

PABNA HEALTH CARE IN DISMAL STATE

Half of doctors' posts vacant, shortage of staff acute

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

A staggering 148 of the 257 posts of doctors are lying vacant at 14 health care units in Pabna district, hampering healthcare services in the district.

Only 109 doctors are now working to provide healthcare service to some 2.6 million people in nine upazilas of the district, sources in the district health department said.

In 2005, the then 120-bed Pabna General Hospital was upgraded to a 250-bed one but there is hardly any development in its facilities.

Treatment of patients is greatly hampered at Pabna General Hospital, as the authorities concerned did not appoint sufficient manpower for the specialised hospital in last four years, said Dr Md Tariqul Islam, the RMO (resident medical officer) of the hospital.

Only 30 doctors are working in Pabna General Hospital although there are 57 sanctioned posts, official sources said.

The hospital does not have any senior consultant for medicine and consultants for cardiology, pathology and anaesthesia.

"The list of vacant posts is usually sent to the higher authorities twice a month. But the health directorate is unable to provide required manpower due to shortage of physicians across the country," Pabna Civil Surgeon Dr Khairul Alam Chowdhury told The Daily Star recently.

Shortage of manpower, mainly doctors, is also acute in upazila health complexes includ-

ing 50-bed ones in Santhia, Sujanagar and Chatmohar upazilas.

Sujanagar and Santhia upazila health complexes are running with seven doctors each although there are 29 and 31 posts in the two health care centres.

Eleven doctors are working at Chatmohar Upazila Health Complex while it has posts of 31 doctors.

Faridpur Upazila Health Complex is running with only four doctors although there are 25 allocated posts following its recent upgradation to a 50-bed one.

"Officially four doctors are working at Faridpur Upazila Health Complex but practically we are getting service of three doctors there. Health assistants often provide health service to patients due to lack of doctors. Quality of treatment cannot be maintained due to the situation," said Dr Md Khalilur Rahman, Faridpur upazila health and family planning officer.

Three out of 13 posts of doctors are lying vacant in Pabna Sadar Upazila Health Complex, said sources at Pabna Civil Surgeon's Office.

The numbers of vacant posts are seven in Ishwardi upazila, eight in Atghoria upazila, five in Bhangura upazila and nine in Bera upazila health complex while the sanctioned posts are 16, 14, 14, 17 respectively.

Besides, two posts of doctors have been lying vacant at Pabna Civil Surgeon's Office and the chest disease hospital.



A surfer checks the carcass of a mother turtle at Kalatoli point in Cox's Bazar sea beach on Thursday. A good number of turtles, coming to the shore for laying eggs, are floated dead daily as they are trapped in illegally set nets along the 100-kilometre shore from Nazirtek in Cox's Bazar town to Teknaf, officials said.

Monimala 'set afire for dowry, ' fighting for life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

A young housewife, set afire allegedly by in-laws, is fighting for life at the burn unit of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH).

The victim, Monimala, 20, got more than 40 percent of her body including face and chest burnt during the incident on February 22 afternoon at her husband's house at village Kalibari in Jhenaigati upazila under Sherpur district.

In the evening the same day, her in-laws took her to Jhenaigati Upazila Health Complex from where she was referred to Sherpur Sadar Hospital. As her condition deteriorated, she was admitted to MMCH on Saturday night.

Following the incident, a case was filed against five people including her husband Ali Hossain, mother-in-law Hujura, sisters-in-law Rubia alias Chikani and Minara and maternal uncle-in-law Abdul Malek Member and police arrested Ali Hossain.

Monimala was married to Ali Hossain, a day labourer of the neighbouring village, two years ago. Monimala lost her father at an early age and her mother is a mental patient, said family members.

Monimala's brothers, who work as day labourers, gave Tk 35,000 as dowry during and after the marriage but the in-laws led by her mother-in-law Hujura used to torture her physically, they said.

"Around 15 days ago, Monimala came to our house following a quarrel with her sister-in-law Chikani. Later she returned to husband's house. On February 22 afternoon, the accused set her on fire after pouring kerosene," Monimala's elder brother



Seriously burnt Monimala is undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Hurmoz Ali told this correspondent.

In the evening, the culprits took Monimala to Jhenaigati Upazila Health Complex from where she was referred to Sherpur Sadar Hospital at night. Before taking her to hospital, Abdul Malek Member forced Monimala to say that the incident occurred while she was cooking food and Malek Member recorded it with his mobile set, alleged Hurmoz Ali.

