

## FIVE NEW MEDICAL COLLEGES

## Staffs deprived of salaries for 14 months

NAIMUL HAQ With HASIBUR RAHMAN In Bogra

About 1,200 teaching and administrative staffs at five newly built medical colleges have resorted to demonstration and work abstention demanding immediate payment of salaries.

The staffs at Dinajpur, Faridpur, Khulna, Comilla and Shaheed Ziaur Rahman (Bogra) medical colleges have been demonstrating since June 9 as they have not been receiving their salaries for the last 14 months.

The agitation programmes have apparently led to major disruption of treatment facilities in the hospitals attached to the medical colleges as more than half of the agitating staffs are also engaged in the treatment of patients.

Many outdoor patients are seen either waiting or returning home without any consultation with the doctors who remain busy joining the demonstration.

The staffs put on black badges on June 11 to protest the government's

indifferent attitude. They also went on work abstention on June 12 and 13 to intensify their agitation programme.

"Without salary, how can I pay attention to the hospital patients. In fact, many of my colleagues like myself have been giving more time to their private practice to make up for loss of earnings," said a young doctor seeking anonymity.

According to sources, despite an order issued by the Prime Minister's Office on April 29, 2004 for transferring the staffs from development budget to revenue budget, the finance and establishment ministries are yet to take any step in this regard.

The sources said the staffs were appointed under a project titled 'Establishment of five Medical Colleges' that started in 1991-92 fiscal. After the project period ended in June 2000, a monitoring cell from the health ministry recommended shifting of the 1200 staffs to revenue budget.

However, in the face of demand for salaries, the government started giving block allocation for disbursement and the salaries were paid every four to six months on average.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at a function of the Doctors' Association of Bangladesh (DAB) on April 14, 2004 pledged to transfer the 1200 staffs to revenue budget. And the PMO issued the order on April 29, 2004 asking the ministries concerned to take necessary steps in this regard.

When contacted, an official of the health ministry said that the relevant file is now at the finance ministry. The problem is expected to be solved by next month, he added.

## NANIARCHAR GUNFIGHT

## Another dies at CMCH

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Another UPDF supporter succumbed to his injuries at the

Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) yesterday morning raising the death toll to three in Wednesday's gunfight in Rangamati.

The dead was identified as Amalendu Chakma. He was shot during a shootout between the anti-peace accord United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF) and pro-peace accord Parbatya Chattagram Jono Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) at Korollyachhari village under Naniarchar upazila.

"We have just received the news that Amalendu succumbed to his injuries in the morning at Chittagong",

said a security source here at 12:55pm yesterday.

Meanwhile, doctors advised bullet-hit Sunukky Chakma, who is languishing at General Hospital here, for treatment at CMCH. Sunukky, 40, son of Tanta Ronjan Chakma of village Haridaspara, was shot in his left thigh.

UPDF cadre Avilash Chakma and unidentified PCJSS supporter were killed on the spot during the shootout.

The gunfight began when a pro-peace accord PCJSS cadres numbering 25 raided the village Korollyachhari in the morning, local people said. The village is known as a stronghold of UPDF.

Naniarchar police lodged a general diary yesterday in this connection.



The road near the Joykai Mandir becomes gridlocked almost every day as long-route buses use this road to reach the city centre. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Enact new laws to stop spread of HIV/Aids

## Lawmakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lawmakers at a discussion yesterday called for enacting new laws to help stop spreading of HIV/Aids and protect the victims.

They said being people's representatives, they have a crucial role to play against the deadly disease.

The MPs should visit their respective constituencies more often and discuss the issue with local people.

The discussion on 'Prevention of HIV/Aids and Human Trafficking' was organised by Bangladesh Parliament Member's Support Group (BPMMSG) at a city hotel.

Lawmakers from the ruling BNP,

Awami League, Jamaat-e-Islami and Jatiya Party took part in the discussion.

Speaking as chief guest, LGRD and Co-operatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said this is not true that poor countries are more vulnerable to HIV/Aids than rich countries.

"If we can uphold our social and religious values, we could combat HIV/Aids," he said.

Presiding over the discussion, Deputy Speaker Akhter Hamid Siddiqui said, "We have to prevent HIV/Aids before it spreads all over the country as we don't have enough money to face its devastation later."

He stressed the need for creating public awareness against the disease.

The lawmakers called for ensuring proper vigilance at land, sea and airports so that people coming from abroad could be screened.

They also called for engaging Imams (religious leader), teachers, and local government members to create awareness among the people.

Parliament Members Md Ashraf Hossain, Vice-principal Md Abdus Shahid, Lt Col (Retd) Faruk Khan, Dr Md Ali, Prof Dr Amanullah, and GM Kader also took part in the discussion.

