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Face of a 'strange disease' unmasked

By Mustak Hossain back from Pabna

Mahbubul Islam Prince, a young man of village Charrupur, of Pabna district, experienced a tragic turn in his life when his parents' died of 'strange diseases', his younger brother had to give up studies and he was barred from marrying his beloved after he, too, was attacked by the disease.

The 'strange disease' was unknown to them until a health-worker came to their village and spoke about 'arsenicosis' caused by drinking of arsenic-contaminated ground water.

"Now I recall that the palms of my parents' hands and soles of their feet got darkened and grew harder, cracks appeared on them and they began to suffer from constant pain," said the 29-year-old Mahbubul Islam Prince.

"Some spots had also begun to appear all over the body of my parents. We thought it was some strange kind of a skin disease and they died without any treatment," he said.

"Arsenic was the silent killer of my parents and a disaster for my whole family," he said.

But when some people from the Dhaka Community Hospital (DCH) came to our village and tested the water samples of our own tube well, they found presence of alarming proportions of arsenic.

"They also told us about the symptoms of Arsenicosis; now I know that my parents died of arsenicosis," he said.

Since there is no surface water in this area, located on a shoal land, we have to depend on tube well water as the lone source of drinking water.

My younger brother Ziaur Rahman Sumon, was forced to drop out from school due to severe pain caused by arsenicosis and discriminatory behaviour of his school-mates," he said.

"As I was also suffering from arsenicosis, spots also appeared on my neck and hands. I was barred from marrying my betrothed, Shahna Parveen, by her parents for obvious reasons," he said sadly.

Thanks to the active campaign of the DCH, all villagers of our locality started to drink

See Page 11 Col 7

They now know symptoms and prevention of Arsenicosis



Affected hands of a man suffering from Arsenicosis.

— Star photo

White House, Congress bicker over budget

Clinton refuses to accept aid cut, plans to veto defence hike

WASHINGTON, Oct 18: President Bill Clinton vetoed the Republican-led Congress' foreign aid bill today because it cuts his proposed spending by 2.3 billion dollars, reports AP.

The president also refused to sign other spending bills passed by Congress despite a budget deadline looming this week.

And he was considering vetoing a defence spending bill because the Republicans want to spend more than he requested on the military," said spokesman Joe Lockhart.

Even with a veto, foreign aid likely would continue to flow at current levels as part of stopgap spending legislation that covers agencies and departments for which there has been no appropriation.

Nonetheless, some money for counter-narcotics, fighting AIDS and aiding former Soviet states would be lost, according to Sen Mitch McConnell,

chairman of Senate appropriations subcommittee that helped draw up the bill.

Congress had approved 12.6 billion dollars for foreign aid. Spending for last fiscal year was about 12.8 billion dollars. Clinton had asked for 14.9 billion dollars.

Clinton called on Republican congressional leaders to join the administration in seeking a solution to the budget impasse.

"We need to sit down and do it together," the president told reporters in the White House. He said he would sign another emergency spending measure to keep the government running beyond Thursday, but that it should be a short-term measure.

"We have to put politics aside and seek common ground," Clinton said.

The foreign aid bill passed over loud opposition from Democrats, who claim it short-

changes important American foreign policy interests such as furthering the Mideast peace deal negotiated at Wye River, Maryland.

"It doesn't meet the president's priorities," Lockhart said today. "Wye River is certainly an important element to that, and it is an important part of continuing to exercise US leadership around the world. We can't expect nations in troubled parts of the world, like the Middle East, to move forward with their peace process when we won't meet the commitments we've made."

The administration also had complained that the legislation cuts many economic assistance programmes, including those for poor countries in Africa.

Lockhart said a veto of the defence spending bill may be on the way. "That is under consideration," he said.

See Page 11 Col 7

Daily Star's car parts stolen

By Staff Correspondent

A gang of miscreants, brandishing firearms, ran away with four windowpanes and both the side-view mirrors of a microbus owned by The Daily Star early Monday morning.

According to the driver of the vehicle, the incident took place at Kakrail in the city at about 3:00 am when the vehicle was being used for distribution of newspapers.

Motor workshop executives have estimated the loss to be more than Tk 50,000.

