

Dengue patients on rise: Serious crisis of blood

By Staff Correspondent
Different hospitals and clinics in the city reported admitting a total of 18 people with dengue fever yesterday.

According to sources, Dhaka Medical College Hospital admitted one yesterday while nine such patients are undergoing treatment there.

Two dengue patients were admitted to Dhaka Shishu Hospital yesterday, raising the total number of dengue patients at the hospital to 46.

Three more persons infected with dengue virus were admitted to Suhrawardi Hospital yesterday while BIRDEM admitted four. The total number of dengue infected patients at BIRDEM now stands at 32.

Samarita Hospital admitted four new patients with dengue fever yesterday while Central Hospital admitted three.

Bangladesh Medical College Hospital reported admitting one patient yesterday. The total number of dengue patients at the hospital stood at 21 yesterday.

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Driver of microbus discloses 7 Shibir-backed gunmen involved in Ctg killings

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 24: A gang of seven Shibir-backed gunmen was involved in the July 8 killing of eight people including six Chhatra League activists at Bahaddarhat in Chittagong, police said today.

Police made the disclosure after interrogating Babul Hosain, driver of the microbus used in the killing and Md Solaiman, an activist of Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Police said they have "fully detected" the incident.

Solaiman was arrested from Banskhal in Chittagong on Saturday night and Babul Hosain was arrested yesterday afternoon from Comilla.

Solaiman was one of the seven members of the gang, police confirmed.

Police said driver Babul identified Solaiman at the CID office last night. Babul told police that Solaiman was in the gang which fired shots indiscriminately, killing the eight people.

The driver jumped after seeing Solaiman at CID office and identified him as one of the killers' a senior police official said on condition of anonymity.

During interrogation, Solaiman also disclosed in detail the incident to CID police.

A senior official of CID told this correspondent that they have collected "full particulars" of the gang members. But he declined to disclose names.

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Japanese PM Mori due in city Aug 19

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori will arrive in Bangladesh on August 19 on the first leg of his South Asian tour, official sources said yesterday.

He is arriving here on a 2-day visit at the invitation of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina who visited Japan in 1997, a Foreign Office source told UNB.

From Dhaka, the Japanese premier is expected to go to Islamabad and New Delhi on his three-nation trip.

Mori would be the second Prime Minister of Japan to visit Bangladesh. Toshiki Kaifu was the first to visit Bangladesh on May 1, 1990.

During his stay here, the Japanese Prime Minister would hold official talks with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in which investment and economic cooperation between the two countries are likely to figure prominently.

A 60-member media team is likely to accompany Mori during his South Asia tour.



Going gray: A large number of valuable Sisum or Shishu trees along both sides of six roads in Sirajganj district are either dying or being stolen by poachers thanks to lack of care by the authorities. About 20,000 trees were planted as part of the afforestation programme in 1992 on the roads leading to Belkuchi, Enayetpur, Kazipur and Sirajganj Town Embankment-WAPDA road, Bogra-Nagarbari Highway and Kamarkhand-Belkuchi road.

—Star photo by Akhteruzzaman Bablu.

Workers of four textile mills at CEPZ begin strike

CHITTAGONG, July 24: Workers of four textile mills at CEPZ began an indefinite strike at 6 pm today, reports UNB.

The mills owned by a US citizen are: Tower (Bangladesh) Ltd, Globe Textile, Global Textile and Al Salam (Bangladesh) Ltd.

The workers are demanding pay-hike as per a BEPZA circular issued in 1993.

Earlier, production in three other textile mills here remained suspended from June 11 due to strike called by their workers on the same demand.

EPZ authorities, however, said the circular of increasing pay has immediately been cancelled through another circular.

Going gets tough for Amu

Elen Bhutto has blessings of both opposition & some AL leaders

By Nazmul Ashraf, with Aroop Talukdar in Jhalakati

Amir Hossain Amu with all his powers as a cabinet minister and a senior ruling party leader is finding going really tough in his run for the parliamentary by-election in Jhalakati-2 constituency.

Elen Bhutto, widow of Jatiya Party MP Zulfikar Ali Bhutto whose death necessitated the by-polls, is giving food Minister Amu a hard time, although he thought it to be an easy sail due to the fact that mainstream opposition parties are boycotting it.

The July 31 by-election by all indications is poised to see a scorching battle between Amu and Elen, an independent candidate.

The JP did not pick Bhutto's widow to contest the vacant seat due to her previous unwillingness. But Elen's well-wishers and followers of her late husband who won the seat thrice



Amir Hossain Amu



Elen Bhutto

made her to change the decision. Besides, reports have it that Elen is having blessings of the opposition parties in the constituency and some ruling party leaders.

