

Diarrhoea, pneumonia trail floods in Sirajganj

7 killed, at least 1000 attacked in nine upazilas in five days

A CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Diarrhoea and pneumonia have broken out in large scale nine upazilas of Sirajganj following recession of flood waters.

The diseases claimed seven lives

and affected over 1000 people in last five days. Most of the pneumonia victims are infants.

Those died of diarrhoea include Nasimuddin, 56, of Bankai village in Raiganj upazila; Gaher Ali, 60 of Nishchintapur village and Bakiullah, 6,

of Chargiresh village in Kazipur upazila and Omesha Khatun, 2, of Belkuchi, according to sources at the Civil Surgeon's office. Rhidoy, 22 days, son of Azahar Ali of Bengnai village in Raiganj and Hurmoti, 2 of Gudhibari village in Shahzadpur upazila died of pneumo-

nia.

While visiting different hospitals, including Raiganj and Kazipur health complexes and Sirajganj Sadar Hospital yesterday, this correspondent saw diarroea and pneumonia patients, most of them children, lying on floors due to lack of beds.

Some patients were seen going to private hospitals, failing to get beds at the Sadar Hospital.

Talking to the patients, it was gathered that children in large numbers were being attacked with pneumonia in remote areas in Raiganj, Tarash, Kazipur, Chowhali, Shahzadpur, Ullapara, Belkuchi, Kamarkhanda and Sadar upazilas due to cold from the recent downpour.

Most of the patients said alleged that there was scarcity of medicine and saline at hospitals. Most of the them said they have to procure medicines from outside.

Sources claimed that the unofficial number of affected people would be much more because many patients are taking treatment in the private clinics and at homes.

When contacted Sirajganj Civil Surgeon Mizanur Rahman said 82 medical teams are working in the 82 unions in the district.

He however said the rate of attack this year is not more than in previous years. Most patients come to hospital when their condition turns critical, when treatment becomes difficult, he said. This is due to lack of awareness, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

Diarrhoea patients on the floor of Sirajganj Sadar Hospital. The photo was taken yesterday.

2.5 kg explosives recovered in Barisal, four held

Police suspect link to Islamist militants

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Kalkini thana police in Madaripur district have recovered two and half (2.5) kilograms of explosives and other bomb making materials including 11 wrapping tapes and 300 pieces of marble.

Police on Wednesday arrested Abdus Salam Boiati, 45, Saidul Alam Shah, 31, Abul Hasem, 40 and Delwar, 35, all alleged members of

notorious gang of dacoits led by one Lokman Sardar.

Acting on their confession, a team led by Kalkini thana OC Ekram Ali Mollah raided the house of alleged ringleader Lokman Sardar at Batamara village in Muladi upazila in Barisal district Thursday night.

Police recovered the explosives and other bomb making materials from the house but Lokman escaped.

Police said Lokman's gang was involved in incidents of robbery in different areas in Madaripur district and Vurghata, Gourmadi and Muladi upazilas in Barisal. Several cases were also lodged with different thanas in the areas.

The arrestees confessed to using bombs for dacoity but police suspect their link with Islamist militants, the Kalkini thana OC said.

Bomb recovered from RU stadium

RU CORRESPONDENT

A bomb was recovered from the main entrance of Rajshahi University stadium yesterday.

A cleaner saw a small container wrapped with red tape and informed its Director Fazlur Rahman, who informed police.

Motlier thana police along with bomb experts recovered the bomb. Inter-department football tournament began at the university stadium on October 6.

Police have been deployed in front of stadium after recovery of the bomb.

5 units idle at Ashuganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Five out of eight units at Ashuganj power station are inoperative, reducing power generation to 328 MW from 728 MW.

Md. Shahidur Rahman, Managing Director (MD) of the station, however told this correspondent yesterday that one 64 MW unit may resume generation today.

Two of the units are undergoing renovation and two others stopped generation due to technical fault earlier. Another unit stopped generation on Friday due to technical fault, sources at the power station said.

4 cr at risk of HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh

Workshop in Jessore told

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jessore

About four crores youths of 15 to 24 age group in Bangladesh are at serious risk of HIV/AIDS.

This was disclosed at a roundtable titled, 'Young Generation in Prevention of HIV/AIDS', held at the BMA auditorium here on Monday.

