



PHOTO: STAR

A boy being treated for diarrhoea on a bench in front of Nilphamari Sadar Hospital (left) and patients on the floor at the diarrhoea ward.

Diarrhoea spreading fast in Nilphamari

12 killed, 5000 attacked: Crisis of saline, drinking water

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

The diarrhoea situation deteriorated in Nilphamari as it claimed 7 more lives on Tuesday, raising the toll to 12.

At least 5000 people have been attacked as the disease is spreading alarmingly to fresh areas.

Though a seasonal phenomenon, its intensity is greater this year as a fallout of late floods that caused crisis of drinking water and aggravated the munga, officials said.

Supply of oral saline is also not adequate in the affected areas.

In Ding Ding Para village, 10 miles from the town, at least 200 out of about 1000 people are attacked with diarrhoea. It is hard to find a family without at least one diarrhoea patient, sources said. All members of a family being attacked with the disease is also not uncommon. On Tuesday, some villagers snatched IV saline injections from medical teams there for their sick relatives.

Deputy Commissioner Rabindra Nath Roy Chowdhury, Civil Surgeon In-Charge Dr Abdul Majid and Sadar UNO ATM Masduzzaman visited Ding Ding village on Tuesday and assured the villagers of all possible

help.

The Deputy Commissioner held a special meeting on Sunday with all Upazila Health and Family Planning Officers and officials of Public Health Department to find ways to combat diarrhoea. In the meeting, two ADC's were given emergency duty for monitoring the situation round the clock. A Rapid Response Team has been formed at the district headquarter to rush to any area on information.

Besides 72 medical teams now working in the district, one Emergency Team has been formed in each upazila to monitor the situation and take immediate steps, officials at the district control room said.

The Deputy Commissioner has allotted 45 tonnes of rice for worst affected areas because the disease is caused mainly due to shortage of food and pure drinking water. As poor people have no work now, they try to survive on uneatable things, which cause diarrhoea.

The 12 victims are Parveen, 3 of Jhechu Para village, Abia, 6 and Rabeya, 8, of Dangapara village in Sadar upazila; Zabeda, 40, Jobeda, 55, Rozina, 25 and her five-day old son of Panger Motukpur village in Domar

upazila; Abdul Majid Kalu, 40, of Guapara in Kishoreganj upazila and Chobidul, 35 of the same upazila; Abdul Mamud, 45 of Balapara cluster village in Jaldhaka upazila and Rekha, 4, of the same upazila and Fatema Begum of Pochar Hat village in Dimla upazila.

The district control room however confirmed only two deaths from diarrhoea. Sources there said at least 2300 people took treatment at government hospitals and field treatment centres in four days till Tuesday. A total of 203 people went to hospitals only on Tuesday.

Unofficial sources however said the number of patients would be much more as many people in remote areas do not have any means to go to hospitals. They take treatment at home.

At some government hospitals, some patients alleged that the authorities released them though they were not fully cured.

Awami League lawmaker from Nilphamari Sadar constituency Asaduzzaman Noor at a press conference here on Sunday demanded of the government to declare diarrhoea and munga affected Nilphamari

district as a 'distress area'.

He said people are being attacked with diarrhoea after eating uneatable things as they have no food and work.

The situation is more serious than what the district officials say, he said. The district health department does not give an accurate picture of the situation. They give a low death toll only to save the image of the government, he alleged. He urged the Prime Minister to visit the affected areas.

Civil-Surgeon In-Charge Dr Abdul Majid, when contacted, told this correspondent on Tuesday that 72 medical teams were working in the affected areas across the district. Two temporary diarrhoea treatment centres have been setup in Gogram and Chanderhat village in Sadar upazila.

He said UNICEF officials had inquired about the situation and requirement of IV saline and other medicine. He said there is a stock of 6,383 bags of 500 cc IV saline and 1,238 bags of 1,000 cc IV saline with the district health department. More 2000 bags of IV saline reached Nilphamari on Monday. He said the situation is still under control.

ATTACK ON KHULNA MAYOR

Charge sheet submitted naming lone outlaw

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Chargesheet of the case for grenade attack on Khulna city Mayor Shaikh Tabeer Rahman filed with Khulna thana under the Explosive Substances Act was submitted to the CMM court yesterday by investigating officer SI Shaiful Alam.

Mashikul Islam Yoy, an alleged cadre of M-L faction of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) has been named as the lone accused in the charge sheet.

Four other accused belonging to the same underground organisation and named in the FIR died last year in 'crossfire' at different times. They are Abdur Rashid alias Tapu, Jashim, Khalil and Raja Chowdhury.

