

Unending war of an FF

Aku risked his life for freedom in '71 now fights to survive with gangrene in bullet-hit back



JASIM MAJUMDER,
Khagrachhari

Freedom fighter Aku Mia, who risked his life for freedom of the country in 1971, is now fighting to survive with his gangrene-affected back.

The war hero, now struggling to maintain his six-member family by begging, cannot even think of treatment at his own cost.

During a fight with Pakistan army in Noakhali, the valiant freedom fighter received a few bullets in his body but continued to take part in the war until the final victory.

Carrying a bullet inside his body for the last 38 years, the valiant war hero now suffers from gangrene in his back from where fluids ooze out.

"I was 22 years old when I joined the Liberation War after hearing the announcement of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," he told The Daily Star correspondent recently.

"When Independence

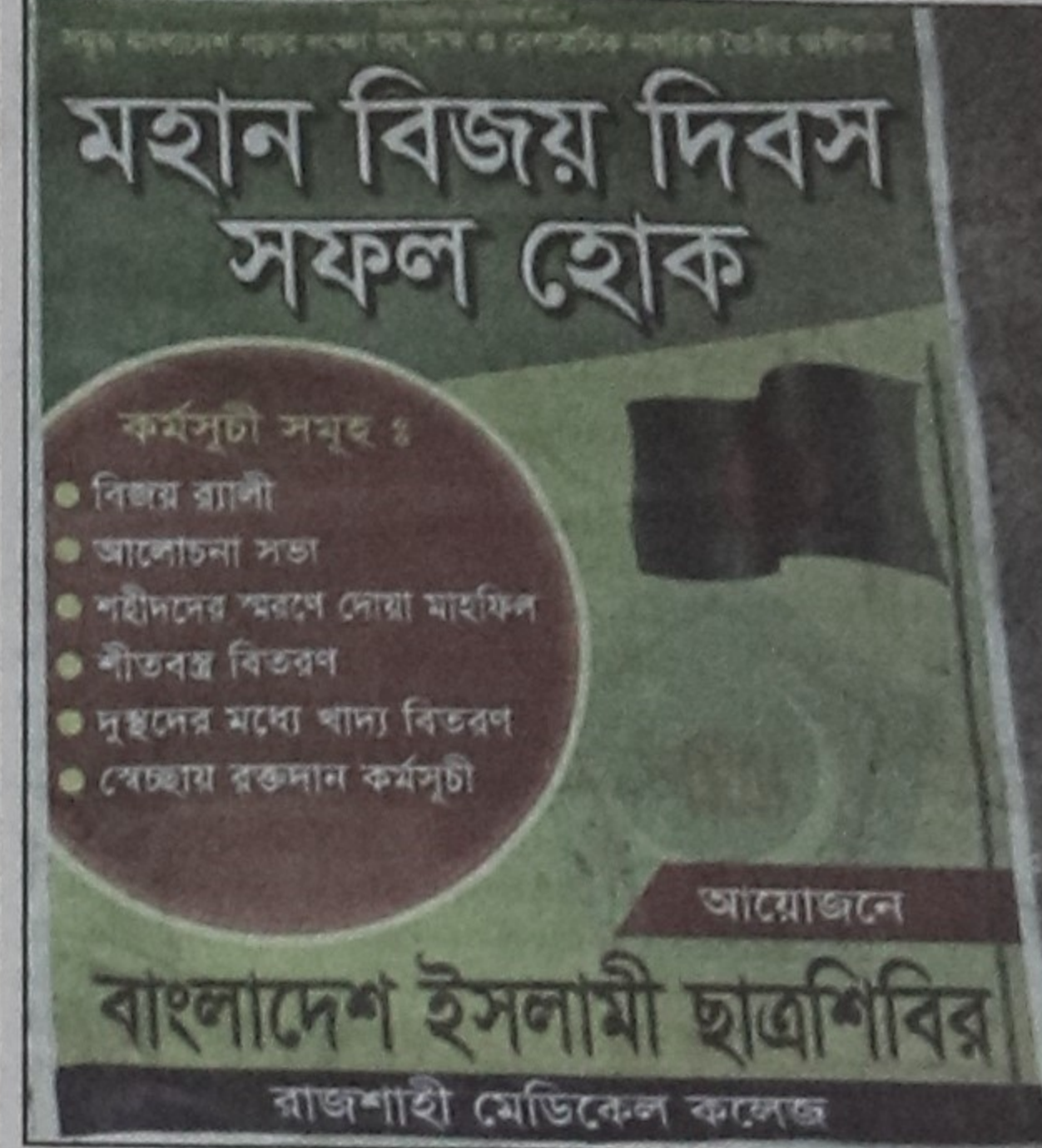
Day or Victory Day comes, the government gives us special food and arranges reception for us [freedom fighters]. But we have to pass miserable days throughout the year. Why making such fun?" he sighed.

Aku Mia now lives at a rented hut at Shalbagun in Sadar upazila for Tk 300 a month.

"It is not possible for me to maintain my family by begging. I have no land. I do not know where I will be laid for final rest after my death," Aku Mia murmured.

