

Mushroom growth of private clinics in Rajshahi

Standard of treatment declining

From Abdul Wadood

RAJSHAHI, July 12: Standard of treatment in the private hospitals and clinics is deteriorating day by day in Rajshahi.

There are even allegations against some clinics of cheating.

There is a big government hospital Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) in the city. It was established in 1958 as a 500-bed academic hospital of simultaneously established Rajshahi Medical College.

Nowadays rush of patients to hospital has mounted so high that it always remains over-crowded. Patients are always seen to crowd in the beds, extra beds, floors and verandahs. There are not sufficient number of doctors, nurses, boys and ayes. Medical facilities are too short to meet the demands. So the patients are to suffer much. Especially the patients of general surgery, obstetrics, gynaecology, orthopaedics and neurosurgery are to suffer most. They are to wait for weeks after weeks on the beds and floors to have their turns.

In this perspective, private clinics are established and get popularity. These clinics also become over-crowded, commercially viable within a very short period. This has led to establishment of more new clinics. As a result a mushroom grow of clinics took place.

The private clinics are increasing in number every year. The office of the civil surgeon could not say the actual number of private clinics and hospitals working in the city and the upazilas. "The number will be

near one hundred," said an official.

These private hospitals and clinics are mainly surgery-based. But almost all of those have no well-equipped operation theatre.

Mukti Clinic Private Limited, Islami Bank Hospital, Padma Clinic and Zamzam Islami Hospital are the few exceptions which have more or less well-equipped and well-managed operation theatres. None of them, however, have any monitoring system in the operation theatres.

Most of the clinics have no cardiac monitor or pulse oximeter.

Situation of cleanliness and sanitation is not satisfactory in most of the clinics.

Actually the clinics have been opened in the rented residential houses. These houses have no architectural arrangement required for clinics. Patients are kept every here and there in corridors and verandahs, raising temporary curtains of cloth and hardboards. The rooms are not cleared properly. Bed smells evolve from the rooms. When number of patients increases, patients are kept side by side with no gap in between them.

Only one or two junior doctors run a clinic. They cannot attend the patients always when needed. Nurses are not trained well. The clinic owners do not usually appoint nurses passed from the Nursing Institutes rather take untrained distressed young females at a very less amount of salary. They cannot give expected service to the patients.

Operations are also done by junior doctors in most

clinics. As a result number of complications are abnormally higher in the private clinics. Senior and specialist doctors come only when called for. Patients are to pay extra price for these visits.

Doctors, nurses and other employees of these clinics are given abnormally less amount of salary. That is why they cannot become serious and sincere in their duties. A junior (simple MBBS) doctor is given only Taka 3,000 to Taka 5,000 per month. But he or she is to work for at least 10-12 hours a day.

On the other hand, an experienced nurse having no degree gets only Taka 1,000 to Taka 2,000 per month.

The clinics charge Taka 6,000 to Taka 12,000 from the patient for a major operation, Taka 3,000 to Taka 6,000 for a medium type of operation and Taka 1,500 to Taka 3,000 for minor operation. Seat rents range from Taka 80 to Taka 150 in ordinary wards and Taka 200 to Taka 300 for cabins per day.

Most clinics have their own diagnostic units. It is alleged that patients are often advised to do unnecessary investigations. These diagnostic units lack trained and experienced laboratory technicians.

There are more serious allegation against some clinics. They catch patients by their agents and make compel them to get operated though it is not necessary.

There are records that a patient with abdominal pain for causes other than appendicitis had to face appendix operation. There are even such allegations that only the skin has been incised and sutured in

the name of operation.

Patients coming from rural areas and outside Rajshahi usually become victims of cheating.

Rajshahi District Civil Surgeon office sources acknowledged the prevailing bad situation of the private clinics. "There is no clear cut specific rules and regulations to supervise the private hospitals and clinics," said an official in the office of the Civil Surgeon. So the malpractices and irregularities cannot be checked, he said.

Some clinic-owners said that there was a system of registration for the private clinics previously, but the system is not followed now. The registration fees is Taka 5,000. The registration should be renewed every year paying Taka 5,000.

