

Doctors show little interest to serve in hilly regions

From A K M Zahoorul Huq

KHAGRACHHARI, July 4: Rendering of medicare services by the government Health Department in the district has been facing serious setback due to acute shortage of physicians, field workers and staff as well as supply of insufficient medicine accompanied with absence of relevant facilities and provisions in the hospital, health centres and union health centres, the concerned circles alleged.

The poor and helpless people of this malaria and diarrhoea-prone district are being deprived of medicare services for the last five years as all the eight thana health complexes and eleven union medical centres along with the 51-bed hospital in Khagrachhari have been experiencing bare shortage of physicians and staff. Out of 85 posts of physicians, only 34 physicians at present are serving in this district. The post of Thana Health and Family Planning Officer in Manikchhari and Matiranga is lying vacant for a couple of years. No health complexes have been provided with more than three physicians whereas each of the complexes hold nine posts of physicians, it was learnt. The important posts like laboratory technician, pharmacist, radiographer

etc are lying vacant in all the eight thana health complexes, observers alleged.

A total of 172 posts including 51 posts of physicians are lying vacant at present in the district, sources from Khagrachhari Civil Surgeon office informed.

No surgical operation was done in the district hospital within the last six years due to absence of any surgeon. The apparatus for operation are getting rusted. Post of anaesthetist for this department is yet to be created. The consultant of medicine and gynaecology who were posted once, did not join. The posts of pathologist and radiologist are also lying vacant for about twelve years depriving the patients from pathological tests and X-ray facilities, sufferers alleged.

Due to fund constraint, the ambulances of the district hospital and Ramgarh thana health complex are lying disordered. No ambulances were provided to any of the six thana health complexes, officials alleged.

Thousands of people of the inaccessible Dighinala thana are being deprived of the medicare facilities as the government's commitment to upgrade the Dighinala hospital to 31-bed is yet not implemented.

The 31-bed hospital building constructed in Ramgarh thana by the Public Works Department is not yet handed over for the reason best known to them causing a hindrance in medicare services.

The construction of new hospital building at Panchhari and Matiranga is progressing very slowly. Gross irregularities were also alleged on the under construction thana health complexes at Luxmichhari. Rusted iron rods, inferior quality of bricks, cement and sand were allegedly being used in construction works. Due to faulty and irregular construction of the district hospital, the toilet and lavatory of the female ward is kept closed for the last four years causing an immense suffering to the female patients.

The quality of diet supplied in Khagrachhari hospital, Ramgarh, Panchhari, Dighinala, Mohalchhari and Manikchhari thana health complexes is very much below than any standard. The renovation and repair of morgue of the district hospital is urgently needed. Accommodation provisions in the district hospital as well as all the thana health complexes should immediately be increased to meet the increasing influx of the patients.

Sec 144 on rail station area in Mymensingh

MYMENSINGH, July 4: The district administration today imposed section 144 in the rail station area as the Jatiya Party and the Jatiyatadbadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) called for meeting at the same venue at the same time, reports UNB.

Both the rival groups called for public meeting at the venue at 5 pm today. Additional District Magistrate Sultan Alam imposed the restriction for 14 hours from 4 pm today.

4 JCD leaders held in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent
SYLHET, July 4: Police arrested four leaders and workers of the Jatiyatadbadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) here last night.

Kamal Mia, the newly elected commissioner of Ward No. 8 of Sylhet Pouroshava who is also a leader of the JCD and three others were arrested from Kamal's residence at the Electric Supply Road. Kamal is wanted in nine cases, police said. The three others Mohiuddin Bablu, Anwar Hossain Manik and Iqbal Hossain are also wanted in different cases.

Two killed in road mishaps in CHT

From CHT Correspondent
RANGAMATI, July 4: Ripan 7, a student of class II, of Shilchhari Primary School in Kaptai thana of the district was crushed under wheels of a bus beside his school at about 11:00 am Saturday.