The miscreants also flattened all four wheels of the vehicle as they left the scene with the valuables. The Ramna police has been informed of the incident.

World War-II bomb found in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, Oct 18: An unexploded bomb weighing 35 kilograms was found at village Modhakassapia of Chakaria Thana here today, reports BSS.

Chakaria police said, one Abul Hossain of Modhakassapia found the 21-inch-long bomb while he was removing earth at his house.

The bomb was dropped by Japanese Army during the World War-II, but it did not explode, police and local people believe.

The bomb was handed over to Chakaria police by local UP chairman.

Another 'guest house' sealed

By Staff Correspondent
Another 'guest house' at city's Banani area was sealed off by police yesterday.

With this five 'guest houses' in city's Gulshan and Banani areas have so far been closed since Saturday last.

Gulshan police said that a joint team of Gulshan police, Dhaka City Corporation and intelligence agencies raided Orbis, the guest house, at Block A, Road No 18, Banani at about 5 am.

"It was unauthorised," police said.

Over 50 vehicles damaged during rickshaw strike in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Oct 18: Over 50 vehicles were damaged by striking rickshaws here today. Earlier they had called a half-day strike to protest the killing of fellow Shahjahan, rickshawpuller, by unidentified persons Saturday night.

Over 30 rickshaws, 15 tempos, two microbuses, two motorcycles and a private car were damaged by the agitating rickshawpullers.

They also held a rally, followed by processions and later submitted memorandums to the DC and the SP.

Sufia Begum, wife of Shahjahan, filed a murder case with Kotwali thana today, accusing 23 people. Most of the accused are BNP workers and supporters, including four brothers of district BNP secretary Obaidul Haq Chand.

Police arrested one Khokon, 24, in this connection.

'MV Ocean won't affect ship movement'

KHULNA, Oct 18: After surveying the grounded ship at outer channel of Mongla port, the authority today indicated that it would not affect movement to vessels in immediate future, says UNB.

Port sources said Deputy Harbor Master Capt Sharif visited the areas around the ship MV Ocean Wave, which ran aground on the outer channel near Hiron Point, after developing a leak on its bottom on October 8. The report has been submitted to the authority.

Eight raped every 24 hrs in Pakistan

LONDON, Oct 18: An average of about eight women are raped every 24 hours in Pakistan, where domestic violence affects nearly 90 percent of the country's women, the human rights defence group Human Rights Watch said, reports AFP.

"Violence against women has escalated to the level of a national crisis in Pakistan," the organisation said in its report scheduled to be released in London on Tuesday.

"Perhaps more disturbing than the prevalence of violence against women is the absolute impunity with which these crimes are committed," the report said, accusing the Pakistani government of closing its eyes to the numerous abuses.

"Domestic violence is routinely dismissed by law enforcement authorities as a private dispute and female victims who attempt to register a police complaint of spousal or familial physical abuse are invariably turned away," the US-based watchdog group said.



Hindu community performing Kumari Puja in the city yesterday.

— Star photo

Pakistan in Sharjah Cup final

SHARJAH, Oct 18: Pakistan rode on the fury of their new pace sensation Shabbir Ahmed to ease into the Sharjah Cup final with a 118-run romp over Sri Lanka here today, reports AFP.

Shabbir, playing only his second international, wrecked Sri Lanka's reply to Pakistan's 239-8 with the wickets of skipper Sanath Jayasuriya and Ramesh Kaluwitharana in his first three overs.

Pakistan captain Wasim Akram joined in with his 100th wicket at this desert venue as the Sri Lankans crashed for 121 in a match that ensured the winner a place in Friday's final.

Sri Lanka can, however, still make the final if Pakistan defeat the West Indies in the last league match on Tuesday.

Pakistan head the table with five points from three games, while Sri Lanka finished the league with three points. The West Indies, who have two points, must beat Pakistan to qualify.

Shabbir, a pencil-slim 17-year-old from Khanewal in Punjab province, struck with his first ball in the tournament when he forced Jayasuriya to

Top Opposition leaders meet Ershad today

By Staff Correspondent

Top leaders of the BNP-led opposition alliance will meet Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad today to review the on-going street agitation and discuss steps to strengthen the unity of the alliance.