"Freedom fighter Aku Mia received a few bullets during a fight with the Pakistani occupation forces. He is now struggling to survive, Mongshathowai Chowdhury, president of district unit command of Mukti Juddha Sangsad.

"Nobody wants to sit beside him as bad smell comes out of his gangrene affected body. We have urged the government to take step for his treatment so that he can live well," he said.



Shibir dishonours national flag, makes offensive remarks on V-day

BCL leaders at RMC allege

ARU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi Medical College (RMC) unit leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) have said Islamic Chhatra Shibir dishonoured the national flag on the campus on the Victory Day.

A large number of posters, pasted by Shibir men on the college campus on the occasion of Victory Day, bear photo of the national flag with black marks in the red circle on the background of green, BCL leaders said.

Defying the national flag rules, the flag flutters to the left side on the poster, they said, adding that symbols of star and moon have been tactfully pasted just below the flag.

Shibir activists led by the college unit President Anwar Hossain, Secretary Muhammad Zahid and former president Abu Talha barred the general students to place wreath on Shaheed Minar premises on the day, they said.

Several students of Kazi Nurunnabi Hostel of the

college said they could not place wreath at Shaheed Minar as Shibir kept the hall gate locked in the early hours of the Victory Day.

At the rally and discussion arranged on the campus by Shibir on the Victory Day, speakers allegedly made objectionable comments about the Liberation War.

BCL leaders said the authorities and law enforcers did not take any steps against the Shibir men although the authorities were earlier informed of Shibir's 'unwanted activities'.

Shibir tries to flex muscles on the college campus to vitiate congenial atmosphere through their objectionable activities, RMC unit of BCL President Ashok Kumar said.

When contacted, RMC Shibir President Anwar Hossain declined to make any comment.

RMC Hostel Superintendent Dr Mohibul Hossain told this correspondent that they will take steps after investigation.

MIMING OF GAIBANDHA CONTRACTOR One of four alleged extortionists held

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Gaibandha

Police on Friday night arrested Taposh from Sukh-Santi area of the town on charge of attacking a local contractor for non-payment of illegal toll.

Police are still looking for three other accused Rubel, Raihan and Mahfuz in connection with the incident.

On November 5, the gang demanded a toll of Tk 20,000 from contractor Masud Rana. Being refused, the criminals called out Masud from his house next day and took him to V-aid Road and later to nearby Banglabazar area and hacked with Chinese axe and sword. The criminals fled the spot leaving the victim with critical leg, hand and head injuries.

Masud was first admitted to Rangpur Medical College and Hospital in a critical condition and later shifted to Dhaka Medical College and

Hospital. His right leg was amputated as the injuries formed gangrene.

Demanding immediate arrest of criminals and exemplary punishment, hundreds of agitated people of V-aid Road and Gaibandha municipal area on December 6 besieged the offices of the deputy commissioner (DC) and police superintendent.

They also formed a human chain in front of DC Office where the speakers sought trial of the culprits under speedy trial act.

The victim is still fighting for life at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

Since the incident, local people brought out several processions and held protest meetings demanding exemplary punishment of criminals.

Meanwhile, the criminals continued to threaten the victim's family members with dire consequences if they did not withdraw the case against them.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

Fratricide in Meherpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

A man killed his elder brother during a dispute over their ancestral property at Ruerkandi village in Gangni upazila in Meherpur yesterday. The dead was identified as Mannaf Ali, 40, son of Mahtab Ali. Family sources said, Mannaf had a dispute with his younger brother Salam over a piece of ancestral land. According to police, the two brothers locked in a quarrel when Mannaf went to discuss the issue with Salam at about 9:30 am. At one stage of heated argument, Salam hit Mannaf with a sharp weapon killing him on the spot. A police team from Gangni police station rushed to spot, recovered body and sent to Meherpur General Hospital. A case was filed but police could not nab Salam as he went into hiding.

Four extortionists held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Friday night arrested four people from village Shreekol under Atakula police station for allegedly demanding toll from a contractor. The arrestees are Sahidur Rahman Sahid, 41, Md Rubel Mollah, 23, Md Shukur Ali, 28, and Md Akter Pramanik, 25. They hailed from Shreekol Modhohopara under Atakula police station in the district. Rab said that the arrestees demanded toll from a contractor. On information, the team raided Shreekol village on Friday night. Sensing Rab presence, the extortionists tried to flee the scene but they were caught after a brief chase. The four extortionists were realising illegal toll from the people in the area for long, Rab said.

Arms peddler arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kustia

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested an alleged arms peddler and recovered a pistol and five bullets from him on Friday night. Sources said, on information, Rab-12 team raided Barakpara area in Daulatpur upazila in the district at about 7:00 pm and arrested Al-Mamun alias Jhantu, 30. Hailing from the same area, Jhantu was also involved in arms smuggling, Rab suspects. Rab later handed over the arrestee to Daulatpur police station.