The mob obstructed the bus and handed over the driver and conductor to Kaptai thana police.

In another accident at Gochchabil in Manikchhari thana of Khagrachhari hill district, a way-farer was run-over by a rice-loaded trade at 9:00 am the same day. The dead was identified as Hezaiya Chakma, 40.

Driver Kamal was taken in to Manikchhari thana police custody with the truck.

Heavy rain fall: Crops on 60,000 acres inundated in Gopalganj

From Our Correspondent
GOPALGANJ, July 4: Crops on sixty thousand acres of land in ten unions of Kasiani and Maksudpur thanas have been inundated due to the heavy rain falls during the last few days. Eighty per cent of the crops have been damaged, it was learnt from the farmers.

It is learnt that vast areas including Chandar Beel and Mollar Beel of Maksudpur thana and Baro-Beel of Kasiani thana have gone under water following the downpour.

The area has become waterlogged as there is no drainage system. As a result of this situation, forty thousand cultivators have been facing serious disaster in Jalipar, Namikhir Khanderpur, Bahugram and Ujani Unions of Maksudpur thana and Rajpat, Rahuthar, Ramdia, Nizamkandi and Maheshpur unions of Kasiani thana in the district.

Forest Deptt in Faridpur to plant 98,000 saplings

From Our Correspondent
FARIDPUR, July 4: Faridpur Forest Department (FFD) has taken up a massive programme to plant 98 thousand saplings of different kinds of trees by the sides of roads and highways in the district during the current fiscal year.

Of these saplings, 73,600 will be planted on both sides of 26 kilometre-long road and highway and 24,400 saplings will be planted on both sides of 156 kilometre long feeder roads, a source in the forest department informed.

BA examinee commits suicide

NARSINGDI, July 4: A BA (Pass) examinee allegedly committed suicide at Neamatpur (Daspara) of the town last night after failing in the examination, reports UNB.

Murad, 20, son of a retired sub-inspector of police Fazlur Rahman allegedly hanged himself from the ceiling of their tin-shed house at dead of night after he came to know his result.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Sadar Hospital morgue for postmortem.

The last traces of Rani Bhabani Palace may soon disappear

From M A Ali Himu

NATORE, July 4: The famous Rani Bhabani Palace of Natore is gradually turning into ruins. In the absence of proper maintenance, floor, roof, walls and engravings of the palace is collapsing fast.



