

# Heatwave kills 6 babies in Thakurgaon in 2 days

500 people admitted to hospitals in two districts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Dinajpur*

A heat wave now sweeping Dinajpur and Thakurgaon district killed at least six infants in last three days. Over 500 people have been admitted to hospitals, about 100 of them in Dinajpur Sadar Hospital and the rest in Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital.

Most of the infants died from pneumonia. The disease spread as there is excessive heat during daytime, doctors at Sadar hospitals in Dinajpur and Thakurgaon told this correspondent yesterday.

All the deaths have been reported from Thakurgaon, according to sources at the Sadar Hospital. The victims are one year-old Joy, son of Amitab Barman of Harinarayanpur village in Thakurgaon Sadar upazila; days-old Anwar Hossain, son of Bhagdol Haque of Baniapara village in Danadarhat union in sadar upazila; seven-day-old Babu, son of Abdul Bashir of Singramgram village in Doulatpur union; five-day-old Rabu, daughter of Sadekur Islam of Ghuradangi, village in Pirganj; four-day-old Shaju, son of Monwar Hossain of Natun Bashi village in Boda union and two-month old Rukhru, son of Chiranjeet Barman of Mirjupur village in Atwai upazila in Thakurgaon district.

Hospital sources many people including aged ones are coming to the sadar hospital every day after they fall sick due to the heat wave.

Hospital sources claimed that lack of accommodation and oxygen cylinder are affecting their treatment. This correspondent during a visit to Dinajpur Sadar Hospital saw

patients on floors as there was no empty bed.

There were only three oxygen cylinders at Thakurgaon hospital, which is too inadequate to cope the rush of patients, said doctor Md. Shahjahan Newaj at Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital over telephone.

He said at least 250 infants were admitted to the hospital since

Wednesday.

The mercury moved between 34-38 degrees Celsius on Wednesday and Thursday in Dinajpur, sources at the local meteorological department said.

"Though there is excessive heat during day time, the temperature may rise again if there is no heavy shower in a couple of days.

Most people in Dinajpur town now keep indoors during day time due to scorching heat.

Along with the heat wave, erratic power supply and water crisis have increased people's sufferings.

They said the temperature may rise again if there is no heavy shower in a couple of days.

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PHOTO: STAR

Patients affected with heat-related diseases taking treatment on the floor of Dinajpur Sadar Hospital.

Four fishermen missing in Bay 24 rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Four out of 28 fishermen were missing as two fishing trawlers capsized in the Bay, 50-kilometre south of Char Montaz and 100 km off Galachipa upazila town.

Twenty-four fishermen were rescued from sea by another trawler.

The missing fishermen are Abul, 38, Taher, 32, Heju, 30 and Almes, 30, all hailing from different villages of Galachipa.

Fishermen said, two trawlers, FB-Aril and FB- Hasan capsized with 28 fishermen during a sudden storm in the Bay Thursday evening.

Another trawler, FB Nasreen rescued 24 fishermen.

DEMAND FOR GAS IN KUSHTIA

Meeting today to launch agitation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

A meeting of the newly formed Kushtia Gas Line Implementation Committee (GLIC) will be held today at the conference room of Kushtia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) to chalk out an agitation programme for pipeline gas supply to Kushtia.

Mozibar Rahman, chairman of BRB Cables industries, president of KCCI and convenor of GLIC will preside over the meeting, KCCI sources said.

The GLIC is thinking to launch agitation to realise the demand. The committee urged people of all walks of life to join KCCI programmes to realise the demand for gas supply to the district.

## APPOINTMENT OF JAMAAT MAN AS PRINCIPAL Tension mounts in Jaldhaka as rival parties hold rallies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

Tension is mounting in Jaldhaka over appointment of a Jamaat-e-Islami man as principal of Jaldhaka Degree College.

Opposition political parties led by Awami league and Jamaat are now in a face-off situation, the former opposing the appointment and the latter trying to defend itself. Both held rallies to counter each other, which may lead to clashes any time, political observers said.

On Tuesday, the newly formed All Party Students Alliance backed by Awami League and a section of BNP held a rally at the upazila headquarters protesting the appointment of Fazlul Hoq as principal of the college. Its leaders said a tougher agitation will be launched if the Jamaat man is not removed from the post of principal of the college.

The All Party Students Alliance recently brought out a procession in the upazila headquarters demanding removal of the principal.

To counter the agitation, Jamaat held a rally on Thursday, which was addressed by, among others, lawmaker Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

Mizanur Rahman told the rally that the agitation was part of conspiracy and threatened that "all conspirators will be uprooted if Jamaat workers take to streets".

Thursday's public meeting called by the governing body of Jaldhaka Degree College was held at the zero point in the town. The Jamaat lawmaker was the chief guest while Enamul Haque, a Madrasa superintendent and a member of the college governing body was in the chair.

