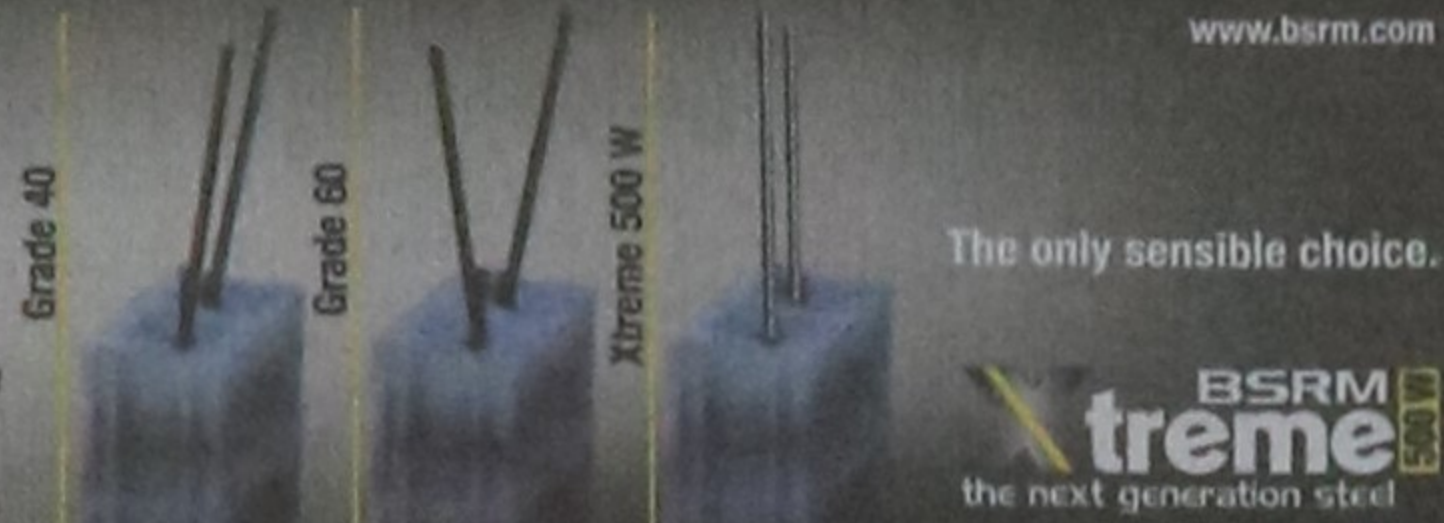


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Toxic drugs slip thru' monitoring

Problem-ridden Drug Administration fails to maintain quality of raw materials, medicines of some companies

ALPHA ARZU

The Drug Administration (DA), the country's sole drug regulatory body, fails to monitor the domestic drug manufacturing companies due to lack of sufficient laboratory equipment and facilities and manpower shortage, posing serious threat to public health.

Sources said though the drug superintendents are supposed to visit the allopathic, ayurvedic and homeopathic medicine producing factories and sales stores and examine the brands, local or imported, as part of their monitoring job, they hardly visit the places on the excuse of manpower shortage and lack of other logistic supports.

As the DA officials are not visiting the factories, the company owners are producing drugs with low quality raw materials and sometimes they are even mixing harmful chemicals like diethylene glycol that causes acute renal failure and death when ingested, said Prof Mohammad Hanif, of nephrology department of Dhaka Shishu Hospital.

He suggested that the government should restrict import and open market sale of such chemicals that are harmful for public health.

Owners and executives of the factories and

pharmacies frequently bribe drug administration officials for early clearance of files on permission for new products and import of raw materials, said drug sellers and company insiders.

"For inspection of our company, the DA officials ask us to send car for them and after the visit, we have to give them a handsome amount in bribe for a good certificate," said an executive officer of a company.

A high official of the DA recently told The Daily Star, "As we have no vehicle to visit the companies, we use the company vehicle to visit their factory."

The official said that the drug superintendents get only Tk 700 each month as travel and daily allowances, which should be increased.

Drug manufacturing company Rid Pharmaceutical produced spurious drugs due to lack of monitoring by the DA officials. The spurious drugs claimed lives of at least 28 children in two months in the areas of Comilla, Narsingdi, Habiganj, Barisal and Chittagong.

"The DA or the government does not mete out exemplary punishment to the offenders that produce spurious drugs. And dishonest businessmen are taking the opportunity of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



Hawke's, parked cars and shoppers crowd streets in front of malls in the capital yesterday as time for Eid shopping runs out. The photo was taken near Gausia Market. Story on page 2.

PHOTO: STAR

Khaleda returns home

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday returned home after performing umrah in Saudi Arabia.

Party Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain along with leaders, activists and supporters of Bangladesh Nationalist Party and its associate bodies received the party chief at Zia International Airport and presented her bouquets.

On her arrival at airport, Khaleda told reporters that she used to go to Saudi Arabia to observe umrah every year ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr, but was

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Surge in road crashes

20 killed, 79 injured in Dhaka, dists

STAR REPORT

As many as 20 people were killed and 79 others injured in road accidents in different districts and the capital Dhaka on Friday and yesterday.