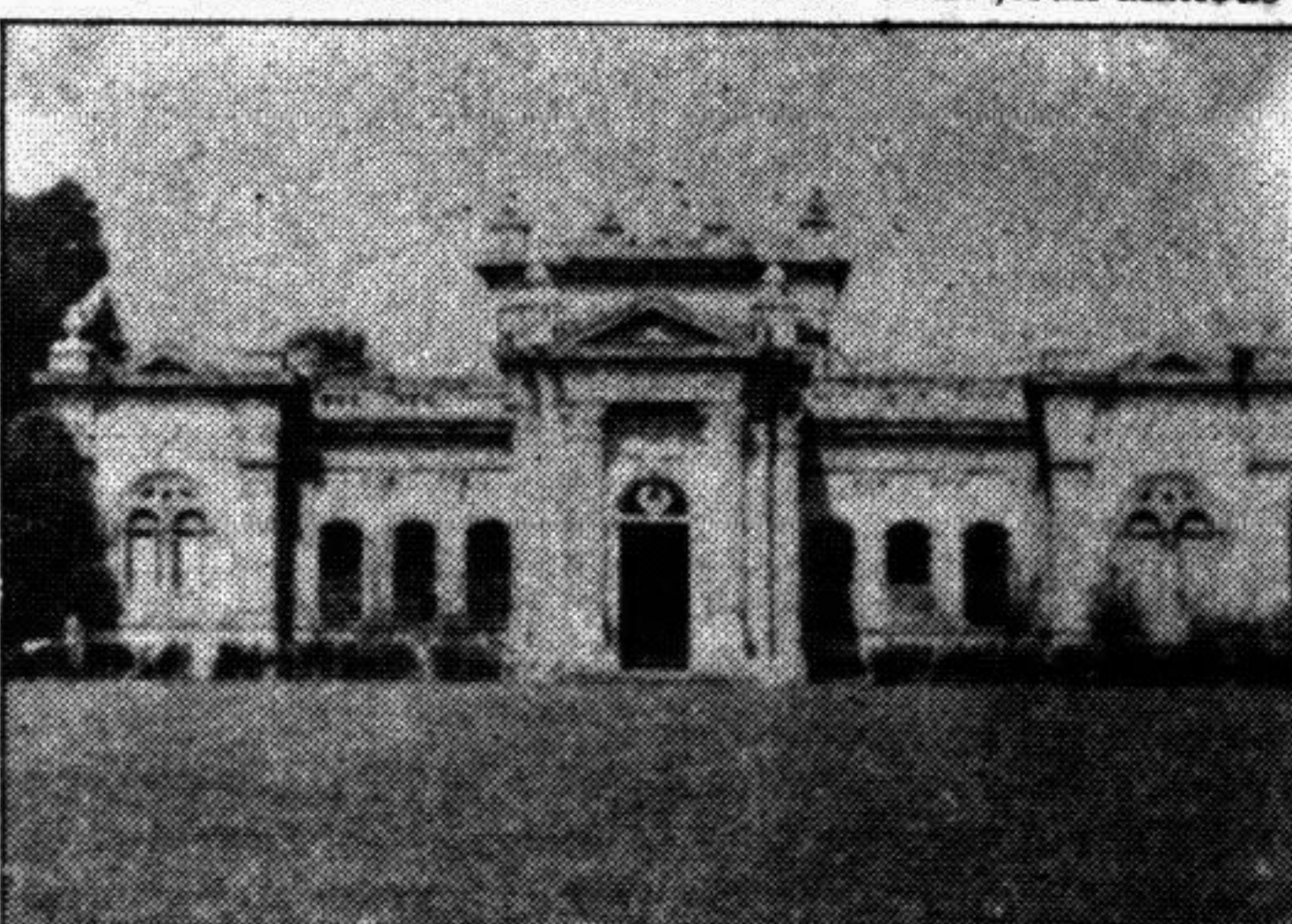
NATORE: Such big holes have developed in many parts of the roof of Rani Bhabani.

— Star photo

The history of royal family of Natore dates back to the sixteenth century. Raja Ram Jiban, son of an upper caste Hindu, is best known as the founder of the royal family. Raja Raghu Nandan, the younger brother of Ram Jiban, who was the Dewan of Murshid Kuli Khan bestowed the Satoil pargana of Natore to his brother Ram Jiban. Ram Jiban also got a huge reservoir — Vath Jharar Beel — as a property bestowed to the Brahmin

from Raja Darpa Narayan. Ram Jiban built a magnificent palace on 80 bighas of reclaimed land in the beel. He also obtained huge land properties from Raja Uday Narayan and Raja Sheeta Ram. In 1706 Bahadur Shah, the emperor of Delhi, gave Ram Jiban the power of justice. In the later part of sixteenth century Ram Jiban made Natore the capital of his kingdom.

Kalika Prasad, the only son of Ram Jiban, died in 1724. The premature death of his heir made Ram Jiban anxious



NATORE: The front view of Rani Bhabani main building.

— Star photo
about his kingdom. Consulting his wife, he adopted Ramkanta, son of Ram Chandra of Chowgram village under Shingra. Ramkanta married Bhabani, daughter of Atma Ram of village Chanti. In course of time, Ramkanta's wife Bhabani became famous and popularly was known as the Rani Bhabani.