"We applied for registration 2/3 years ago, but the concerned authorities have not sent yet any team to visit our clinic," said an owner of a clinic on condition of anonymity. So their registration remain hanged, he said.

For this reason the government is being deprived of a handsome amount of revenue income every year. General Secretary of Rajshahi Diagnostic Complex and Clinic Owners Association Dr Abdul Mannan said that negligence of the concerned authorities, political influence and monetary corruption lead to mushroom growth of clinics of low standard.

The government should promulgate specific rules and regulations regarding establishment and running of clinics to check the malpractices and irregularities," he said.

Arsenic mitigation programme

A comprehensive arsenic mitigation programme has been taken up in Chuadanga district, says a press release.

The programme, taken up at the initiative Chuadanga district administration, will be implemented with the financial assistance of Impact Foundation Bangladesh, an NGO, and technical support of district Public Health and Engineering Department (PHED) in two phases, according to the press release by Impact Foundation Bangladesh released on Tuesday.

In the first phase, more than 200 tubewells, which had been sealed because of arsenic contamination, will be re-sunk, ensuring safe drinking water for people, while in the second phase, mass awareness programmes will be launched to help people fight arsenic menace.

Arsenic mitigation programme through re-sinking of tubewells



Water of this tubewell at Kalmakanda village in Netrakona district contains arsenic beyond permissible level. Villagers have been advised not to use the water of the tubewell. --Star photo

was implemented in two villages of Chuadanga, one of the worst arsenic affected districts in the country, on experimental basis recently.

A large number of people at Benagari and Takpara villages under Alamdanga upazila of the district had been suffering from arsenic related diseases. Seven of them died of the diseases. Families with arsenic affected members were almost 'excommunicated'. Many started deserting their houses fearing excommunications.

But after re-sinking of tubewells the villagers are now getting safe drinking water and many have started returning houses, the release said.

Two killed in Gopalganj road accident

From Our Correspondent
GOPALGANJ, July 12: Two persons were killed and ten others were injured in a road accident near New Police Line area on Gopalganj-Takerhat road on Monday.

The accident occurred when a microbus fell into a roadside ditch after colliding with a truck, killing two on the spot.

The died were identified as Nirmal Kumar Saha, 43, and Jitendra Nath Roky, 40.

Critically injured Dipak Kumar Sen, 50; Sajit Kumar Biswas, 40; Arabintha Saha, 40; Sudhir Biswas, 58; Paritash Saha, 50; Abdur Rafiq, 32; and Ratan Ray, 40, were admitted to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital.

A case was lodged with police in this connection.

Old man killed in Magura road accident

From Our Correspondent
MAGURA, July 12: An old man was killed in a road accident in Belnagar area under Sadar upazila on Magura-Faridpur highway on Monday.

The dead was identified as Intaz Ali Shiekh, 72, of village Sonagachha under Sreepur upazila.

Witnesses said the old man was crushed under the wheels of a Khulna-bound bus while crossing the road.

Poverty alleviation programme

From Our Correspondent
NETRAKONA, July 12: Palli Daridra Bimochon Foundation, an organisation for rural poverty alleviation, has taken a credit programme to make unemployed young and distressed women self-reliant.

Under the project, these women are being imparted training on development, adult education, mass education, tree plantation, family planning sanitation and volunteer services.

Activities of the credit programme are being carried out in 10 upazilas with the direct supervision of Basana Chowdhury.

There are 1104 woman organisations and 25,897 members in 10 upazilas here.

With a view to rehabilitating unemployed and distressed women, Taka 3,95,44,000 have already been disbursed as loan among the members of 1104 organisations.

Basana Chowdhury told this correspondent that the credit programme has been playing an important role in improving the economic condition of distressed and unemployed women.

Budget

From Our Correspondent
MYMENSINGH, July 12: Taka eight crore 45 thousand budget for 2000-2001 fiscal of Muktagachha Municipality in the district was announced recently.