"The main objective of the meeting is to further intensify the current one-point out-govern movement," said BNP leader Anwar Zahid.

Secretaries general of the four parties - Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan (BNP), Nazir Rahman Manjur (JP), Matiur Rahman Nizami (Jamaat) and Fazlul Haq Amin (IOJ) -- and representatives of the Liaison Committee will join the meeting at JP's Baridhara office. The meeting will start at 11 am.

The leaders will also meet chiefs of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Oikya Jote later. The dates will be finalised at today's meeting, Zahid said.

The leaders earlier met BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleida Zia on October 8.

After the meetings with the party chiefs, they will hold a series of meetings and finalise an outline and future course of action to intensify the movement, other sources in the opposition said.

Meanwhile, the liaison committee met yesterday evening at the official residence of the Leader of the Opposition with BNP leader M Shamsul Islam MP in the chair and discussed preparations for Thursday's hartal and the action programmes to follow.

Briefing newsmen later, Anwar Zahid said, the meeting condemned filing of 'false' cases against BNP leader Tariqul Islam and government's 'conspiracy' to implicate him in the Udichi killing case.

Replying to a question on the proposed meeting of chiefs of the four parties, he said, "The liaison committee also discussed it. It will be held at an appropriate time."

The liaison committee meeting was attended by BNP leaders Tariqul Islam, M Shamsul Islam MP and Anwar Zahid, JP leader Kazi Firoz Rashid, Jamaat leaders Mohammad Kamaruzzaman, Abdul Qader Mollah and ATM Azharul Islam, and IOJ leaders Fazlul Haq Amin and ARM Abdul Matin.



Members of the visiting German parliamentary delegation at the reception hosted by the Daily Star yesterday.

— Star photo

'Perfume' factory fire kills one

One person was killed and another injured in a fire at a spurious perfume factory in the city's Lalbagh area on Sunday night, reports UNB.

Worker of the factory M Olullah, 40, succumbed to his burn wounds at Dhaka Medical College Hospital at 11 am yesterday.

Condition of Ripon, 25, was reported to be critical. He was undergoing treatment at the DMCH.

Locals said the factory at 37, Lalbagh near the Killar Morh went up in flames as a candle fell on a drum of chemicals of the adulterated perfumes and ignited it at 7 pm.

The area was going through an outage at that time. However, the fire couldn't spread as it was raining.

According to witnesses, the owner, Babul, could take away all the materials from the factory before intelligence agency people conducted a raid shortly afterwards.

They complained of local police having connived with owners of such factories mushrooming in the area.

Hawkers purchase used bottles of foreign perfumes, shampoo and cosmetics from across the city to be refilled with the counterfeit scents that are sold as the foreign brands.

Guest house owners' demands

By Staff Correspondent

Some leaders of Guest House Owners Association (GHOA) have demanded that the Dhaka City Corporation renew trade licences of its members, which have remained suspended for about two years.

They made the demand at a press conference yesterday at the Jatiya Press Club, held against the backdrop of police raids at a number of guest houses in posh residential areas in the city. It was attended by GM Mosharraf Hussain, secretary general; FM Alauddin Mahmud, organising secretary, and Mosharraf Hussain Shishir, treasurer of the association.

"The four guest houses sealed recently did not belong to our association," Alauddin Mahmud claimed.

If the authorities did not renew their licences and allow them to continue their business in the residential areas, they might think of legal action, he said.

All guest houses were not involved in alcohol trading or other illegal activities, he added.

GHOA comprising 22 members is one of the two associations of guest house owners in the city. Its leaders failed to give the exact number of guest houses in the city.

Heroin: Arrested 4 remanded

By Court Correspondent

Four persons arrested with one kilogram of heroin from the city's Bashabo and Shewrapara areas Sunday were taken on a one-day remand yesterday.

Earlier police produced Mizan, Abdus Samad, Ibrahim Ali and Daud Mia before the CMM's court at about 6 pm and prayed for seven days' remand.

Body of newborn recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Decomposed body of a newborn was found in a sewerage line in Dinonath Sen Road in the Old city yesterday afternoon.