After the death of Ram Jiban in 1730, Ramkanta inherited his kingdom. But as Ramkanta spent most of his time in performing religious rituals, it was Bhabani (Rani) who governed the kingdom. Ramkanta had only one child, a daughter, Tara Sundari. At his death in 1748, Rani Bhabani had to hold the reins of the kingdom. In the passage of time she earned the reputation as an excellent ruler.

After ascending the throne, Rani Bhabani took zamindari of a vast area from the Nawab of Bengal — Ali Bawrdi Khan. Historians say between 1748 to 1802 Rani Bhabani ruled an area of 13 thousand square miles encompassing the greater Rajshahi, greater Rangpur, Pabna, Dinajpur, Bogra, Kushtia and Jessore districts of Bangladesh and Birbhum and Malda of India.

The yearly income of her kingdom was Taka 1.5 crore at that time. She had to pay an annual revenue of Taka 27 lakh to the Nawab of Bengal.

The huge surplus of her revenue income enabled her to



NATORE: The marble stones of the eastern staircase have been stolen.

— Star photo
undertake massive welfare projects for the benefit of her subjects. During her rule she spent nearly Taka 50 crore to build schools, temples and houses.

During the great famine of 1776, she donated graciously from her royal treasury for the affected people. She also bought grains from distant country and sold that at nominal prices.

Rani Bhabani fought against British occupation of Bengal. She assisted Nawab Sirajuddoula with men and ammunition in his several wars against the British empire. Her adopted son, Ram Krishna took over the responsibility possibly in 1787. But at the sudden death of Ram Krishna in 1795 the British aggravated the situation. At this point Rani Bhabani tried to rise to the power. But being obstructed by the British she put Bishwa Nath, the elder son of Ram Krishna, in the throne and guided from behind. Rani Bhabani passed away in 1802. She ruled the kingdom for long 40 years.

Since liberation of Bangladesh the palace has been used as Agricultural Training Centre, District Judge Court, Police line, Police Super's office and ADC's (Revenue) office.

Consecutive governments have expressed concern about the deteriorating condition of the palace. But no steps have yet been taken.

In 1985 the then DC of Natore made Jubo Park in areas surrounding the palace. Being open to all, valuable marble stones placed on the floors are being stolen. Besides statues and other ornamental designs are also in the process of ruination.



NATORE: The deplorable condition of Rani Bhabani.

— Star photo

4 dacoits held after confessional statements made by their mate

From CHT Correspondent

MATIRANGA (Khagrachhari), July 4: Police has here rounded up four tribal dacoits Saturday on the confession of another dacoit who was caught red-handed by the villagers while committing dacoit in a house at Azadhya village of Matiranga thana in the district on June 30 midnight, police said.

According to the source, a gang of five tribal dacoits stormed in the house of Abdul Malek in Azadhya village of the thana at midnight on June 30 with lethal weapons and started looting and beating the inmates of the house. On the hue and cry of the members of the raided house, the neighbours rushed there to help.

In face of resistance of the neighbours, the bandits managed to flee with the booties except one who was caught by them.

Fooled them!

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, July 4: A fake Non-Government Organisation (NGO) fled after collecting Tk about five lakh from villages of Jhenidah district recently, it is alleged.

According to reports, an NGO namely Mukhtangan College Mission started functioning at Kaliganj and Kotchandpur thanas of the district a few months back. They allegedly collected at least Tk five lakh from jobless young men promising them to provide prospective jobs against security deposit of Tk between five thousand and ten thousand per head. Some jobless young men came forward and accordingly deposited the money hoping to get job opportunity. They filled up forms and were given receipts and were told to wait for the call.

Talking to some employees who were appointed by the said Mukhtangan College Mission in the areas it was learnt that they were advised to serve the rural people providing them with medicare facilities. Those who were able to sell as many medical cards

to the village members each for Tk ten would be provided with the job.