News snaps



The national convention of Bangladesh Photojournalists Association was held at the District Council Auditorium in Satkhira on Friday. Barrister Moinul Islam, chairman, Editorial Board of The Ittefaq and The New Nation speaking as the chief guest while secretary generals of two factions of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) Akhter Ahmed Khan and M A Aziz, director general of Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) Sheikh Abdus Salam on his left and deputy commissioner (DC) of Satkhira, president of the association Salahuddin Ahmed and president of its Satkhira unit Nurul Islam on his right. --Star photo

A rare moment

BANDARBAN, July 12: It was a rare happy moment for a newborn tribal girl when she was patted lovingly and named Moni Marmas by supermodel Claudia Schiffer, reports BSS.

Hundreds of tribal and non-tribal people including women and children were delighted to see the rare scene at Talukdarpara of Bandarban hill town on Tuesday. Schiffer, who is visiting Bangladesh as the special envoy of UNICEF, gave two drops of polio vaccine to the girl. As she wanted to know the name of the baby, her parents could not come up with a reply because she was born only 15 hours ago and was not yet named. A smiling Schiffer addressed her as Moni, and as she came from a Marmas family gave the name Moni Marmas.

Schiffer then told journalists that she was happy to be able to administer the vaccine to an infant.

PCJSS supporter abducted

RANGAMATI, July 12: A supporter of the Parbatyia Chattagram Jono Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) was allegedly abducted from Junumachhari in Kaikhali upazila on Tuesday at gunpoint by the armed activists opposing CHT peace accord, reports BSS.

The victim was identified as Nihari Chakma alias Ishpat, 19, son of Guoshor Chakma. A PCJSS press release, made available to BSS here tonight, said that an armed group of anti-peace elements, numbering about 7 to 8, kidnapped the victim while he was going out from his house for work.

Teacher hacked to death

NARSINGDI, July 12: A madrasa teacher was hacked to death by armed men who entered his house breaking open the doors at 3 am on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Yunus Ali, 30, the victim, was teacher of Hossain Nagar Madrasa under Belabo upazila. He also happened to be brother of local Awami League leader Sirajul Islam. Nazrul Islam of the same village was arrested following a case filed against him and some of his associates. Motive of the killing could not be ascertained.

Population Day observed

CHITTAGONG, July 12: World Population Day was observed here on Tuesday through various programmes, reports BSS.

Chittagong City Corporation brought out a procession in observance of the day. Starting from M A Aziz Stadium, the colourful procession paraded different city streets. Students, boy scouts, girl guides, NGO workers, members of social welfare organisations, ward commissioners, officers and employees of government and non-government offices joined the procession. A seminar on 'Safe Life of Women Ensures Social Development', was held at the CCC conference room. UN Population Fund, Urban Primary Health Care and CCC jointly arranged the seminar. Acting Mayor Haji Nurul Huq, speaking at the seminar, said Bangladesh has earned commendation from the world community for population control programmes. Our efforts for prosperity will go in vain if we fail to reduce pressure of population growth, he said adding family planning activities have been expanded at CCC hospitals.

Dacoit sentenced under arms act

BAGERHAT, July 12: Abdur Rashid, 35, a forest dacoit was sentenced to 10 years by a local court under the arms act, reports BSS.

District and Session Judge Anisuzzaman pronounced the sentence order at the crowded court room. The convict, Abdur Rashid, was seen roaming around suspiciously on November 27, 1998 at South Chandpai village when Feroj Howladar, a UP member who caught and recovered two indigenous guns and handed over the suspect to the police station. Obtaining the bail, Abdur Rashid, since then, had been absconding, according to case report. The court pronounced the judgement in absentia.

Wanted terror arrested

RANGAMATI, July 12: Rangamati Kotwali police on Tuesday arrested a tribal youth from Kalindipur in the town immediately after looting cash and kinds from a non-tribal hawkers, reports BSS.

The arrested person was identified as Ripon Chakma, 24. According to Rangamati Kotwali police, a gang of five tribal youths, led by Ripon Chakma, allegedly looted cash and clothes from Mohammad Harun, a hawkers from Kalindipur in the town. A case was lodged with Rangamati Kotwali police in this connection. Ripon Chakma was wanted in connection with a number of cases, police said.

LGED implements 41 projects

TANGAIL, July 12: Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is implementing 41 road development projects at a cost of Taka 1.32 crore under 1999-2000 fiscal, reports BSS.