There were injury marks in the abdomen of the baby.

Local people informed police when they saw the floating body wrapped in polythene.

Police recovered the body at about 2:30 pm and sent it to Mitford Hospital morgue for autopsy. An unnatural death case was filed with Shurapur thana in this connection.

German parliamentarians say Visit to see progress, strengthen ties

By Staff Correspondent

A visiting team of German MPs yesterday underscored the need for increased economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

"We have come to Bangladesh to acquaint ourselves with the problems and see first hand the progress made in different spheres in your country," said Brigitte Adler, leader of a delegation of five MPs from German-South Asian Parliamentary Group in the Bundestag (German Parliament).

She was speaking at a luncheon meeting hosted by Mahfuz Anam, editor of The Daily Star and publisher of Prothom Alo, at a city restaurant yesterday.

"We want to understand your country better so that enhanced cooperation could take place between the peoples and parliamentarians of the two nations."

"The current tour is a manifestation of growing German-South Asian ties with special focus on Bangladesh," the German MP said.

The composition of the delegation is unique, Adler said, because the members of the team represented parliamentarians from various committees involving foreign relations, trade, economic cooperation, sports and culture.

The delegation is expected to submit a report with a set of recommendations on its return.

Three of the MPs are members of the ruling Social Democratic Party while two are from the opposition Christian Democratic Union-Christian Social Union alliance in the Bundestag.

Editor Mahfuz Anam welcomed the guests and hoped that the visit would go a long way in strengthening the already existing friendly ties between the two countries.

The visiting parliamentarians are Brigitte Adler (SPD), Prof Dr. Erika Schuchardt, (CDU/CSU), Peter Letzger (CDU/CSU), Holger Ortel (SPD), Ingrid Holzhueter (SPD).

German ambassador to Bangladesh Ume Schramm, EU ambassador Antonio de Souza Menezes, Deputy head of German mission in Dhaka Jan-Axel Voss and Directress of Goethe Institut in Dhaka Barbara Meyer-Marroth were present.

The lunch was also attended by senior journalists, directors of Mediaworld Ltd, which publishes The Daily Star, and politicians from the ruling and opposition parties.

Election clash: Schoolteacher killed in Bogra

DINAJPUR, Oct 18: A schoolteacher who was injured in an electioneering clash in Hakimpur thana here on Saturday, died at Rangpur Medical College Hospital tonight, reports UNB.

The dead was identified as Pronab Chandra Roy, 30, an assistant teacher of Jalalpur High School.

Police said the clash ensued when the supporters of ward commissioner candidate Prokash Chandra Roy attacked the supporters of another candidate Abdus Sattar while they were holding electioneering meeting at the residence of one Ajit Chandra Roy.

Police arrested Dulal Chandra Roy, 40, Adhir Chandra Roy, 42, Protul Chandra Roy, 36 and Arun Chandra Roy, 40 in this connection.

FOURTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF LATE AL-HAJ JAHURUL ISLAM



Today October 19, 1999 is the fourth Death Anniversary of Late AL-HAJ JAHURUL ISLAM, the founder and Chairman of ISLAM GROUP OF COMPANIES.