Jointly organised by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Save the children, USA, the roundtable was presided over by Jessore Civil Surgeon Abul Bashar Mohammad Khashru while Jessore Pourasabha Chairman SM Kamruzzaman Chunnun was present as chief guest.

Held under the supervision of Padakkhep Consortium, the round table was told that 465 people were attacked with HIV in Bangladesh last year although the actual figure is over 700.

Speakers further disclosed told that 70 per cent of 18 lakh bus, truck, launch and rickshaw van workers are clients of sex workers. But most of them do not use condoms, they said.

Speakers feared that Bangladesh is very much at risk of HIV/AIDS because many Indian truck drivers pass nights at Benapole Land Port. The number of AIDS victims in India is very high, they informed.

Among others, ADC (General) Omar Faruk, Jessore Press Club President Fakir Shankar and Islamic Foundation Deputy Director Abdur Razzaque Mollah attended the roundtable.

Appoint district judges in CHT

Lawyers from 3 hill dists demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Lawyers from Khagrachhari, Bandarban and Rangamati at a joint meeting here yesterday demanded immediate appointment of District and Daira Judges in the three hill districts.

The meeting held at the office of Rangamati Lawyers Association (RLA) was presided over by Fanindra Lal Das, president of RLA.

Speakers at the meeting said people of the three hill districts are denied justice and are suffering in absence of district judges but the government is indifferent to the situation despite a High Court order in this regard.

The High Court in a recent verdict said that 'carrying out judicial activities via the Additional Divisional Commissioner is unlawful', they said.

Poor litigants of the three hill districts suffer as petty cases are not disposed even in years as they can not go to Chittagong, they said.

Advocates Nasiruddin Ahmad and Ashutush Chakma from Khagrachhari and Mohiuddin and Eliasur Rahman from Bandarban represented local bar associations at the meeting. The speakers included Gyanendu Bikash Chakma, Swapon Kumar Choudhury, Bidhan Kanungu, Dulal Kanti Sarkar, Paritush Kumar Datt, Ushamoy Khisha, Shaktiman Chakma, Rafiqul Islam, Mukhter Ahmad, U Thoiat Mong Marma and Pratim Roy.

The fake doctor does it again

Released on bail, he forged signature of govt doctors to run diagnostic centre

ABU AHMED, Satkhira

A fake doctor, released on bail in a case for cheating patients, has been found forging signatures of two government doctors to run his clinic in Satkhira town.

Bazlur Rahman runs the Skylark Clinic at Amtala intersection in the town. He was arrested along with 12 others in February for cheating patients by impersonating highly qualified doctors. To cheat patients, they had opened well furnished chambers in Satkhira town and Shyamnagar. Their name plates and pads showed degrees like MBBS, FCPS and MD though none of them had any such degree.

As a report was published in The daily Star on their forgery, the Health Department asked the Satkhira Civil Surgeon to probe the matter. Action was taken against the 12 fake doctors.

Bazlur Rahman was arrested in February. He was released recently on bail granted by the High Court.

After release, he started cheating again, albeit in a different way. He began forging signatures of two physicians -- Dr. Ishaque and Dr. Abul Hossain of Satkhira Sadar Hospital.

The forgery was detected during an investigation at the Skylark Clinic by Civil Surgeon Dr Abu Aziz Al Monsur on September 17.

The CS found that fake doctor Bazlur Rahman appointed Dr Ishque Ali and Dr. Abul Hossain on part time basis at a salary of Tk 5000 per month. Their joining reports were also there at the clinic.

Next day, the CS issued show-cause notices on the two doctors, asking them to reply within three days why action will not be taken against them for working at a private

medical center, violating rules.

In reply, the two doctors said they never worked at the clinic.

On investigation it was revealed that the owner of the Skylark Clinic had been forging signatures of the two doctors in false reports on pathological tests.

Dr. Ishaque and Dr. Abul Hossain told this correspondent that Bazlur Rahman has been cheating patients for long. A general diary has been filed with the Sadar thana in this connection, they said.

On contacted, Civil Surgeon Dr. Abu Aziz Al Monsur confirmed the incident and said probe is going on and further action will be taken against Bazlur Rahman after it is completed.