Two FIR-named accused-Sajal and Shohag-have been exempted from the charge as their involvement could not be proved during investigation, sources said.

Khulna city Mayor came under a grenade attack at noon on February 29 last year while he was on way to his residence after attending a seminar held at a club at KD Ghosh Road, organised by Islamic Welfare Centre.

He survived the attack as the grenade did not explode.

The chargesheeted accused, Joy, was arrested in Dhaka in June last year.

He wrote a letter sent by post to OC of Khulna thana threatening to blow up the thana building for killing his associates Jashim and Khalil. The letter was received by the OC in May last year.

According to sources in Khulna district police, PBCP Janajuddha faction decided to include names of Amar Desh Journalists on the hit list for writing against its armed cadres based in Matomdanga area under Khanjahan Ali thana of Khulna city.

The hit-list was disclosed during interrogation of Janajuddha cadre arrested by DB of KMP in connection with the murder of BNP leader Manjir Ahmed last month.

Khulna Bureau office of Dainik Amar Desh made published exclusive stories on PBCP operatives.

Of course, neither Khulna Bureau chief Kazi Motaahar Rahman Babu nor staff correspondent Atiar Parvez has so far received any threat from the outlawed party. When contacted, they said they got the information from police source.

Convict freed on 'bribe'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Muladi police caught a person convicted for life for a double murder but released him allegedly after taking bribe.

Abul Kalam Kala of Syeem Takta village in Mehendiganj upzila of Barisal district was sentenced to life term imprisonment in 2000 in a double murder case.

He was tried in absentia as he fled to Dubai after the murders. Kala came to Bangladesh recently.

Acting on a tip-off, Sub-Inspector Abdul Aziz and ASI Md. Hossain of Muladi police station arrested him from the house of his father-in-law Haider Mia at Kazir Char village early Monday.

But instead of taking him to police station, he was rushed to Muladi Upazila Health Complex and later released.

It has been alleged that police took a bribe of Tk1, 10,000 from the convict.

Sheikh Zillur Rahman, OC of Muladi thana, admitted that Kala was arrested. He was arrested under Section 54 and taken to hospital as he fell sick in custody, he said.

Kala's guardians took him to their custody by giving a bond as police did not know about his life term conviction, the OC claimed.

But the OC failed to clarify why Kala was arrested under S54 and Mehendiganj police were not informed after his arrest.

AUG 17 BOMBING IN KHULNA COURT AREA

Seven JMB leaders to be charge-sheeted Oct 26

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Seven leaders of the outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) will be charge-sheeted on October 26 for exploding bomb in Khulna Judges' Court compound on August 17, according to the Investigating Officer (IO) of the case, sub-inspector (SI) Shaiful Alam of Khulna Police Station.

The charge-sheet will be submitted to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court here against Abdur Rahman, Siddiquil Islam Bangla Bhai, Asaduzzaman alias Arif, Shahidullah alias Lokman, Mahabubur Rahman alias Palash, Mintoo and Mehedi Hasan.

Meanwhile, an unprecedented

security measure has been taken in Khulna judge's court, CMM court and other courts housed in the Collectorate building including Sonadanga Speedy Trial Tribunal following bomb attack on Sylhet Divisional Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge on Tuesday.

No outsider was allowed to enter the court compounds without checking and proper identification. Plainclothes policemen were deployed in all the courts.

Meanwhile, a correspondent from Gopalganj reports: members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Monday arrested a suspected JMB member from the district town.

The arrested is Abu Taleb, 28, son of Mofazzel Sheikh, an inhabitant of

Garfa village in Mollahat upazila, Bagerhat.

According to eye-witnesses, he is an accused in a case of bomb attack on an Awami League (AL) public meeting at Khalilur Rahman Degree College ground in Mollahat, Bagerhat on September 23, 2001. Eight persons were killed and more than 50 persons were injured in the attack.

Taleb was taken on a 5-day remand from yesterday. RAB members arrested him from the technical school area.

Another report says: Zillur Rahman who was suspiciously arrested from Bagerhat in connection with the August 17 bomb blasts in Bagerhat town was taken on five-day remand yesterday.

Another 48 likely to get 'controversial' appointments at RU

RU CORRESPONDENT

The Rajshahi University authorities have completed the process for recruitment of 48 more teachers and officials, allegedly on political considerations.

Their appointment may be given after the Eid-ul-Fitr, sources said.

Eight persons will be appointed to the posts of section officer and 40 to become teachers in 12 departments.

The teachers to be recruited are two for the Mass Communication department, three for Zoology, two for Sociology, four for Political Science, three for Islamic History and Culture, two for Information and Communications Technology and seven for Fine Arts department.

