

Fake medicines supplied to Rangpur hospitals for 2 yrs

Arrested fake chemist tells police: Pressure from BNP leaders to drop some names from case

RAFIQUE SARKER, Rangpur

Spurious medicines produced in fake factories here were supplied to Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH), Sadar Hospital, TB Hospital and seven upazila health complexes in the district for the last two years, arrested Mahfuz Amin Setu, now on remand, told police.

He divulged "a lot of information" about spurious medicines, Detective Branch police said. He was taken on three-day remand on Saturday.

Mahfuz Amin Setu, a fake chemist, was arrested when police raided a fake laboratory at Pannardighi in the Sadar upazila on August 3 and recovered huge quantities of spurious medicines and fertiliser.

Quoting from Setu's statement, a DB source said that some of the spurious life saving medicines produced in the fake factory were packed and labeled in the name of reputed pharmaceutical companies and supplied to these hospitals.

Besides information on production

and supply of spurious medicines, Mahfuz Amin also disclosed some "sensational information", the sources said but declined to disclose for the sake of investigation.

Three alleged spurious medicine dealers Joynal Abedin, Azad, and Mosaddeque Bablu had formed an "armed gang" in and around the RMCH. They did all sorts of crimes in the hospital.

Whenever some one opened mouth against them, they never hesitated to take any action to stop him.

A source at the RMCH said Azad and Mosaddeque Bablu were subcontractors who supplied medicines to the hospital on behalf of an influential BNP and DAB (Doctors Association of Bangladesh) leader.

Some months ago, they presented the BNP leader a luxurious car.

The DB sources said they are facing a "tough situation now as some influential BNP leaders are pressuring them to go to Dhaka and pay for High Court bail.

Meanwhile Rangpur Civil Surgeon Dr. Joynal Abedin told this correspond-

ent that they have not yet formed any probe body to investigate the matter but asked the authorities of ACME Laboratory and Aristopharma to check the quality of medicines Eftear Pharmacy supplies to their depots.

Eftear Pharmacy, whose proprietor is the wife of Joynal Abedin, is supposed to supply medicines of ACME Laboratory and Aristopharma under a contract.

On Saturday, activists of the parties staged a four-hour token hunger strike in front of the Court Square.

The hunger strike programme ended with formation of a human chain.

Dr. Swapani, Sakwati Ranga, Goutom Roy and other leaders led the programmes that started at 10:00 am.

The JSD leaders expressed their deep concern over alleged the police inaction in arresting the producers of spurious medicine, fertiliser and cement and their dealers.

They claimed that police, instead of arresting the culprits suggested them to go to Dhaka and pay for High Court bail.

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Said he was asked to examine the quality of medicines supplied by Eftear Pharmacy. He is awaiting an official letter from the Civil Surgeon in this regard.

When asked if any probe body was formed to investigate

Supply of spurious medicines to RMCH. Director of the hospital Dr. A.K.M. Shahriar said, "I won't say anything about this."



Awami Ainjibi Parishad brought out a procession in Barisal city (left) and party leaders and activists paraded streets of Comilla town (right) yesterday

PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: STAR

'Execute Bangabandhu murder verdict' Hunger strike in Gaibandha, procession at RU

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The 29th death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was observed yesterday in Rajshahi University and Gaibandha town in a befitting manner.

Our Rajshahi University (RU)

Correspondent reports: Different organisations brought out mourning processions, held discussion meetings, cultural functions and milad mahfil on the university campus to mark the day.

Rajshahi University unit of Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote brought out a mourning procession on the campus. Processionists chanted slogans demanding immediate execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case.

A discussion meeting and a cultural function were held at Room No 115 of the

Fourth Arts building.

Former National University Vice Chancellor (VC) Professor Borhanuddin Jahangir was present at the discussion meeting as a chief guest while former Rajshahi University VC Professor Abdul Khaled and Prof Saidur Rahman were present as special guests.

Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote President Prof Md Shafiqul Islam presided over the discussion. A cultural function followed the discussion.

The university unit of Bangabandhu Parishad and Uddihi Shilpi Gosthi organised a cultural function on the Folklore Department premises.

The university unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) brought out a mourning procession and held a rally on the campus. Processionists wore black

badges. Its president Ibrahim Hossain Moon and general secretary Ayan Uddin led the procession.

Earlier, BCL placed wreath at the portrait of Bangabandhu at the Central Shaheed Minar. A milad mahfil was also held at the central mosque after Asar prayer. A blood donation programme has been arranged at the central library today.

The university unit of Bangabandhu observed the day by holding a discussion meeting and a cultural programme.

An earlier report says: The teachers of Rajshahi University (RU) paraded the campus streets in a silent procession on Friday demanding immediate execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case.

Progressive Teachers' Association convener Professor Entajul Haque led the

procession.

Abigrid followed the procession.

Speakers blamed the government for protecting the killers and called upon the government for immediate execution of the verdict.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports:

BCL staged a six-hour token hunger strike on the Shaheed Minar premises.

BCL activists formed a human chain and brought out a procession in the town.

A discussion meeting was held at the Public Library Hall under the auspices of Mukti Joddha Chetona Bastobayan Committee where leaders of Awami League and its front organisations demanded immediate execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu Murder Case.

Facing fallout of flood

45,000 hectares under sand in Bogra, Sirajgonj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

The floodwater is gone but has left vast sheets of sand, making lands uncultivable.

At least 45,000 hectares of cultivable land in Bogra and Sirajgonj districts have been covered by sand carried by the recent flood.

