

BLOOD FROM DRUG ADDICTS

Blood bank shut down, owner fined, partner sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court yesterday shut down a blood bank penalising its owner Tk 60,000 and sending his partner to jail on charge of collecting blood from drug addicts in the city.

Donor Blood and Pathology Centre, located on Nazimuddin Road at Chankharpul near Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH), had been carrying out the illegal business for several months.

During the drive conducted by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-4) and led by Magistrate Anwar Pasha, 70 bags of blood were seized and the owner of blood bank AR Motaleb was sent to jail where he will have to serve one year while his partner Yunus escaped imprisonment paying a penalty of Tk 60 thousand.

Magistrate Pasha said the blood bank used to collect blood at Tk 150 to 250 per bag mainly from drug addicts via brokers and sell at Tk 600 to 2,000 to different hospitals and clinics including the DMCH.

"During the drive we found the staffs of the blood bank collecting blood from some drug addicts," he told The Daily Star.

He said though the blood bank had registration but it was not complying with the conditions for conducting the blood bank.

Rab sources said the three-room blood bank on the first floor of a four-storey building had no testing machine and other necessary equipment for preservation of blood.

An official of the health directorate accompanied the Rab team during the drive, they added.



A mobile court raids a blood bank in the city's Chankharpul area yesterday. Later, the court shuts down the blood bank on charges of taking blood from drug addicts.

PHOTO: STAR

Take long-term nat'l plan to face climate change: UNDP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has suggested incorporating measures in the long-term national planning and budgeting to address climate change, looking at the human impacts on the most vulnerable.

"It is extremely important that both the second poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) and sixth five-year plan, currently under formulation, contain clear provisions to address climate change," said acting Country Director of UNDP Robert Juhkam yesterday.

Integrating these measures into these two framework documents is fundamental for sustainable development with clear linkages to operational provisions such as annual development programme (ADP) and annual budget, he added.

Juhkam was addressing the inaugural ceremony of a two-day workshop for economic policy makers and researchers on economic approaches to climate change and poverty at Radius Centre in the city.

Climate change experts and economists from Bangladesh, India, Bangkok,

Australia and donor agencies are attending the programme jointly organised by UNDP, UN Environment Programme, South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics and Bangladesh government.

"While many countries in the region are now seeing the impacts of a changing climate, there remains an overly perception-based understanding on the economic cost," Juhkam said.

More and better knowledge is needed for better planning for adaptation strategy if the countries like Bangladesh are to manage climate change, he noted.

The UNDP official said, "Most importantly, however, these economic approaches must look at the human impacts, not just gains through additional GDP per capita."

UNDP Assistant Country Director M Aminul Islam said the government is mobilising funds from internal and external sources, but there is a lack of exact analysis and clear-cut planning to its best use to address climate change impacts.

Briefing media on the sidelines of the workshop, he said less investment in time can have better gains, but that needs scientific analysis. "If our actions are perception-based, results may be misleading."

Dr Golam Sarwar of Bangladesh Planning Commission in a presentation said climate change impacts include temperature rise, erratic rainfall, salinity intrusion, rise of floods, cyclones, storm surges and draught, which seriously will affect the agriculture and livelihoods, especially of the poor.

Climate change could affect 70 million people of Bangladesh and adversely affect attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by damaging crops, livestock, fisheries, housing, water supply, sanitation, health, education, transport and other infrastructures, he noted.

Criticising the government's lack of specific planning on utilisation of money to address climate change, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies Executive Director Dr Atiq Rahman said money should be spent very cautiously.

Stating that it is basically the poor who would be the victims in the climate regime, he said, "We all have to understand the phenomena and design our programmes accordingly."

Addressing the rally the speakers demanded immediate arrest and trial of the attackers.

Meanwhile truck workers union held a rally at Mondalpara Bridge and brought out a procession led by top criminal Hajji Ripon.

Though the truck workers kept suspended loading and unloading of goods in the morning, they started the work from noon.

ATTACK ON N'GANJ MAYOR Staffs begin indefinite work stoppage

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Officials and employees of Narayanganj municipality began work stoppage for indefinite period yesterday to protest the attack on mayor, councilors and employees of the municipality by a group of miscreants on Monday.

They also started a sit-in programme inside the municipality office.

About 500 employees who took part in the sit-in programme also held a rally.

Addressing the rally the speakers demanded immediate arrest and trial of the attackers.

Meanwhile truck workers union held a rally at Mondalpara Bridge and brought out a procession led by top criminal Hajji Ripon.

Though the truck workers kept suspended loading and unloading of goods in the morning, they started the work from noon.

Municipal Mayor Dr Selina Hayat Ivy has filed a general diary, while a municipal employee Abul Hossain and truck workers union leader Anwar Hossain have filed two separate cases with Sadar Model Police Station.

Additional armed police and Rab have been deployed at Mondalpara in the town.

Mayor Ivy said a quarter has been trying for long to set up an illegal truck stand at Nitaganj.

She said she has received a letter containing threat to kill her and she is feeling insecure.

The mayor said Monday's incident was a sequel to that ill attempt.

She said she is apprehending a big sabotage centring the truck stand issue.

GRAFT CASE HC suspends conviction of Mir Nasir

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday suspended the conviction of former state minister for civil aviation and tourism and BNP leader Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin in a corruption case filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC).