Businessmen robbed

UNB, Sylhet

A gang of robbers looted cash and valuables worth over Tk 1 lakh from 10-12 businessmen putting barricade on a road in Khajanchi area of Biswanath upazila early Friday. Police quoting witnesses said, the gang barricaded the road late at night to intercept the businessmen while they were returning home from the upazila headquarters by two CNG-run autorickshaws. Later, the robbers looted valuables worth Tk 1 lakh including Tk 45,000 in cash from them. As driver Ashak Ali, 40, and passenger Fakhrul, 35, tried to resist the gang, the two were beaten up indiscriminately. Ashak Ali was rushed to Sylhet Osmani Medical College and Hospital in a critical condition.



PHOTO: STAR

This one-month-old fawn, rescued by Taymus Miah of Jangalia village under Kamar Chhara forest beat in Kamalganj upazila of Moulvibazar district on Thursday, is now under the custody of Rajkandi Forest Range officials. The fawn, found ill and without mother, will be treated to recovery before its release to the reserve forest, officials said.

Father, son commit suicide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A man and his son allegedly committed suicide at Rangpur village in Dumuria upazila on Friday night. The deceased were identified as Jagadish Bala, 54, and his son Sridham Bala, 15, a student of Class X of the village. Police said, Sridham committed suicide first by hanging from the ceiling of his house at about 07:40pm following a family feud. Later, Jagadish also committed suicide at around 8:00pm by hanging, failing to bear the grief. Police quoting neighbours said, Jagadish often could not earn enough to maintain his family triggering frequent family feud. On the fateful day and the day before the family went without food, police said. On information, police recovered the bodies and sent those to hospital morgue for autopsy.

Freedom fighters honoured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

At least a hundred freedom fighters (FFs) were honoured by Polashpur 29 BDR under Matiranga upazila in Khagrachhari district on Friday. The FFs were given a reception along with financial assistance at the week-long programme to mark the victory month of December. Earlier, a discussion was held where 29 BDR Battalion commanding officer Lt Colonel Mohammad Shamsur Rahman alias Shams, Matiranga upazila chairman Mohammad Shamsul Hoque and district Mukti Juddha unit commander Mohammad Rais Uddin spoke on the liberation war and role of the freedom fighters.

A health complex needs care

Acute crisis of doctors, medicines while stray dogs move at large

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Dakope Upazila Health Complex has become repulsive to treatment seekers as the 50-bed hospital is beset with manifold problems including serious manpower crisis and shortage of medicines.

Amid security problem, patients often pass sleepless nights as they are scared of stray dogs moving around.

"Stray dogs often invade the compound," said a female patient who requested anonymity.

"We are really afraid as furious dogs sometimes enter the hospital ward even," said another patient.

Many patients, especially those who have to stay on the floor due to shortage of beds, are often compelled to buy food and medicines from outside, they said.

Stray dogs moving at large inside the hospital sometimes snatch patients' diet, eyewitnesses said.

Admitting unhygienic condition, shortage of beds, crisis of medicines, lack of medical services and absence of requisite physicians at Dakope Upazila Health Complex, upazila Chairman Sheikh Abul Hossain said the hospital cannot provide life saving drugs for patients suffering from critical diseases.

"Proper medical services for patients cannot



PHOTO: STAR

A stray dog roaming about in the patients' ward on the ground floor of Dakope Upazila Health Complex recently.

be given as there is shortage of manpower including physicians and nurses. There is crisis of medicines too. Besides, patients always outnumber the beds," said Dr Akbar Hossain, medical officer of the health complex.

Fifteen posts of physicians and nurses have been lying

vacant for the last three years. The operation theatre has also remained inactive for two years.

This hospital, upgraded to a 50-bed one in 2005, is now in urgent need of consultant physicians for all departments including medicine, surgery, pathology, cardiology, ENT, ophthalmology and

dentistry, the medical officer said.

The hospital has no paediatrician although the number of child patients is on rise, he said.

Asked about the entrance of stray dogs into hospital wards, he said it occurred due to absence of security guards, especially at night.

Natore agitates for gas link

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

People from all walks of life in Natore have started agitation as work for installing pipelines to supply natural gas to Rajshahi bypassing Natore is going on.

Different organisations have held press conference, rallies and processions and formed human chains in the district town demanding supply of gas to Natore.

They have already launched a signature campaign and vowed to continue agitation until the demand is met.

Sources concerned said pipelines are being installed to supply gas to Rajshahi through Bonpara in Natore from Sirajganj, keeping many important installations, including Natore town, outside the gas supply project.

Natore Chamber of Commerce and industry President Aminul Haque said though the road link of Natore with rest of the country is good, the development of the area has remained stalled due to lack of natural gas.

Demand for gas supply to Natore is getting stronger. A human chain was formed in front of Natore central mosque yesterday to press home the demand.

Addressing a rally at the venue, the agitators urged the government to take immediate steps to supply gas to Natore. Otherwise, they threatened to launch a tougher agitation programme.

Many organisations, including Partex Group, have purchased land in Natore but they cannot set up industry due to lack of gas supply.



PHOTO: STAR

Locals form a human chain in Natore town yesterday demanding gas supply to the area.

LIMITED SEATS AVAILABLE FOR ADMISSION ENQUIRIES CALL

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