Sirajgonj Agriculture Extension Department (AED) officials said about 25,000 hectares are now under cover of five to six feet layers of sand in different areas of the district.

Sand has covered over 20,000 hectares in the Sadar, Dhunat, Sonatola and Sharikandi upazilas in Bogra, officials

here said.

Asraf Ali and Afzal Hossain at Chuniapara village in Dhunat upazila said all their lands have become unfit for cultivation due to sand deposit. It is not possible to remove the sand and make those cultivable again, the poor farmers said. Same is the condition with many a farmers in Dhunat and three other upazilas, AED officials told this correspondent. The worst affected villages are Chaniapara, Chatodiar, Gozaria, Buroiel, Chekashi, Kuthirgat, Gueduri, Daripara, Chatul, Fakirpara and Collagare.

In Sonatola upazila, most lands in Khabulia, Vitarpura and Purbatakinch

villages are now sheets of sand.

Farmers in Sirajgonj Sadar and Kazipara said they can not cultivate Aman paddy on fields on the right bank of the Jamuna due to heavy layers of sand on the lands.

The affected areas include Bahauka, Kurania, Kuripara, Vatiparia, Shimla, Patagram villages in Kazipara upazila and Kaziur in Shahjadpur upazila.

Twenty-five thousand hectares out of over 39,000 inundated by the flood in the district are now under sand and unfit for Aman cultivation, sources said.



A farmer at Goshabari village in Dhunat upazila in Bogra removing sand from his cultivable land.

PHOTO: STAR

Unabated looting of coastal forests

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Reserve forests in coastal areas of Patuakhali are disappearing due to large scale felling of timber trees by organised gaubs of thieves.

Local people alleged that the gangs are stealing valuable timber trees from forests in coastal areas of Kalapara and Galachipa upazilas in connivance with a section of Forest Department staff and law enforcers.

Scores of valuable trees like Sundari, Kewra, Garan and Karai are taken away from forests in Fatir Bank, Char Gongamoti Son Char, Nishan Baria and Kachop Khali lake every night. These are loaded in trawlers and sent to the different areas including Dhaka and Chittagong.

Parts of these are also sold at nearby saw mills. Forest officials some times recover stolen timber and arrest people, but this is only an eyewash, they alleged.

"We recovered about 500 cft Sundari timber from three trawlers on the Kalapara sea beach last week saw hun-

dreds of dead trees.

Abdul Mannan 40, a farmer at Char Gougamoti said the withering process starts four to five months after their roots are covered with sand.

Govt assistance Only 5,700 to benefit in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Only 5700 flood affected farmers out of about one lake in Bogra district will get governments' assistance under its post-flood agriculture rehabilitation programme.

Forest officials said excessive deposit of sand is harmful for man grove forest. The forest can be saved if the sand layer is removed, but it is costly.

But other officials differ with the view. There could be other reasons they said but could not specify.

This correspondent during a visit to Kuakata sea beach last week saw hun-

dreds of dead trees.

Death from custodial torture alleged

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessor

Death of poor rickshaw puller due to alleged torture in custody has created resentment among people in the town.

But the matter has been suppressed by authorities of Jessor Central Jail, Jessor 250 Bed Hospital and a Court Inspector.

The torture came to light when people attending the Namaj-e-Janaza of victim Anisur Rahman found marks of injury on the body on Tuesday.

The body was buried without autopsy.

Anisur Rahman, 23, son of late Nur Islam of Birampur village on the outskirts of Jessor town was arrested on May 31 by Jhikargacha police under Section 54 while he was going to his father-in-law's house at Chapatala village in the upazila.

On June 1, he was produced before a Magistrate court, which sent him to Jessor Central Jail (Hajati No. 2596/04).

At about 9.20 am on August 5, the jail authorities admitted him to Jessor 250 Bed Hospital (registration No. 15290/13). It is alleged that he had fallen sick due to torture in custody.

On August 7, when his condition deteriorated, he was released from hospital. Prior to this, a Sub-inspector of Jessor Court hurriedly called his mother Rabeya Khatun to the hospital and took her thumb impression on a white paper, Rabeya told this correspondent.

On August 8, Rabeya brought Anisur to the hospital again and admitted him in a serious condition.

Anisur told his mother that he was severely tortured in custody on August 4 as he wanted a match box from the on-duty policeman for smoking. He died at the hospital at about 3 am on August 10.

When asked by journalists on Tuesday, Jailer Abdul Gaffor Mullik said there was no such prisoner in Jessor Central Jail.

Mentionably, the court had dismissed the case on August 5 as the investigation officer (IO) in his report said the allegation against him could not be proved.

Rainy season without rain

Farmers irrigate lands to transplant Aman in southwestern dists

A CORRESPONDENT, Jessor

Unbelievable though, farmers are irrigating lands in many areas in southwestern districts to transplant Aman seedlings in the current rainy season.

This correspondent during a visit to some areas saw farmers pumping groundwater to fields with shallow irrigation machines. Many a poor farmers said they can not even rot harvested jute plants for lack of water in canals, ditches and other small waterbodies.

A drought-like situation is prevailing in the ten south-western districts because of scanty rainfall, farmers said. Black clouds often appear in the sky raising hopes, but those do not burst, they lamented.

Agriculture Extension Department (AED) sources said they fixed a target to bring 7,07900 hectares of land under Aman cultivation in the ten districts to produce 16, 22, 690 tonnes of paddy in the current season. Transplantation of