Under the programme the roads in eight upazilas including Ghatail, Nagarpur, Tangail Sadar, Kallithai, Madhupur, Bhuiyapur, Shakhipur and Basail are being constructed. Reconstruction and maintenance works are progressing as required and it will be completed in two months.

Prizes distributed

MANIKGANJ, July 12: Prize distribution ceremony and experts gathering organised by Agriculture Extension Department (AED) was held at Shibayaya Upazila Parishad auditorium on Thursday, reports BSS.

Gazi Asgar Ali Mia, Deputy Director, (AED) was present in the meeting as the chief guest and Anil Chandra Sarker was special guest. The meeting was presided over by Ashrafur Mosaddeque, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Shibayaya.

Indian sugar seized

COMILLA, July 12: Police seized a truckload of Indian sugar at Daudkandi Toll Plaza on Dhaka-Chittagong highway early Monday, reports UNB.

They also arrested three people, including driver Manjur Alam and his helper Abdul Quader, in this connection. Acting on a tip-off, police from Daudkandi thana halted the Dhaka-bound truck from Feni and recovered the sugar worth about Tk 1.13 lakh. A case was filed.



Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Netrakona inaugurating the district office of Palli Daridra Bimochon Foundation, an organisation of poverty alleviation, recently at Nagra in Netrakona town. --Star photo

Erosion renders 550 families homeless

From Our Correspondent
GAIBANDHA, July 12: Erosion by the Jamuna, the Teesta and the Ghagot took a serious turn in the district during the last 15 days, rendering nearly 550 families homeless.

With the water levels increasing sharply the rivers devoured many lands in different areas of the district.

Many houses on riverbank across Char Haldia, Kalurpara, Kanaipara, Nalsia, Begagram, Dighal Kandi, Guabari, Bagerpatil, Sathalia, Pansipara, Hatbari under Shaghata upazila went into the gorge of river. Meanwhile, a huge chunk of arable lands were devoured.

Erosion victims have taken shelters on WDB embankments and other public places.

The Teesta has taken alarming turn at Belka, Chalitabari, Haripur, Gazirkura, Ujan Bochagrai under Sunderganj upazila.

Portion of Katerbeel embankment is threatened by the erosion. If the embankment gives in to the pressure of water over 10,000 acres of croplands will go under water, local people said. Authority concerned, however, placed bamboo sticks in sensitive areas along the embankment.

3 killers awarded life-term

From Our Correspondent
NETRAKONA, July 12: A court here has sentenced three persons to life-term imprisonment and fined Tk 5,000 each, in default, to suffer one year more imprisonment.

According to prosecution, Faraj Miah, Babar Ali and Nobab Mia killed Lal Hossain by attacking him indiscriminately with sharp weapons following a dispute over a fish hatchery at village Lage Golua in Mohongonj upazila.

The incident took place on March 4 in 1994. A murder case was recorded with Mohongonj Police Station on the next day.

Robbery in Rangpur

From Our Correspondent
RANGPUR, July 12: A robbery was committed recently in Dhap area in the town.

The armed robbers numbering about seven stormed the house of Sadequul Islam at midnight and looted Taka 30,000 in cash ornaments and other valuables worth Tk 1,34,500 at gunpoint.

Most of the inmates of the house were not present during the robbery. The robbers tied up the housewife, looted and decamped with the booty.

Kotalipara Health Complex beset with problems

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, July 12: Kotalipara Upazila Health Complex here is beset with manifold problems, including dearth of physicians and medicines, depriving patients of proper treatment facilities.

The health complex is facing shortage of medicine. Patients buy most of the medicines prescribed by the doctors from markets.

A large number of patients, mostly of low-income group, visit the hospital every day, but they hardly get proper facilities, local people said.

Shortage of doctors is another main problem the health complex is facing. The number of doctors is inadequate, hampering the treatment facilities, patients said.

Besides, some doctors of the health complex are found busy with their own practices, local people alleged.

The health complex has no X-ray machine and blood bank. It also lacks dental and ophthalmic treatment facilities.

The surrounding of the health complex is unhygienic. Toilets are not cleaned regularly.