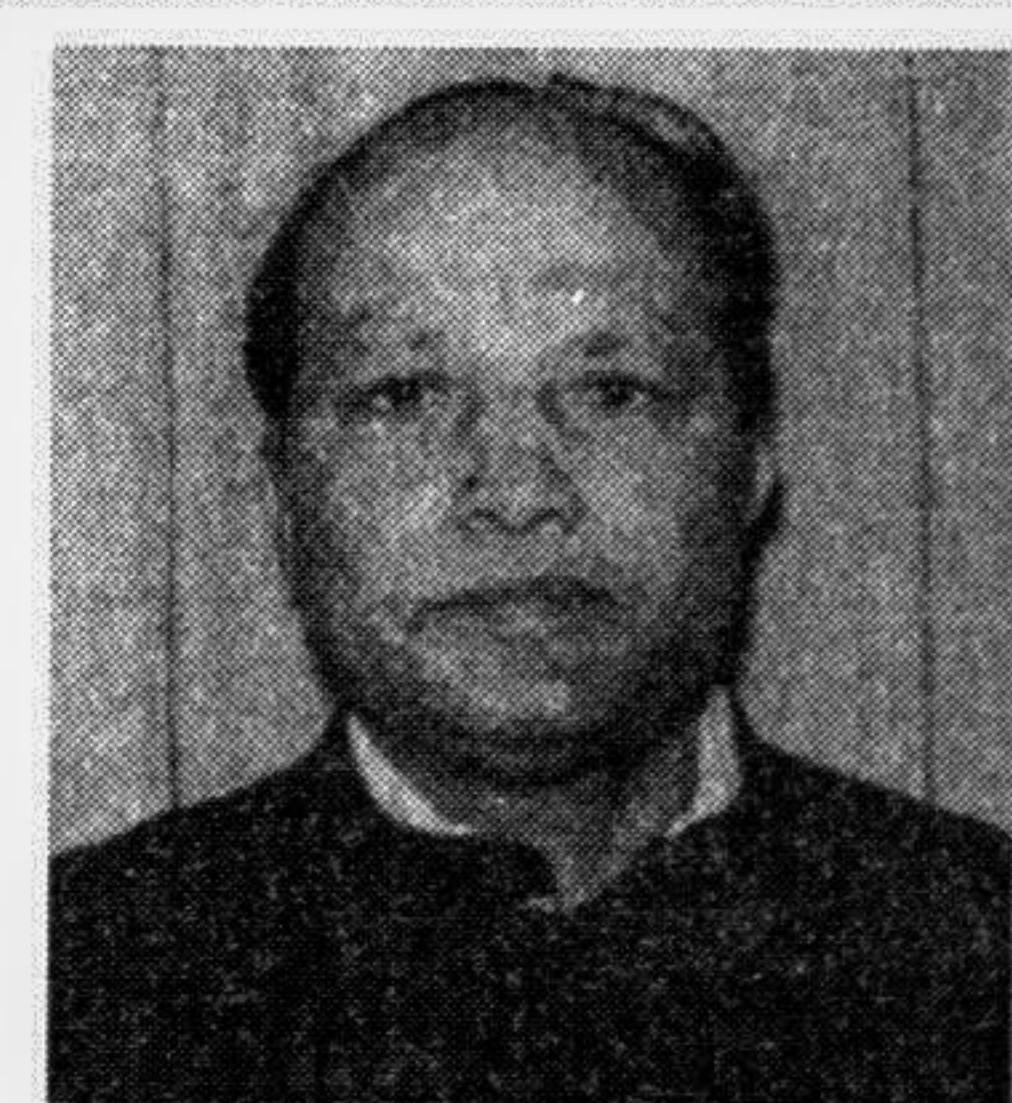
On this occasion a Milad Mehfil will be held on Friday the 22nd October 99 at his residence after Asr Prayers. All his relatives, well-wishers, colleagues, friends and staffs are requested to attend the Milad Mehfil and pray for the departed soul.

MRS. JAHURUL ISLAM & FAMILY.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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শ্রদ্ধাঞ্জলি



আজ ১৯শে অক্টোবর ১৯৯৯ নাভানা লিমিটেড ও আফতাব অটোমোবাইলস লিমিটেড-এর প্রতিষ্ঠাতা, পরম শ্রদ্ধেয় মহান আলহাজ্ব জহুরুল ইসলাম সাহেবের চতুর্থ মৃত্যু বার্ষিকী।

জীবিত অবস্থায় তিনি ছিলেন আমাদের আদর্শ, পথ প্রদর্শক এবং সকল কর্ম প্রেরণার উৎস। আজ তাঁর বিদেহী আত্মার প্রতি জানাই গভীর শ্রদ্ধা এবং পরম করুণাময়ের কাছে কামনা করছি তাঁর আত্মার মাগফেরাত।

মরহমের স্মৃতির প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা নিবেদনের জন্য আজ নাভানা লিমিটেড ও আফতাব অটোমোবাইলস লিমিটেড এর সকল অফিস বন্ধ থাকবে।

সফিউল ইসলাম (কামাল)
চেয়ারম্যান

নাভানা লিমিটেড



আফতাব অটোমোবাইলস লিমিটেড