like the King of Nepal if it does not accept the opposition's reform proposals for holding the next parliamentary election in a free and fair manner.

"They are still conspiring to hold a farcical polls to cling to power, but people will foil all their evil motives", the former minister said at a public meeting held at Faridpur High school ground in Gaibandha. "They will have to surrender to people's agitation".

There will be no election in the country without reforms to the Election Commission and the caretaker system, he reiterated.

There will be no dialogue with the government if it includes Jamaat-Islami in the team. In that case, a tougher agitation programmes will be launched to "paralyse the country", the front ranking AL leader said.

The alliance government is

killing time on different pleas as they are adamant to include Jamaat in the proposed dialogue on reform proposals, he added.

This government killed many people in the last four years in the name of crossfire. But there has not been any let up in crimes because criminals and Islamist militants are sheltered by ruling party men, Nasim claimed.

Crimes were less during Awami League rule although it did not raise any elite force to maintain law and order, the former home minister said.

Although some Islamist militant leaders have been arrested but their followers are still active under the protection of a partner in the ruling coalition, Nasim claimed. He demanded arrest of ruling party leaders allegedly sheltering militants.

Presided over by Al-Helal Sarker, the meeting was also addressed by AL central leader Fazley Rabbi and Gaibandha AL President Mohammed Khaled.

Kaliganj Genocide Day today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Today is Kaliganj Genocide Day. On this day in 1971, Pakistan occupation army killed 300 young people at Kaliganj village in Jaldhaka upazila.

They also looted the villagers and raped women.

Some victims were forced to dig a big grave before they were killed in brush fire.

Narrating a horrifying incident, Amor Krisno Adhikari, 53, the lone survivor of the genocide, also a teacher of Balagram High School, said he was merely 19 years old at that time. His father and two brothers were killed in the genocide. He was also buried alive but he could come out of the grave as 'luck favoured me,' he said.

Morshed Ali and Shamsad Ali, two silent spectators of the genocide and former Union Parishad (UP) members of Chira Bhiza Goina union regretted that no government took step to preserve the memory of the martyrs although it was the largest genocide in the country. Local people built a memorial at their own initiative and engraved martyrs' names on the plaque, they informed. No major political parties chalked out programmes to mark the day.

Kaliganj High School and Chandmoni, a social welfare organisation, organised a memorial meeting on the spot yesterday.

Ruling coalition partner sheltering militants

Razzak alleges at Pabna rally

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Awami League Presidium member Abdur Razzak yesterday alleged that a partner in the ruling alliance is sheltering Islamist militants in the country.

The militant organisations including Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh are being patronised for their use in the next election to cling to power, he said while addressing a public meeting at Shaathia upazila in Pabna.

The former minister urged the government to accept opposition reform proposals in the interest of the country and itself.

"Otherwise they will have to step down in a disgraceful situation", he said.

"We have already sent names of

our leaders for reform talks, but they (4 party alliance) are yet to decide. This shows they are still conspiring to hold then next election without reforms to the Election Commission and the caretaker system".

People will not allow this, the AL leader said.

He also criticised the government for price hike of essentials and power-fuel crisis.

Organised by Shathia upazilla AL, the meeting was also addressed by local party leaders. Arranged the rally that was presided by party central leader Mostafa Julal Mohiuddin, Prof Abu Sayed, Shamsur Rahman Sharif Ditu MP and Pabna AL secretary Shamsul Haque Tuku.

Hartal for power

A CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A half-day hartal (strike) for electricity will be observed in Chatmohar upazila today.

Palli Bidyut Grahok Kalyan Sangram Parisad has called the strike to press its 13-point demand which included uninterrupted power supply, reduction of excessive service charges and action against corrupt REB officials and staff.

The action committee is continuing an agitation programme for power for the last two months.

Earlier, the committee boycotted a meeting with Chatmohar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) on Monday and observed half-day hartal on Tuesday.

12X3



PHOTO: STAR
Japanese Ambassador in Bangladesh Matsushiro Horiguchi yesterday inaugurating a 63-bed eye hospital in Sunamganj, to be run by a local NGO-Voluntary Association for Rural Development (VARD).

9X3

3.5X2