

# 3000 children born with thalassaemia a year

Voluntary blood donation not up to mark

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Patients suffering from thalassaemia, haemophilia, anaemia or leukaemia, who need regular blood supply from outside, are facing tremendous problems in getting it as the rate of voluntary blood donations is not up to the mark.

According to the reports supplied by the Department of Paediatric Haematology and Oncology of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), every year some 2000 to 3000 children are born with thalassaemia that needs regular supply of blood from outside sources.

"If a patient needs two bags of blood every month, then 1.20 lakh bags of blood will be needed for all thalassaemia patients in the country. It means 2000 bags of blood are required in every district hospitals in every month," said the experts.

But the fact is that the district hospitals outside Dhaka can collect very few units of blood voluntarily as the campaign is insignificant and people are less motivated to donate blood voluntarily.

Experts at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College and

Hospital in Bogra said their demand for blood every month is 1200 bags, and it is managed either from replacement donors or from Sandhani.

Sandhani, the medical college-based organisation, is covering nine districts through its 18 units, and can supply only 40000 to 45000 units of blood a year, said organisation President Rashid Alam.

According to World Health Organisation, Bangladesh needs every year 2.5 lakh units of blood and blood components. Though it is supposed to be collected from voluntary blood donors, still 10.53 percent of it is collected from professional blood donors.

A screening report of Safe Blood Transfusion Programme shows that only 29.13 percent blood comes from voluntary blood donors while 60.34 percent is collected from replacement donors.

"It is unfortunate that a huge quantity of blood is still collected in our country from professional blood sellers," said Dr Syeda Masooma Rahman of Safe Blood Transfusion Programme of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH).

"If people are not motivated to donate blood, it tends to encourage the professional blood donors who sometimes even give blood twice a month that contain insignificant haemoglobin and increases the risk of spreading HIV/AIDS virus, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Syphilis," said Dr Shahana Zafor, officer-in-charge of Dhaka Blood Centre at Bangladesh Red Crescent Society.

With its five branches in Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Jessore and Dinajpur, the society collected and distributed 45000 units of blood in 2007 which is very insignificant compared to total requirement of blood in the country every year, said Dr Shahana.

"Everyday on an average 25 people are coming to Dhaka Branch of Red Crescent Society to seek blood for emergency need of the patients. But we can supply blood to only 15 people which means we cannot meet the requisition of 40 percent people," she added.

Supply of blood from outside is also needed for operative cases and people injured in road accidents.

But as more people are not coming forward to donate blood

voluntarily, a person who needs emergency blood supply has to face serious problem in getting safe blood.

So people will have to come forward to donate blood voluntarily, and a healthy person can donate blood in every four months. According to experts, donating blood in one hand saves lives of many and on the other hand it is good for the donor as by donating blood, the bone marrow gets stimulus to produce new blood cell.

"It is good to hear that the number of professional blood sellers has been reduced from 70 percent to 20 percent as motivation for voluntary blood donation has been strengthened. But the paid blood donors or blood sellers are still continuing to supply blood in the country, especially outside Dhaka," said Dr Moniruzzaman.

Dr Moniruzzaman, also coordinator of Research and Motivation of Voluntary Blood Donation Programme at Quantum Foundation, said a bag of blood can give direct support to four patients.

"However, the number of voluntary blood donors is not increasing as was expected due to lack of proper motivation," he added.



President Iajuddin Ahmed takes salute (right) while members of the Armed Forces march (left) during the Independence Day Parade on the National Parade Ground in the city yesterday.



## Informatics Olympiad begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Informatics Olympiad 2008 will begin at five divisional headquarters - Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and Sylhet - simultaneously tomorrow, says a press release.

Bangladesh Informatics Olympiad Committee (BIOC) and Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) are jointly organising the Informatics Olympiad 2008, the qualifying contest for the International Olympiad in Informatics from Bangladesh.

The Daily Star is the media partner of the event sponsored by Nestle Bangladesh Ltd.

The contest consists of two-day computer programming -- solving problems of an algorithmic nature. Those who are under 20 years and not students of university at the time of qualification are eligible for the contest.

The contestants have to show basic skills in problem analysis, design of the algorithm needed, data structure, as well as programming and testing of their solutions.

Qualified students from divisional contests will participate in the national contest to be held at Notre Dame College in Dhaka on April 11.

No more than top four programmers from the winners of the national contest will be selected after a rigorous training session for the International Olympiad in Informatics, scheduled to be held from August 16 to 22 in Alexandria, Egypt.

Winners of the International Olympiad are recognised as the best young computer scientists of the world. Eligible students of school and colleges can register with the organisers in divisional venues to participate in the contest.

The divisional venues are Khulna University of Engineering and Technology, Rajshahi University, Premier University in Chittagong, Metropolitan University in Sylhet and Notre Dame College in Dhaka.

For further information, please visit the website: <http://teacher.buet.ac.bd/mhkabir/bioc/> or contact Dr Md Humayun Kabir, member secretary, BIOC, and associate professor, computer science and engineering department, Buet. Email: [mhkabir@gmail.com](mailto:mhkabir@gmail.com).

## Unite to bring changes to politics Says Dr Kamal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain on Tuesday called on all to unite to bring changes to political culture of the country so that honest and competent candidates can be elected in the elections.

Changes in politics are a must so that people can resist those candidates who want to win the elections using money and muscle power, he said at a seminar organised by Bangladesh Nagorik Samaj.

Awami League presidium member Suranjit Sengupta, JSD President Hasanul Haque Inu and Acting Office Secretary of BNP Ruhul Kabir Rizvi also took part in the seminar held at the National Press Club in the city, with Nagorik Samaj President Khabir Uddin Khan in the chair.