On July 4, 2007, a special anti-graft court in Dhaka convicted and sentenced Mir Nasir to 13 years in jail for acquiring wealth illegally and concealing information about it from the ACC.

The HC bench of Justice Syed Muhammad Dastagir Husain and Justice Md Rais Uddin passed the order upon appeal by the BNP leader against his conviction.

The suspension of the conviction will continue until disposal of the appeal, according to the order.

The HC earlier granted him bail in the case.

ACC filed the case against Mir Nasir on charge of illegally accumulating huge wealth and concealing information of wealth worth Tk 6,72,68,000 in the report he had submitted to the commission.

Advocate TH Khan appeared for Mir Nasir while Deputy Attorney General AKM Zahid Sarwar Kajal stood for the government.

FAO rep calls on FM

METRO DESK

FAO Representative in Bangladesh Ad Spijkers called on Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at Foreign Ministry office yesterday, says a press release.

During the meeting they discussed the forthcoming Food Security Summit in Rome and achieving MDGs. Dipu Moni told Spijkers that Bangladesh underscored the highest importance to the forthcoming summit.

Spijkers told the foreign minister that the proposed World Summit on Food Security in November would facilitate obtaining global support for the development of the agriculture and attainment of food self-sufficiency.

The foreign minister mentioned the government of Bangladesh's heightened emphasis on food security and also highlighted the commitment of the government to restore Bangladesh's food self-sufficiency as the highest national priority.

She requested the FAO representative to extend assistance for adaptation, environmental protection due to climate change.

1.5cr persons with disabilities in Bangladesh: Survey

Two hostels for them soon, says secretary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The secretary said the persons with disabilities face many barriers in society. With a little boost, they too can play a significant role in every sphere.

According to a survey conducted by the World Health Organisation in 2000, 10 percent of the total population are physically challenged or mentally handicapped in Bangladesh. The total number is around 1.5 crore.

One hostel would be for men while the other for women with disabilities.

Social Welfare Secretary Quomaran Nessa Khanam yesterday said this at the opening ceremony of a three-day workshop organised by Sightsavers International in the city.

However, only 4 percent PWDs in the country receive formal education while the average ratio of student enrolment in the country is 97 percent.

Speakers at the programme said because of the dearth of specialised books, trained teachers and PWD-friendly educational atmosphere, they cannot receive formal education.

The workshop titled 'An exploration of community-based rehabilitation (CBR) in the light of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)' was held at a convention centre.

Rather than sending them only to specialised schools, access to education in the existing general schools should be made easier by appointing one teacher exclusively for PWDs, he added.

On the other hand, Jowherul Islam Mamun, secretary general of National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled, stressed the need to increase recreational facilities for PWDs.

He said Bangladeshi athletes with disabilities won medals in Special Olympics yet there are no government sports facilities for them.

Diane Mulligan, technical adviser of Sightsavers Social Inclusion and Disability, said the UN convention clearly said equal opportunity for participation of PWDs in all spheres of life.

"UNCRPD is only a piece of paper unless it is translated into our lives," he mentioned.

Sightsavers Country Director Wahidul Islam and Programme Manager Rifat Khan also spoke.



Shahjahan Siraj released

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former BNP minister Shahjahan Siraj was released from jail on bail yesterday.

A Dhaka court sent him to jail on June 30 after he surrendered before it in connection with a tax evasion case.

Earlier, two separate trial courts convicted and sentenced him to 21 years in jail in two corruption cases.

Barrister Sarwat Siraj, a lawyer and also daughter of Shahjahan Siraj, told The Daily Star that the jail authorities released her father from jail at around 5:00pm as per the Supreme Court (SC) orders.

The SC on October 12 upheld the High Court (HC) orders that granted him bail in four cases filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC).

Upon separate petitions filed by Shahjahan Siraj, the HC earlier granted bail to him in all the cases.

Rescue my son from kidnappers Elderly woman's appeal to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An elderly woman yesterday made an appeal to the government to rescue her son from the kidnappers or take the responsibilities of the victim's four children as their mother is also dead.

Taherun Nesa, 65, a resident of Nikunja in Khilkhet area, made the appeal at a press conference at the Crime Reporters' Association of Bangladesh (CRAB) in the city.

"I am passing very hard days with my four grand children as they have no parents to look after them. The children's father Asaduzzaman was kidnapped after he left his house for office at Baridhara on August 26 last while their mother also died in March last leaving them shelterless," said Taherun.

Ayesha said the anonymous caller did not give them the address of the house at Ashulia despite repeated request.

Taherun said she along with two grand daughters has been residing at the house of her daughter in Nikunja while two grand sons, who are primary school students, reside with her another son at Nababganj.

She said they filed a general diary and then a case with Gulshan Police Station in this connection but police could not make any headway although they gave police the cell phone number.

She said the orphan children need shelter and financial help to continue their study but at this stage of her life she is quite unable to look after them.

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Advocate TH Khan appeared for Mir Nasir while Deputy Attorney General AKM Zahid Sarwar Kajal stood for the government.



Sadia Begum, a housewife of 13/14 Kabi Jasim Uddin Road at Kamalapur in the city, holds a newborn baby in her lap in a maternal gesture yesterday. The baby was abandoned on the staircase of her residence around 7:00pm. She wants a good Samaritan to look after the child.