He said seven illegal clinics and laboratories have been closed down at Shyamnagar upazila headquarters for violating government rules.

Hannan's arrest a relief to in-laws

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Members of father-in-law's family of Harkatul Zihad leader Mufti Abdul Hannan are not at all anxious about the fate of Hannan. Rather, they heaved a sigh of relief following his arrest and are waiting to get back their daughter Ruma.

Mufti Hannan is the main accused in the case filed for attempting to kill the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina by planting a powerful bomb at her public meeting venue in Kotalipara. Hannan was hiding till he was arrested by RAB in Dhaka on Oct 1.

Mufti Hannan was married to Ruma Parvin, daughter of Ansar Ali Mollah of Moghi village in Magura Sadar upazila about 11 years back.

This correspondent visited Moghi yesterday morning and talked to his in-law's family members.

Family sources said, Hannan first saw Ruma when she was learning the holy Quran at a madrasa in Jessore. He was attracted to beautiful Ruma. About a month later, Hannan along with his influential relatives including former Kotalipara Upazila chairman came to the residence of Ansar Ali and married Ruma.

"Though Hannan was not a likeable person, we agreed to the marriage proposal because of fervent requests from Hannan and his influential relatives", said Ruma's mother Aleya



Begum.

"The last time my daughter came with her husband was about six months after the case for attempting to kill Sheikh Hasina was filed. I do not bother about Hannan's fate, we are waiting for the safe return of our daughter", she said.

As Ruma was married to Hannan, her family members suffered a lot time to time. Her father Ansar Ali was picked up by army in 2000 for interrogation after the case was filed for attempting to kill Sheikh Hasina.

Besides, police raided their house at least 98 times, they said.

Hannan's in-law's family members now feel shame because an infamous person like Hannan is their son-in-law.

"It is a matter of shame that we are relatives of Hannan. What Almighty does is always good. Every sin has a

limit", commented Nazmul Hossain a cousin of Ruma.

"We are not sad following the arrest of Hannan, because he was a cause for our sufferings for the last several years and he has brought ill reputation for us", Nazmul said.

Manikganj AL leader arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

An Awami League (AL) leader was arrested from his Shibbari residence in the town on charge of criminal activities in the early hours of Friday.

The arrested is dormer Jubo League district unit General Secretary AFM Sultanul Azam Khan (Apel) who is also ex-Secretary of Manikganj District Sports Association.

When contacted, Manikganj Police Superintendent Abu Bakar Siddque Mozumdar said Apel was arrested because he is one of 30 top criminals.

Meanwhile, AL leaders and activists condemned the arrest.

They hold a meeting at Sabib auditorium in the town where they demanded his immediate release.

6x3

6x3

Ducks die in hundreds

Unknown disease in Kishoreganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Several hundred ducks died of unknown disease in two weeks in different unions of Niklee upazila.

Kishoreganj District Livestock Officer (DLO) Nurul Islam sent two dead ducks for investigation to Central Diseases Investigation Laboratory (CDIL) at Bangabazar in Dhaka on September 26. But he is yet to receive the report till filing the story. He collected the ducks after visiting duck farms in Dhampara union, Karpasa union, Saroitala union and Niklee.

When contacted, Niklee Upazila Livestock Officer (ULO) Mizanur Rahman told this correspondent the sick ducks died overnight. While visiting the affected farms he found the dead ducks were being thrown into the river instead of burying them. In reply to a query, he failed to tell the exact number of dead ducks. 'As the ducks roam about in marshy

lands for food, the disease is spreading fast,' he informed this correspondent.

The ULO also disclosed that he had sent two dead ducks to the Head of Bangladesh Agriculture University laboratory in Mymensingh, Prof Dr Prio Mohan Das. 'Personally, I have detected the disease as 'Mycoplasmosis', he said. 'But we have to wait for the CDIL report,' he added.

Shadhin, a duck farmer said to this correspondent he had already lost 200 out of 1,000 ducks till now. He lamented for delay in detection of the disease.

Another farmer, Kanchan Mia who lost 250 ducks expressed his disappointment saying the report from the CDIL would reach after death of all ducks.

Local duck farmers have demanded of the authorities concerned for immediate step to protect the remaining ducks.

8x3