ABM Osman Gani presented the keynote paper at the seminar.

Kamal Hossain, also an eminent jurist, said those who were involved in criminalisation of politics have put the whole generation in the path of destruction.

The country needs a competent leadership, he said, adding that the previous leadership was responsible for corruption, terrorism, militancy, politicisation of every institutions and 'election nomination trade'.

AL leader Suranjit Sengupta called on the government to start dialogue with the political parties soon to resolve the present crises.

"The government should sit with the political parties immediately and mention clearly when the election will be held and when the emergency will be lifted," he said.

The government has brought misery to the people and that only the dialogue and understanding can help resolve the crises, he added.

BNP leader Rahul Kabir Rizvi said people would not accept any extra-constitutional measures as they want to see the continuity of democratic process in the country.

JSD leader Hasanul Haque Inu said the caretaker government and the Election Commission have created confusion in the minds of the people, but it is clear that the countrymen will not accept any stage-managed election.

"Understanding is a must for holding a credible election," he said.

He also suggested forming a national government to overcome the current crises and to keep the corrupt people outside politics.



Renowned artists of the country paint pictures on War of Liberation at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. The event was organised on the occasion of the Independence Day.

## INDEPENDENCE DAY OBSERVED

# Pledge to build prosperous Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different political, social and cultural organisations yesterday observed the Independence Day in befitting manner and amid various programmes.

Workers Party of Bangladesh (WPB) placed wreaths at the National Mausoleum in the morning and also stood silent for a minute.

In a statement, WPB leaders said though 37 years have already passed the trial of war criminals and anti liberation forces is yet to be done.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) leaders paid tribute to memories of the martyrs by placing wreaths at the National Mausoleum.

Jahangirnagar University (JU) also observed the day in befitting manner.

JU Vice Chancellor, deans of different faculties, proctor, teachers, students, officers and employees placed wreaths at the National Mausoleum.

Nazrul Institute launched a three-day programme to observe the day.

They paid homage to the martyrs at the National Mausoleum and organised a discussion yesterday.

Prof Rafiqul Islam, chairman of the Nazrul Institute Trustee Board, Prof Mustafa Nurul Islam and Mohammad Abul Kashem, executive director of the institute, spoke at the discussion held at the institute premises.

The discussants underscored the need to work concertedly to build a prosperous country and to translate the ideals and dreams of the martyred freedom fighters.

Gulshan Joggers Society organised a discussion at Gulshan Lake Park yesterday.

Members of the society, belonging to various professions, spoke at the discussion highlighting the contribution of the war heroes to the nation.

They also demanded immediate trial of the identified war criminals, said a press release.

Left Democratic Front, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Bangladesh Rehabilitation and Assistance Centre for Addicts, Bangladesh Gono-Azadi League, Bangladesh Jubo Moitree and Gazi Bhaban Shopping Centre Dokan Malik Kallyan Samity also observed the day through different programmes.

## Court allows ACC to interrogate Altaf at jail gate

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court on Tuesday allowed the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to interrogate detained former home minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury at the jail gate in connection with a case filed against him for concealing information and amassing wealth through illegal means.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Golam Rabbani passed the order after ACC Assistant Director Moniruzzaman Khan, who is the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted a petition in this regard.

The case was filed on December 18 last year against Altaf with Ramna Police Station for concealing information or giving false information about moveable assets worth Tk 59 lakh and amassing wealth of Tk 2.56 crore beyond known sources of income.

In the first information report (FIR), it was mentioned that Altaf kept the wealth in his name and the names of his wife Suraiya Akter and daughter Jubaida Akter.

It also said Altaf in his wealth statement mentioned low prices of assets he purchased in his and his wife's names.

The FIR said Altaf gave false information about loans and did not mention anything about the five firearms worth Tk 2 lakh, which he purchased between 1974 and 2002.

He also concealed information about three savings accounts with the Standard Chartered Bank.

Altaf submitted his wealth statement to the ACC on July 25 saying that he has assets worth Tk 3.25 crore.

He was arrested on May 28 last year for his alleged involvement in corruption.



Children take part in a drawing competition with the theme of renewable energy, organised by the Energy Research Centre of Dhaka University.

## 1000 kg Jatka seized in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) seized 1000 kg of Jatka fish from Karwan Bazar wholesale market in the city on Tuesday.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Rab-2 raided the market at around 5:30am and seized the fish. Later, the fish were sold at Tk 52,500 at an auction in presence of the district fisheries officer, Dhaka, the deputy commissioner and a magistrate. The money will go to the government exchequer, said Rab sources.

However, none was arrested in this connection as the fish traders concerned escaped sensing the presence of the elite force.

## Call to release Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different organisations yesterday demanded unconditional release of former prime minister and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina, now in prison on charge of corruption.

Peshajibi Shamonnay Parishad, a body of professionals, and Buet unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League in separate programmes made the demand.

Doctors, engineers and agriculturists, under the banner of Shamonnay Parishad, formed a human chain in front of the Square Hospital.

Chhatra League unit at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) on the other hand, also formed a human chain at the university campus in similar demand.

Chhatra League placed a six-point charter of demands in their programme including unconditional release of Sheikh Hasina, formation of a special tribunal to try the war criminals, control over price hike of essentials commodities, immediate withdrawal of state of emergency, declaration of schedule for national elections and scrapping the idea of forming truth commission.

## Fire breaks out in CMC dorm

UNB, Cg

A fire broke out in a room of a girl students' dormitory of Chittagong Medical College early Wednesday, damaging furniture and books of the inmates.

Hall authority said the fire originated from an electric short circuit at room no. 202 of Kanta Chhatra Nibas at about 12:45am.

On information, two units of fire fighters rushed in and put out the fire.

None was injured in the fire incident.