The Jamaat lawmaker claimed that the appointment process of the principal and five other teachers of Jaldhaka Degree College was fair

and done as per law.

He said that at the selection committee meeting, principal of Rangpur Carmichael University College Nurur Nabi Chowdhury was present as National University representative, and principal of Nilphamari Government College Mosarrat Hossain was present as representative of DG (higher education). They found no irregularities in the selection process, he added.

Mizanur Rahman said that the selection committee on the same day (29 April) also appointed Abdul Gaffar, upazila convenor of the Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee and Muradul Islam, cousin of upazila Awami League president Ansarul Islam Mintu, as lecturers.

"They are not our men. We could reject their appointments as we are majority in the governing body but we did not do that as we were impartial", he said.

He alleged that Awami League is trying to create an issue out of nothing to create anarchy in Jaldhaka.

Golam Mostafa, the leader of the pro-Awami League teachers group in Jaldhaka Degree College, told newsmen that the appointment of Abdul Gaffar and Muradul Islam is an eye wash to legalise the appointment of the Jamaat man as principal. "It is merely a trick of the Jamaat lawmaker", he added.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team went to the spot at about 5 am and seized the van containing smuggled goods like saree, drug, electronic goods, heroin, Phensidyl and cosmetics.

A case was filed with Jamuna Bridge Western Police Station.

2 accused in Kalidas Boral murder case join BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Two charged accused in prominent Awami League leader Kalidas Boral murder case have joined BNP in Bagerhat.

The renegades joined the ruling party at a function held at Daluguri Bazar in Chitalmari upazila Tuesday night.

Bagerhat BNP issued a press release in this regard Thursday evening, two days after the function.

The two charged accused are Jewel Shikdar and Bablu Kazi, who are still allegedly linked with an underground party, sources claimed.

They joined BNP along with over 100 men.

The joining function was presided over by Barobaria union BNP president Mozaffar Shikder where joint secretary of Bagerhat district BNP Wahiduzzaman Dipu was present as chief guest.

This incident has created a sharp reaction among supporters of BNP in Chitalmari. Over 500 BNP supporters brought out a procession at Chitalmari Bazar Thursday night in protest against joining of two alleged outlaws in BNP at a time when Kalidas Boral murder case is being tried.

When asked, president of Bagerhat district BNJP NAH Selim MP expressed his ignorance about joining of the outlaws in his party. "We want death penalty to killers of Kalidas Boral", Selim said.

## BOMB RECOVERY All accused acquitted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

A special tribunal here acquitted all the 11 accused including a Union Parishad (UP) chairman of their charges in a time bomb recovery case.

According to prosecution, a time bomb was recovered from the house of late Yunus Ali Howlader, former secretary of Dumki upazila BNP on December 27, 2003.

Later, he filed a case with the local police station complaining that somebody might have tried to kill him by exploding the bomb.

Police submitted a charge-sheet accusing 11 persons including UP chairman Hasan Mahmud Dural on July 30, 2004.

Examining all the records and witnesses, judge Sajedur Rahman delivered the judgment on Wednesday.

## Tk 50 lakh smuggled goods seized from covered van

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sirajganj*

Indian smuggled goods worth about Tk 50 lakh were recovered from a covered van on the Dhaka-Bogra highway in Sodababda area.

Three persons were also arrested for their alleged involvement in smuggling Wednesday morning.

The arrestees are Yasin Ali, 40, son of Belayet Hossain of Betgari village, Fazlur Rahman, 26, son of late Korban Ali of Gokul village and Farukh, 35, son of late Mozamme Hossain of Kahalu village, all hailing from Bogra district.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team went to the spot at about 5 am and seized the van containing smuggled goods like saree, drug, electronic goods, heroin, Phensidyl and cosmetics.

A case was filed with Jamuna Bridge Western Police Station.

# Cry for water, power can't be suppressed

AL leader Noor tells Mymensingh rally

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Central Awami League (AL) leader Asaduzzaman Noor yesterday said the BNP-led four party alliance government has no right to stay in power as it has failed to resolve any of people's problems and ensure their basic needs.

The sooner the government quits the better it will be for the people, he said while addressing a public meeting at Pudunbari High School ground in Muktagacha yesterday. Organised by Munkon union AL, the rally was addressed by, among others, AL leaders Mahbubul Haque Shakil, advocate Badar Ahmed, Ahsan Md Azad, Billal Hossain Sarker, Rasheda Mohiuddin and Abdus Sabur Sarker. Local AL leader Rafiqul Islam Bahadur was in the chair.

Noor said people are now agitating for power and water, two prime basic needs, while prices of other essentials have gone beyond their reach.

In many urban areas, residents are preparing to launch agitation like in Kansat and Demra in Dhaka city. Instead of looking in their grievances, he said.

ances, the government is arresting opposition party men to foil their agitation. This is unfortunate. The government will not be able to control agitation for water and power by repression, he said.

