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**People's Right to Know** 

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**DENGUE ALERT DEAD: 30** 

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## 123 more hospitalised, WHO sounds alarm

134

#### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 129 people infected with dengue were admitted to various hospitals and private clinics yesterday. The official figure however put the number at 84.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) office in Dhaka has termed the current outbreak an epidemic. But the health ministry has not taken any emergency step to face the

"Yes, it is an epidemic. But the outbreak is not limited to Bangladesh. Currently, we are facing a dengue pandemic worldwide. So, Bangladesh is no exception," Dr George Combacono, WHO communicable Disease Control consultant in Dhaka, told The Daily

"WHO Country Representative Dr Sunitee Acharya has approached the health ministry for any assistance from WHO. We are actually waiting for a comprehensive requirement list from the ministry."

Meantime, WHO has already ordered for some reagents for dengue tests and has provided kits to the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH). It also ordered some educational materials on dengue mosquito control and hygiene.

"The dengue crisis period may linger from one month to six weeks depending on the control strategy. But compared to the previous years, the dengue situation is well within control today. Otherwise, there would have been more deaths this year and I am sure the dengue

THE DENGUE DREAD Hospitalised Death Accumulated Date Total 2363 **Aug 18** 129 § § 30 **Aug 17** 90 27 2160 **Aug 16** 85 2045 123 25 1950 **Aug 15** 94 **Aug 14** 1610 Aug 13 54 23 1863

haemorrhagic fever is being managed well," said Dr Combacono.

Aug 12

With the latest victims, the total number of dengue patients admitted to hospitals since January this year stood at 2.363. Some 30 of them died from dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF).

Meanwhile, the platelet crisis is still on. The Red Crescent Blood Centre at Mohammadpur supplied 68 bags of platelet yesterday.

Panic was ruling supreme among the attendants of patients as heavy rush delayed supply of the lifesaving blood component

"We cannot help it. We are asking people to be patient. There is no need to hurry even if the platelet count is down to less than 10.000." said a doctor at the centre.

Meantime, the so-called 'crash programme' of the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) to control denque mosquito has frustrated the city dwellers as most areas are yet to be either sprayed with insecticide or cleaned.

Meantime, until yesterday the city corporation has done very little to bring the menace of aedes mos-

Even worse, while entomologists recommend spraying of larvicide, the DCC is still sitting on the decision to import the same. Currently, is not a single drop of larvicide is available at the DCC warehouse and according to entomologists, zillions of aedes mosquito eggs are ready for

1576

The DCC official sources said the city corporation has ordered 'special adulticide fogging' in all 90 wards in

"Mayor Sadeq Hossain Khoka has ordered each zonal official to go SEE PAGE 11 COL 8

## Food ministry probe body submits report

#### REAZ AHMAD

The Ministry of Food committee, formed to investigate the alleged wheat procurement scam, submitted its report to Food Secretary Abdul Latif Mandal 8:00pm yester-

Members of the committee, led by joint secretary Yakub Ali, remained tight-lipped about the content of the report.

However, some sources said that the committee had found most of the press reports on procurement irregularities true.

It also found truth in the allegation that during the fag end of the procurement drive, wheat was no more available from local growers and some food officials and politicians took advantage of the situa-

The report was submitted four SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

### Murders at Tejgaon Police padding for slain killer alleged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tense situation was prevailing at Kunipara in the city's Tejgaon area where a top criminal shot dead a police assistant sub-inspector, a businessman and another person on Saturday. Additional police forces have been deployed there.

Meanwhile, five cases have heen filed with the Teigaon and Khilgaon Police Stations in connection with the killings.

One of the most wanted criminals in the country, Mohammad Alauddin, and his gang members shot dead three persons --

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## **WHEATGATE SCAM**

# Wheat growers left high and dry

### ANWAR ALI

Not a single grower in Borga and Pabna districts could sell wheat to the government under the fresh allocation for procurement in July due to random violation of rules under political pressure

Even usual suppliers of homegrown wheat were deprived of the opportunity. There was a special instruction to purchase wheat

from growers as far as possible. But those who supplied wheat during the last ten days

of July either belonged to the ruling alliance or were nonbusinessman opportunists

They collected Indian wheat from local importers at a lower rate and supplied those to the government grana-

ries at higher rate.

In Bogra, two influential groups controlled the wheat supply. One group was allegedly led by Helaluzzaman Talukder Lalu MP and the district BNP's industries affairs secretary Mahfuz Siddigue Liton. The other group was led by he district BNP's publication secretary Md Shokrana and Gabtoli upazila BNP organising secretary Morshed Milton.

In some cases, wheat was supplied in false names. The daily Star revealed these in a 14-day investigation in

Bogra and Pabna. The BNP leaders and workers when contacted how

ever denied their involvement in the scam. But the one-man probe body headed by the secretary

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Titas union out to grab officers' association

#### ZAYADUL AHSAN

Trade union leaders of the Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Compnay Limited have unleashed a reign of terror on the officials in a bid to seize control of the officers' welfare association.

According to sources, they have set a 48-hour deadline for the elected office bearers to resign, thereby paving the path for fresh election, or face dire consequences.

A trade union leader roughed up a Titas official, the treasurer of the

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