A Chapainawabganj-bound bus from Rajshahi collided head-on with a Godagari-bound tempo from Chapainawabganj at about 2:30pm yesterday. The incident left four tempo passengers dead on spot and 40 others injured.

Of the injured, one succumbed to injuries at Chapainawabganj General Hospital.

Of the deceased, three could be identified--Zohurul Islam, 40, headmaster of a local primary school, Bidyut Kumar Pal, 28, of Basudevpur in Godagari upazila under Rajshahi and Dilip Kumar Saha, 28, of Chabasudevpur under sadar upazila in Chapainawabganj district.

The bus fell into a ditch after the collision

while the tempo was badly wrecked.

Of the injured, Khokon, 20, Milon, 25, Alim, 18, with five others were sent to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital. They were reportedly in critical condition. Among them, Kokhon and Milon died yesterday night. Other injured were rushed to Chapainawabganj Sadar Hospital.

A total of five people perished, and 14 others were injured in a head-on collision between two buses at Biswanath crossing in Bera upazila in Pabna about 12:30pm yesterday.

The deceased are Abdus Salam, 27, Shakil, 29, Majnu Mia, 42, Hossain Ali, 38, and an unidentified woman.

The injured were admitted to Pabna General Hospital, reports our Pabna correspondent.

In the capital Dhaka, three people were killed and four others sustained injuries in separate road accidents.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Help make Bangladesh mid-income country

Dipu Moni urges WB UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni Friday sought cooperation from World Bank to help make Bangladesh a middle-income country by 2021.

She sought the cooperation when Isabel Guerrero, WB vice-president for South Asia region, met her in Washington, according to a message received here yesterday.

During the meeting, Dipu Moni and Guerrero discussed issues pertaining to connectivity particularly the rail and railway, energy sector cooperation, cooperation in water sector, development of infrastructure, trade involving the South Asian countries and in that context investment by the WB.

The foreign minister also highlighted the importance of capacity building especially in the area of data information.

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DEC 29 POLLS 'IRREGULARITIES' BNP, Jamaat move to publish 'white papers' soon

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RASHIDUL HASAN

The main position BNP and its key ally Jamaat-e-Islami have initiated publishing "white papers" as proof of rigging in the December 29 parliamentary election.

Policymakers in both the parties said they have formed teams to collect information and documents for preparing the "white papers". They claimed the teams have already gathered documents that substantiate their claim of a rigged election.

"A team has already recorded testimonies of 12 government officials who were engaged in printing and distribution of ballot papers," BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury told The Daily Star last week.

On the basis of the testimonies, they found out that the turnout in the last election was shown 87 percent through a mechanism of election engineering, he said.

He said his party would make the report public on completion of investigation. "The report will reveal how the election was rigged," said Salauddin, also former parliamentary affairs adviser to ex-premier Khaleda Zia.

Following its debacle in the last parliamentary polls, BNP formed a nine-member team with party leaders, former bureaucrats, lawyers and IT specialists. Many others have also been assisting the team, BNP sources said.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia held several meetings with them and asked them to get the work done perfectly by collecting more information and documents, said a source close to the BNP chief.

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Sohri, Iftar timings			
Ramadan	Sept	Sohri	Iftar
29	20		7-00
30	21	5-27	6-59

Prayer Timing		
September 20		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-27	5-37
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	5-30	5-45
Maghrib	7-00	7-10
Esha	8-30	9-00

Source: Islamic Foundation

OnlinePoll

Do you think Sheikh Hasina will be able to take action against her party MPs if they are found patronising tender manipulation and extortion?

☐ Yes (15.5%)
☐ No (83.9%)
☐ No Comments (0.6%)

Total votes: 1211

TODAY'S POLL

In view of over 4,000 deaths in a year in highway accidents, do you think the government should give it top priority to enforce strict rules to check the accidents?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net



PHOTO: STAR

Forest officials at Khagrachhari seize planks of teak, which were being smuggled out of the hill district by a bus yesterday.

7 dishonest sugar traders identified

Commerce minister vows to take action

A CORRESPONDENT, Gopalganj

The government has identified seven dishonest sugar traders and will take legal action against them.

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan said this while talking to reporters after offering special prayers with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the mazar of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at Tungipara in Gopalganj yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

YEMEN UNREST

Army, rebels fight despite 'truce'

AFP, Sanaa

Fighting continued in north Yemen yesterday despite the government saying it was suspending a five-week-long operation against Shia rebels to mark the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.

"Military operations are ongoing, and the rebels continue to target government positions," a military source on the ground told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The fighting centred on Harf Sufyan in Amran province and the Malaheez area in Saada province, the Zaidi rebels' stronghold, the source added.

Earlier the government said a suspension of fighting in the mountainous north would become a permanent ceasefire if the rebels abided by certain conditions. A rebel spokesman said they would "examine" the conditions.

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Timber seized from bus in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Khagrachhari forest officials yesterday recovered 112 pieces of stolen teak planks from a bus at its counter in the sadar Bazar area. They also seized the bus of Hill King Transport, which was to carry the consignment to Dhaka.

Sources at the divisional forest office said, acting on a tip off, a team of forest officials led by Ranger SM Ali Asgar raided the Hill King bus counter and found the bus loaded with illegal planks of teak. The bus was about to leave the hill

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