Arum farming faces setback in Netrakona

From Our Correspondent

NETRAKONA, July 12: Arum cultivation has been facing setback this season in the district. Inadequate rain, high temperature and pest attack have been attributed to the debacle.

According to district Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources, over 3,200 hectares of land here have been brought under the cultivation.

But some 80 per cent of the crop have been attacked by pest this year. Besides, water logging in some areas in Khallajhuri upazila has damaged the standing crop.

Farmers said production will not be up to their expectations this year due to these problems.

The soil and climate of the district are suitable for arum cultivation.

Farmers here cultivate varieties of the vegetable, which include sida mar, pari kochu, bish kochu, tela kochu, ole kochu, and panchamu kochu.

Road mishaps kill 3 in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, July 12: Three people, including two boys, were killed in separate road accidents in the district recently.

Rezaul Islam, 25, was injured when a truck hit him from behind at Bhatal Bazar. He succumbed to his injuries at

patients said, adding food supplied by the authorities is sub-standard.

Local people have urged the authorities concerned to take immediate measures to solve the problems of the health complex.

Feni DIARY

New varieties of paddy

From Our Correspondent
FENE, July 12: Agriculturists of BADC Pangachia Farm here have developed two new types of high yielding variety (HYV) of paddy.

The two varieties were named IR69690H and IR68877H. The new varieties cultivated in demonstration plots yield expected production. 3,800 kg of paddy are produced by cultivating IR69690H paddy on a hectare of land, while 2,200 kg are produced by cultivating IR68877H paddy on a hectare of land.

Kidnapped girl rescued

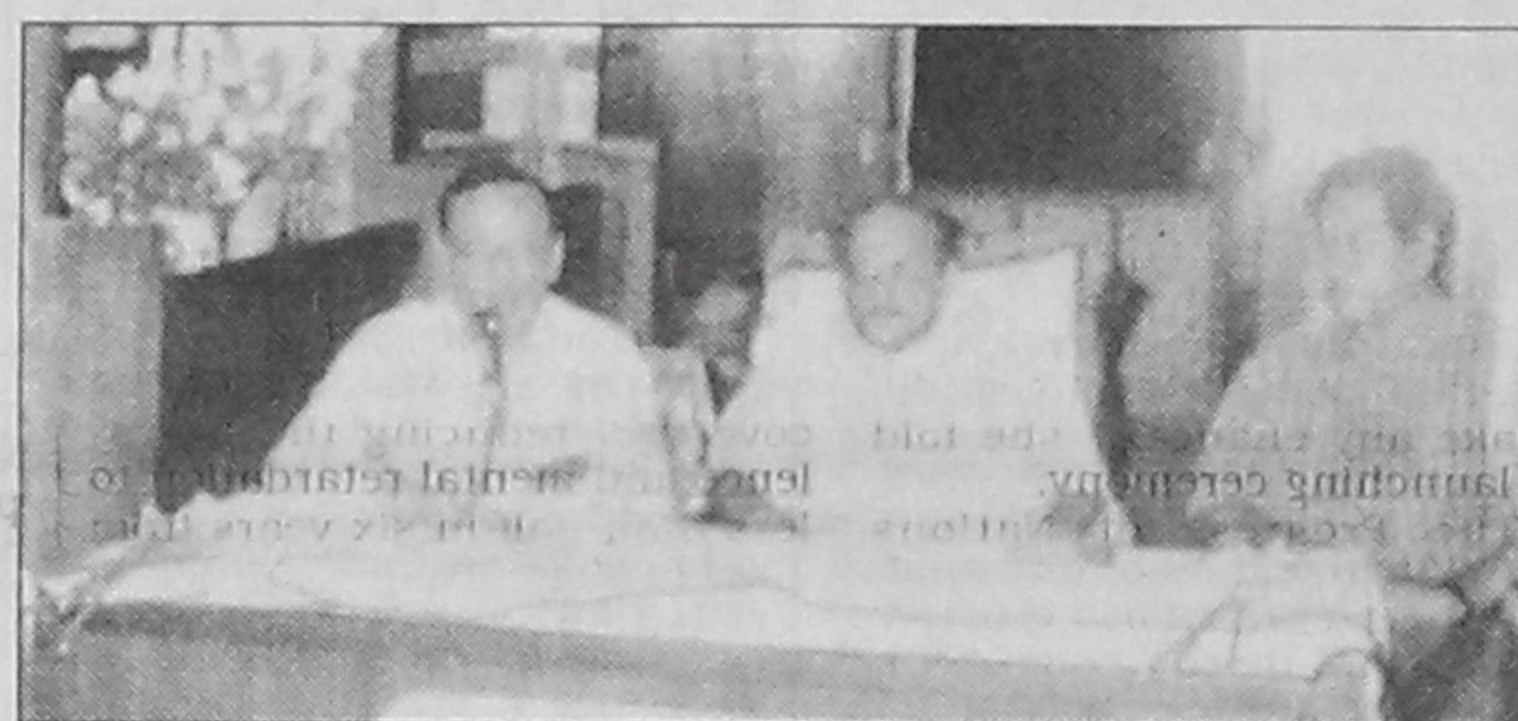
A schoolgirl, who was kidnapped from village Lamua of Feni district one month back, was rescued from Dinagpur district last week, Feni police said.