Unlike in the five previous

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Experts trying to dismantle bomb at Kotalipara

KOTALIPARA, July 24: People within one kilometre periphery of the second bomb detected near the local helipad have been evacuated as experts feared it might explode any time, officials said, reports BSS.

Police cordoned off the area.

A 21-member army explosive experts team led by a lieutenant colonel from Jessore Cantonment reached the spot this morning to dismantle the explosive.

Army chief Lieutenant General Mostafizur Rahman visited the spot to inspect the activities of the military experts.

Bomb planting cooked up incidents: BNP

By Staff Correspondent
BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said yesterday the recent planting of bombs at Kotalipara to kill Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and similar incidents in the past have raised questions among people whether those were cooked up incidents with a political motive.

"How is it possible to carry and plant two bombs there right under the nose of a number of intelligence agencies and security forces?", he posed the question.

Usually, intelligence agencies, police and security forces take unprecedented security measures at least one week ahead of a visit of the head of state or the head of government to any area of the country. "How all the security forces failed to detect it?"

He was speaking at a "Meet

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Alliance formed to ensure political stability: BNP

By Staff Correspondent

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday said though the party has strength and popularity to win a simple majority in the next parliamentary polls, it has formed the opposition alliance to ensure political stability in the country.

"The alliance has been formed to ensure political stability if BNP and its allies are voted to power," he said.

"BNP's popularity is increasing day by day. Awami League is becoming isolated from people because of misdeeds of its leaders. We have the confidence that we will win a simple majority

even if BNP contests alone," he said.

He was speaking at a "Meet the Reporters" programme, organised by the Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) at its auditorium.

"We have a plan to accommodate other parties and even individuals in the alliance because we sincerely want to form a stable government in future. The objective of a broad-based alliance is to govern the country for a full term without unnecessary disturbance from the opposition in future."

He read a written statement

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Biman employees to hold rally at ZIA today

By Staff Correspondent
Bangladesh Biman employees will hold a rally at the entrance of the engineering hangar at Zia International Airport today as part of their agitation against planned conversion of the airlines into a Public Limited Company (PLC) under a privatisation programme.

The rally will be held at 8-45 pm, said Mohiuddin Ahmed, President of the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) of the employees.

He said they were not forcing any one to attend the rally. "Our movement is constitutional."

The employees would continue their agitation against the move for conversion apprehending loss of jobs. They want that Biman could have a strate-

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BCL leader, his accomplice get 14 yrs' RI under PSA in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, July 24: Two criminals were sentenced to 14 years' rigorous imprisonment each today for kidnapping two madrasah students for ransom in March this year, reports UNB.

Abdul Kader, 32, a BCL leader, and his accomplice Azizul Islam alias Jalal, 35, were handed down the verdict and a fine of Tk 50,000, in default to suffer additional two years' rigorous imprisonment. Kader is also known as Machh Kader.

The two men were sued under the Public Safety Act for kidnapping Fariduddin Babar, 17.

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Kashmir militant group declares ceasefire

SRINAGAR, July 24: The most powerful Muslim militant group in Indian Kashmir, Hizbul Mujahideen, announced a unilateral ceasefire today, saying it was willing to enter into negotiations with the Indian authorities, reports AFP.

"We want to show the world that we are not hardliners and we are flexible in the search for a solution," Hizbul Mujahideen chief commander Abdul Majid Dar told a hurriedly arranged press conference on the outskirts of Srinagar.

Dar said the ceasefire would initially run for a three-month period and called on the Indian

security forces to respond in kind.

"There should be no use of force against Mujahideen and no excesses carried out on the Kashmiri people," he said.

Dar made the announcement flanked by his four divisional commanders, none of whom were carrying arms.

"We are ready for talks," Dar said.

The surprise ceasefire announcement came just days after the election of Abdul Gani Bhat as the new chairman of the main separatist political alliance in Kashmir, the Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference.

Bhat favours Kashmir's accession to Pakistan.

The Indian government has expressed its willingness to hold talks with the Hurriyat, but only within the scope of the Indian constitution — a condition that effectively rules out the discussion of Kashmir's secession.

The Hurriyat insists that any dialogue would have to be unconditional.

Dar warned that if the Indian authorities failed to respond appropriately to the ceasefire announcement "then we will once again go on the offensive."

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by Khurshid Hamid

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Prayer Timings

July 25

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	4-55
Zohr	1-00	1-30
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-55	6-58
Esha	8-15	8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



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