A Syndicate meeting will be held on November 15 to confirm the

appointments, the sources said.

Talking to this correspondent, a pro-Awami League member of the RU Syndicate alleged that most of the appointments will be on political considerations.

Meanwhile, allegations have it that lobbying is going on for appointment of relatives of teachers loyal to Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh.

The fresh appointments are being done while the 'controversial' appointments of 546 people are yet to be regularised.

The controversially appointed people now held demonstrations on the campus several times for regularisation of their appointments. They also laid a siege to the Vice-chancellor's office and announced that they would not allow any fresh

recruitment until their jobs are regularised.

They also formed a committee to press their demand. Its convenor Rafiqul Islam Sadar yesterday told a group of newsmen that they would mount agitation if the authorities go for fresh appointments before confirmation of their jobs.

On the other hand, the Progressive Teachers Association (PTA) at RU has decided to protest 'irregularities in appointments'. It may launch a movement if the university authorities go for more appointments on political considerations, sources in the PTA told this correspondent.

When contacted Registrar Prof Abdus Salam said the fresh appointments are being made as per needs of the departments.

BARISAL MARKET

Court stays but BCC continues demolition

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The High Court has issued a rule on Barisal City Corporation asking it to stop demolition of a market in the city owned by local Awami League leader Aftab Hossain Mridha.

The BCC on Sunday started demolishing the market at --, claiming that it was built on its land.

A High Court Bench comprising Justice Abdul Matin and Justice Md. Rezaul Haque issued the order on Tuesday after Aftab's father Amjad Ali Mridha filed a writ petition (no. 7379/2005), sources here said.

Aftab is now in jail after his conviction in an arms case. His family claimed that the market was built on their parental land and that the BCC leaders ordered its demolition to take political revenge.

However BCC continued demolishing the market yesterday.

When contacted, Manir Uddin Mia, CEO of BCC yesterday said, the HC stay order was yet to be reach the City Corporation.

100 injured in Gopalganj clash

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

At least 100 people were injured as rival groups of villagers clashed at North Vennabari village in Brashi union in Gopalganj Sadar upazila yesterday on allegations of demanding toll from a shopowner.

Twenty-five of the injured were admitted to Gopalganj Sadar Hospital and as many were treated at some clinics in the district town.

Sources there said Titas Ahmed Tusher, brother of former chairman of Brashi UP SM Monir Ahmed Nani allegedly demanded 20,000 toll from a shop owner-- Shahabur Sheikh. But he refused.

Later, Tusher and his associates attacked the shop owner with lethal weapons and looted his shop.

As supporters of incumbent UP chairman Nasimul Gani resisted them, a clash started involving supporters to the former and present UP chairman.



PHOTO: STAR

Enthusiastic children with plants grown by them narrating their experience to visitors at the fair held at Aluddin Auditorium.

Sowing love for nature at an early age

Children display plants they grew at a B'baria fair

SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Bbaria

It was a different day for children. The tiny tots between 4 and 7 enjoyed a fair of plants they grew.

The fair, first of its kind in the district, was organised by SSII Foundation and students of North South School of Primary Graduation. The children were given seeds of different varieties and small polythene bags at school. At home, they grew seedlings in the bags and brought those to Aluddin Auditorium for display on Tuesday.

The fair styled Seedling Presentation Fair-2005 also drew a large number of visitors including parents and officials.

The enthusiasm among the children was remarkable. Their joy and excitement knew no bounds when they explained to visitors how

they grew the seedlings.

Some children were seen narrating their experience in English.

Five year-old Rimi 5, a student class one, her classmate Mushfiqur Rahma, 5, and Eidmin, 6, a student of class two attracted visitors by narrating their skills and displaying their seedlings.

Talking to this correspondent, Rimi's mother Naznin Akter said it was a wonderful experience for her daughter Rimi. She learnt through practical demonstration how plants grow from seeds, Naznin said.

Rana's father Nazmul Haqu said his son Rana was given a hybrid seed of bean. Rana was overwhelmed with excitement when he saw the seed sprouted. He watered it every day and took utmost care when the sprout grew into a small plant.

The visitors included Additional Police Superintendent Md. Jahangir Hussain and some other officials.

Md. Matin Ahmed, founder of SSIT Foundation and North South School of Primary Graduation, said the different type of fair was organised to help children have practical knowledge about environment, seeds and plants from early age. This will make them know about environment and how to take care of it, he said.

Thirty children took part in the fair. They were given the seeds seven day back.

They were also asked to prepare a chart on gradual growth of seedlings. They all submitted their charts and narrated their experience in group discussions at the fair.