According to police, the kidnapped schoolgirl Munmun, 14, was rescued from Busagong village. However the kidnapper escaped. Student of class IX in Lamua High School under Sadar upazila, Munmun was kidnapped by Babul and his accomplices.

New ward Commissioner

By-election to the post of word commissioner in Ward No 5 of Feni Municipality was held here on June 26.

Alamgir Hossain Tota, a BCL leader, was elected commissioner bagging 605 votes. His rival Yousof Shahin, a Jubo League leader, got 523 votes. The post fell vacant following the murder of incumbent word commissioner Anwar Hossain Ratan. Alamgir Hossain Tota is the elder brother late Ratan.



Hamidul Haq, Additional Managing Director of United Commercial Bank Limited addressing at the reception ceremony. --Star photo

Reception

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, July 12: Hamidul Haq, Additional Managing Director, United Commercial Bank (UCBL), was accorded a reception by the Bankers' Club here at the local branch of UCBL recently.

The reception ceremony was presided over by Syed Shaikhul Imam, General Manager (GM), Bangladesh Bank, Barisal branch and president, Bankers Club, Barisal.

The ceremony was addressed, among others by

Mohammad Mahabub Hossain Akon, Vice President, National Bank Limited (NBL), Barisal branch, A S M Anisul Kabir, senior AVP, Prime Bank Ltd, Barisal branch, Kazi Fakhrul Islam, Manager, IFIC Bank Ltd, Barisal branch, A K M Jahangir Kabir, Manager, UCBL, Barisal branch and Syed Enayet Hossain, Manager, Rupali Bank, Sadar Road branch and General Secretary, Bankers' Club, Barisal.

Poultry policy demanded

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 12: Chittagong Poultry Feed and Chicks Merchant Association has put up six-point demand including introduction of a Poultry Policy for the flourishing and proper care of poultry industry in the country.

The association, an organisation of the merchants supplying chickens, feeds and medicines to the poultry farmers, made this demand at a press conference at the local press club in the city on Tuesday afternoon.

The conference leaders at the absence of a policy for their industry some opportunist traders were creating dispute over supply of raw materials of this industry such as one-day old chicks, import of hatchable eggs, building of breeder farms and on different pleas, cheat the small poultry farmers.

In this regard the leaders cited an example of raising of the price

of one day broiler chicks from Tk 22 to Tk 42 by some vested section of hatcheries following declaration of stopping import of hatchable eggs in June last and thus taking away crores of taka from this industry.

The association sought cooperation of the government in keeping the price of chick within Tk 20.

The other demands of the association were to fix the electricity bill for poultry farms as agricultural rate instead of commercial rate, full-fledged pathology centres for poultry at every Thana Livestock Department, and to provide loans to the poultry farmers and traders on easy term and condition.

The written statement was read out by the president of the association, Golam Rahman at the conference where the secretary of the association also spoke.



A demonstration plot of BADC Pangachia Farm in Feni where two new types of high yielding variety (HYV) of paddy have been invented recently. --Star photo