Failing in all sectors, the BNP-Jamaat government has hatched a conspiracy to cling to power by preparing a fake voter list and rigging the next parliamentary election. People have already rejected the fake voter list and will not allow holding of a farcical election, the actor turned politician said.

The government has prepared the fake voter list as it knows it will not return to power if a fair election is held with a correct voter list, Noor said.

The central AL publicity secretary reiterated his party's claim that there will not be any election in the country without reforms to the caretaker system and the Election Commission.

But the government is unwilling to go for the proposed reforms, which is apparent from its dilly-dally tactics, he alleged.

Noor also came down heavily on the government for sheltering Islamist militants, who are out to

create a chaotic situation in the country to fish in troubled waters, he alleged.

"Mere nabbing of militants will not free the country from terrorism. Their protectors in the government have to be nabbed and tried", he said.

Noor said Islamic militiamen are shelter by a partner in the ruling coalition. Unless their godfathers are identified as arrested bomb blasts will not stop.

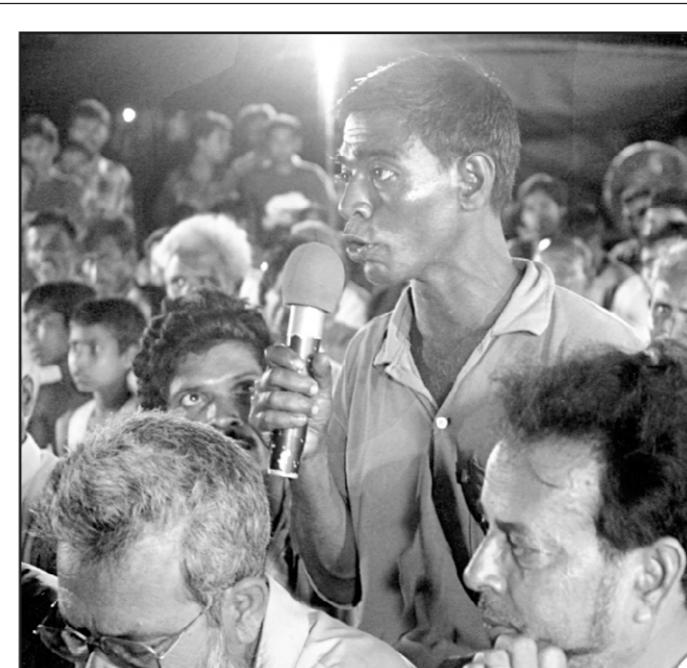
He also alleged that ruling party men including some ministers have amassed huge resources illegally.

They should declare their assets to allow holding of an election to ensure a poll free from use of money and muscle power.

He said prices of essentials are being increased by organised syndicates under the shelter of ruling party men but the government is not taking any action.

He urged the people to unite and intensify the on-going agitation to dislodge the failed government.

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A farmer asking a question during a dialogue on Agriculture Budget, Farmers' Budget, held in Manikganj on Wednesday. It was organised by Channel I.

## STAR NATIONAL DESK

It was a unique experience for farmers at remote Garpara village in Manikganj. They took part in a dialogue on 'Agriculture Budget, Farmers', Farmers' Budget, organised by Channel I, a private TV channel.

Similar programmes will be held in other parts of the country under the TV channel's Rhydoye Mati-o-Manush programme.

Shaikh Siraj of Channel I conducted the Manikganj programme, held on Wednesday. Economist Hossain Zillur Rahman was also present. It was attended by over 500 farmers.

Manikganj additional deputy commissioner (General) (ADC) Mustafizur Rahman, Agriculture Extension Department deputy

director (DD) Abul Khair, upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Belal Hossain, agricultural officer (AO) Mohammad Ali, Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) Irrigation Department assistant engineer (AE) Rafiqul Islam, Seed Marketing Department assistant director (AD) Goutam Kumar Kundu, Garpara UP chairman Alema Begum, Fertiliser Dealer Association president Jamilur Rashid Khan and Deep Tubewell Association president Abul Kashem took part.

The two-hour programme was hampered due to foul weather. Almost all the farmers present at the programme candidly confessed that they had no clear cut idea about budget.

They mentioned various problems they are facing in cultivation of

crops. It was revealed in the discussion that the annual fund earmarked for agriculture in the budget does not reach the farmers. Fertiliser dealers, deep tube-well owners and seed dealers are the direct beneficiaries of government subsidy.

BADC can fulfil only five per cent annual requirement of seeds while its seed distribution activities are limited only at the upazila level. There is no infrastructure for seed distribution at union and village levels.

Farmers face various problems in receiving agricultural loan. Farmers expressed similar opinion in organising themselves in one platform so that the fruits of official subsidy can reach them.