The jobless young men showing interest numbering about 100 started working as volunteers against cash deposited in Kaliganj and Kotchandpur thanas advised by the NGO officials. But after a few days Kotchandpur thana officer along with the Kaliganj thana officer allegedly disappeared suddenly and are still at large.

When contacted, Akkas Ali, a field-worker who was appointed against a deposit of Tk five thousand as security alleged that he managed to get the security money taking loan at a higher rate of interest from a money local under hoping he would recover the money within short time. The secretary of the NGO Forum, Jhenidah said that no NGO is entitled to take money from any job seekers as security deposit.

It may be noted here that the number of fake NGOs are increasing in Jhenidah district alarmingly.



Picture shows (from left) constable of Tangail police line, investigation officer of Rangpur, the accused Masub Bin Hashem, Altob Hossain, and constable of Tangail police line. The shop manager of Singer's show-room-cum-sales centre in Rangpur Masub Bin Hashem was arrested from Tangail on Sunday for embezzling company's money.

Each year in the country Lack of treatment results in death of 1.5 lakh cancer patients

From Our Correspondent
assist the government, social welfare organisations and the people in this concern.

RAJSHAHI, July 4: The leaders of the Bangladesh Cancer Society have urged the government to realise their 7-point demands and 8-point recommendations for prevention of cancers in the country.

While addressing a press conference at a city hotel last Friday evening, President of Bangladesh Cancer Society Prof Syed Fazlul Haque, ex-director of Bangladesh Cancer Institute and Research Hospital, Prof M A Hye, Associate Professor of the Cancer Institute Dr Abu Ubaid Mohammad Mohsin and the convener of BCS Rajshahi unit Dr Daemuddin addressed the conference.

They said that Bangladesh Cancer Society was formed in 1974 with view to work for prevention rapid and accurate diagnosis and necessary treatment of cancers and to

mouth cavity mostly causes cancer.

The recommendations of the society included introduction of education programmes on cancer establishment of new cancer treatment centres, formation of national cancer registry etc.

Bangladesh Cancer Society demanded ban on publicity and advertisement of all kinds of tobacco-made goods, and ban on sponsorship of tobacco business for games and cultural activities, sanction of excess tax on country-made cigarettes, bidis and all other tobacco goods, ban on smoking in offices, halls, vehicles and any public places, prohibition on show of smoking on the television and stage etc.

The society leaders urged all sections of people to unitedly work for prevention of cancer in the country and to realize the demands of the society.

Some loanees just wait for mercy, others flee

From Delwar Kabir

JHENIDAH, July 4: Six banks, one Central Cooperative Bank and one Thana Central Cooperative Association (TCCA) have filed certificate cases against about three thousand loanees, to recover loans, it is learnt.

According to sources, these banks and associations gave credit worth more than Taka six crore 35 lakh till May 31, this year. To recover the loan money, authorities were compelled to file 2,816 cases against the loanees.

Sources said, Bangladesh Krishi Bank (BKB) filed 2,017 cases alone to recover its Taka four crore 66 lakh loan money. Sonali Bank filed 438 cases to recover Taka about

one crore, Janata Bank lodged 101 cases to recover Taka 12 lakh 38 thousand, Agrani Bank filed 52 certificate cases for Taka 13 lakh. Pubali Bank filed 25 certificate cases for Taka about two crore, Rupali Bank lodged 34 cases for Taka 96 lakh. Meanwhile TCCA filed 95 certificate cases for Taka about 16 lakh and Jhenidah Central Cooperative Bank lodged two cases for Taka 12 lakh which are lying pending with the loanees for years together, sources said.

According to reliable sources, BKB authorities filed cases against some defaulters who could not be traced. Among the defaulters list are some names who were said to have taken loans from Bhabiraba and Mohepur branches. But these persons were not living in those villages or areas. Some people alleged that the said banks might have allocated loans in false names.