Representatives from UNDP and UNAIDS also spoke on the occasion.



People of Bikrampur, now living in Japan, forms a human chain in front of the High Court in the city yesterday demanding that Munshiganj district be renamed Bikrampur district.

PHOTO: STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tel-Gas Lunthon Pratirodh Chhatra-Jubo Andolan, (a movement of student and youth to resist plundering of oil and gas) yesterday demanded trial of AKM Mosharraf Hossain, former state minister for energy and mineral resources, for his alleged involvement in corruption.

The organisation also blasted the government for appointing Mahmudur Rahman as advisor to energy and mineral resources ministry terming him as a 'recognized corrupt person.'

Demanding exemplary punishment to Mosharraf, the leaders of the movement said Bangladesh incurred a loss of hundreds of crore of taka as the former state minister signed an agreement with Niko Resource Limited which went against the interests of the country.

"Mere resignation of the state minister is not enough to check corruption in the energy sector, rather the government has to investigate into the corruption that took place while he (Mosharraf) was minister," said Kamrul Alam Sabuj, coordinator of the organisation, at a press conference in the city.

He demanded nationalisation of oil and gas fields by cancelling all 'anti-people agreements' to save the national resources.

"The successive governments have paved the way for plundering the country's mineral resources by foreign companies through signing of anti-people agreement," said Saiful Haque, general secretary of a faction of the Workers' Party.

He also demanded of the government to realise compensation from Niko Resource Limited and Unocal for the blow-up of Tengratila and Magurchhara gas fields.

Saiful said the sale of gas to

Tata Group of Industries at a cheap rate would be harmful for the country.

Bazlur Rashid Firoz, a central leader of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal, and Hamidul Hauge Hamid, joint convenor of Muktiyuddho Union, were also present at the conference.

## KILLING OF 2 BNP LEADERS

## Janajuddho claims responsibility

## Hartal observed in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

The BNP enforced a half-day hartal in Chuadanga yesterday in protest of the killing of BNP leaders Noor Ali and Zillur Rahman.

Noor Ali, vice-president of Chuadanga district BNP, was shot dead by unknown assailants on Wednesday night while Zillur who was critically injured in the attack died in the early hours of yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Janajuddho, a faction of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP), claimed responsibility for the killings.

In the morning, thousands of leaders and activists of the ruling BNP brought out a protest rally in the town.

The BNP also demanded immediate removal of Chuadanga police superintendent (SP) and officer-in-charge (OC) of Sadar Police Station.

In a statement, district BNP Joint Secretary Sardar Ali Hossain criticised the police for their negligence of duty and demanded quick removal of SP Md Sarwar and OC Nazrul Islam Mollah.

Janajuddho, in a statement signed by its regional leader Dipok Roy and faxed to a local daily, claimed the responsibility for the murders, saying that they killed the ruling party leaders to avenge the killings of their party men in so-called 'crossfire' with the law enforcement agencies.

The outlawed party also threatened to kill more leaders in the southwestern region.

Police, however, could not arrest any cadre of the outlawed party.

In another incident, Janajuddho shot dead one of its rival party man at village Changamari in Gangni upazila in Meherpur on Wednesday night.

The dead was identified as Maniruzzaman alias Lulu, 38.

Police said the Janajuddho men stormed the house of Lulu at about 9.30pm and took him out of the house. Later, they shot him dead on a road.

## BACHCHU MURDER

## 18 get life in Gopalganj

UNB, Gopalganj

A court here yesterday convicted 18 people and sentenced them to life term imprisonment in the sensational Baharul Islam Bachchu murder case.

The court also fined the convicts, Tk 1,000 each, in default, to suffer two-month more rigorous imprisonment.

The court acquitted two others.

All the lifers hailed from Ghonapara village of Kasiani upazila in Gopalganj. They are: Rafi Mollah, Jalal Sheikh, Taruf Sheikh, Firoz Sheikh, Idrish Sheikh, Farid Sheikh, Rabiul Mollah, Zakir Mollah, Tipu Sheikh, Shahabuddin Mollah, Mamun Mollah, Siraj Mollah, Ayub Mollah, Paltu Sheikh, Fulmia (absconding), Halim Fakir, Lutfar Mollah and Selim Mollah.

According to the prosecution, the convicts attacked Bachchu with sticks and hammer on August 25, 2002 when he was going to Ghonapara bazar from his house and left him critically injured.

Bachchu was taken to a nearby hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on the same night.

Examining the witnesses and records, the additional district and session Judge of Gopalganj handed down the verdict.