Furthermore some innocent people were served with

money could not be recovered for years. Some money lending societies and some banks have become bankrupt due to the non-recovery of loans, the source said.

Our Jhenidah Correspondent also adds Jhenidah Central Cooperative Bank (JCCB) is likely to face bankruptcy as the member societies are not repaying loans amounting to Taka five crore, it is alleged.

According to reports, JCCB a popular bank in the district lent money for cultivation and other sectors. Sources said, JCCB lent nearly Taka five crore among about 12 thousand members of 14 hundred primary societies.

But after declaration of exemption of agriculture loans and interest upto Taka five thousand, the bank was compelled to exempt the interest and other interests. The bank now can claim only Taka one crore to the members, sources informed.

Sources also informed that as the government have ex-

empted agri-loans upto Taka five thousand including all interest the loanees are now declining to repay the loan as the loans were sanctioned agriculture loans. Talking to JCCB authorities it was gathered that they are even not in a position to recover the principal amount worth about Taka one crore from the loanees. Another source said that at least 90 per cent of primary societies of JCCB were fake and were allegedly formed in black and white only to manipulate the loan money.

It was also alleged that many societies were not found working genuinely. But the leaders of those societies somehow managed to receive

notices who did not take any loans, it was alleged.

Talking to The Daily Star a source told that a number of loanees were repaying loan money but the government decision for exemption of loan upto Taka five thousand affected the process. Further some loanees were reportedly assured by some political leaders that agricultural loans up to Taka 10 thousand might be exempted before the forthcoming parliamentary election, sources said.

The source also informed that whenever the authorities take proper steps to recover the loan money from the loanees, political parties reportedly interfere and the loan

Six banks fight to recover loan money worth over Taka six crore. 2,816 certificate cases filed. Many loanees took credit showing false documents and fled the area, it was alleged. Others allege that the bank authorities themselves give credit even against false documents provided the bank officials have share in the loan money.

registration against bribe taken by the authorities. As a result, those societies were not in a position to show performances. Many students and local leaders took loans from the societies against various projects, it was further alleged which threw the central bank into deep crisis.

Talking to some people and members, it was alleged that most of the loans were taken by the leaders of the societies and they allegedly defalcated the money instead of distributing them.

When contacted, Jhenidah central bank authorities denied the allegations but admitted that a good amount of loan money is still remaining deposited with some secretaries of the societies who neither distributed the money among society members nor refunded to central banks. Authorities also said that they had issued letters to the concerned members to refund the money but no one seemed to show any response.

Robbery attempt: One dacoit shot dead, two others receive injuries

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, July 4: Following a gun-battle between a gang of dacoits and patrol police near Mulgram bridge in Chatmohar thana of Pabna district recently, one alleged dacoit Sirajul Islam, 25, was shot dead while two other dacoits, Amzad Hossain and Bakul Biswas, sustained bullet injuries.

The alleged dacoits, numbering about 10 to 12, earlier created a road blockade by putting two rickshaw vans on Pabna-Chatmohar Road near Mulgram bridge. A night coach bound for Chatmohar from Dhaka was compelled to stop and the dacoits attempted to rob the bus.

The dacoits fired shots to scare the passengers, but the patrol police travelling in the coach, returned fire and during the exchange of gunfire, three dacoits were hit by bullets. Ten passengers were also injured, it is stated.

Degree examinees go on rampage in Pirojpur

PIROJPUR, July 4: Students of the local government Suhrawardy College, who appeared in the degree examinations of 1994 under the National University, went on a rampage on the campus today after failing to get their results, reports UNB.

The angry students also kept 35 teachers of the college under lock and key at the teachers' common room for eight hours. The students freed the teachers on assurance that they will not cooperate with the principal until the results were obtained by him.

The results of Degree examinations held under the National University were announced on Sunday.

A total of 1,046 students of Pirojpur Govt Suhrawardy College had appeared in the examinations, but there was no mention of the college in the result book published by the University.