"Being informed, we went to Monimala's house on February 22 evening. Later we traced out Monimala at Sherpur Sadar Hospital at night and the in-laws left the hospital sensing our presence. We caught Monimala's husband from the hospital area and handed him over to police," said Abdus Sobhan, another elder brother of the victim.

The victim's family members alleged that police at first discouraged them to file a case

SNIPPETS

Farmers form human chain

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Over two hundreds farmers of two unions under Sadar upazila formed a human chain and brought out a procession on Saturday demanding flood control dam. Moshir Rahman Reza, chairman of Lohalia Union Parishad (UP) and Monir Rahman Mridha, chairman for Kamlapur UP led the programmes. The human chain was formed on the bank of the Showla canal in the morning followed by a procession demanding construction of a dam on the canal. Locals claimed that several hundreds hectares of agri land remain idle for lack of dam. 'We cannot cultivate our land as saline water from the canal enters our land', said a farmer.

BSF returns body

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) has returned the body of a Bangladeshi cattle trader to Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) after a company commander-level flag meeting with BDR at Fatehpur frontier of Shibganj upazila on Saturday afternoon. The body of the victim was later handed over to his relatives in presence of Shibganj police. Cattle trader Mukul Mia, 28, son of Faring Mia of Bahalabari village under Shibganj upazila was shot dead by BSF early Thursday, BDR sources said. BSF personnel at Sabghati camp shot dead Mukul when he entered the Indian territory opposite to Wahedpur border outpost in Shibganj upazila and took away the body.

Teenage boy electrocuted

UNB, Moulvibazar

A teenage poultry farm worker was electrocuted at Mohasahasra village in Rajnagar upazila on Thursday night. Victim Fazlur Rahman, 16, was son of Badsha Mia of Bhujball village in the upazila. Locals said Fazlur came in contact with a live electric wire at about 8:00pm while working at the Raj Poultry Farm of Hasan Ahmad at the village. He died on the spot. Police later recovered the body and sent it to hospital morgue for autopsy. A UD case was filed.

Fugitive convict held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Pabna Sadar police on Saturday night arrested a fugitive convict from Tangail district. Arrestee Rajab Ali, 40, is son of Golam Mostafa of village Radhanagar in Pabna Sadar upazila. A Pabna court in 2005 sentenced Rajab Ali to 7 years rigorous imprisonment for embezzling Tk 9 lakh. Abdul Mukit, a businessman of village Pailanpur filed a case in 2000 against Rajab. Officer-in-charge of Pabna Sadar police station Md Motiur Rahman said a team of Pabna police arrested him from Kalihati upazila in Tangail and produced him to court on Sunday.

4 commit 'suicide' in an upazila in 2 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishitta

Four people allegedly committed suicide in Daulatpur upazila in the district on Friday and Saturday.

They are a college girl, a housewife, an elderly man and a physically challenged person.

According to police, Rupa Khatun, 20, a third-year student of Baguan Degree College killed herself by hanging from ceiling at her sister's house at Farakpur village on Saturday night.

Family sources said Rupa, daughter of Abdul Mannan of Dangmorka village was in a huff as her mother rebuked her over returning late from college. She also warned that she would stop her education.

Rupa went to her sister's house at Farakpur, adjacent to Dangmorka and committed 'suicide'.

Kalimuddin, 75, at Krafordnagar committed 'suicide' by hanging from a tree branch following a quarrel with his sons.

Sources said the old man was extremely hurt as his sons abused him 'for no reason' and killed himself on Saturday night.

Police recovered his body yesterday.

The body of housewife Rita Khatun, 19, of Horingachi was recovered from her bedroom on Saturday morning. Rita's in-laws claimed she hanged herself on Friday night due to extreme 'pain in the abdomen' for which she underwent long treatment but to no effect.

On Saturday morning her in-laws broke open the door as it was locked from inside.

Rita was married two years ago. Her husband has another wife in Dhaka.

Physically challenged Nonin Uddin, 25, took poison after a quarrel with his wife Khatun, 21, at Teligangdia village on Friday night.

Sources said Nonin married Khatun a year ago. But their conjugal life was not happy.

Usha Uddin, brother of Nonin yesterday alleged that Nonin's wife had 'extra marital affairs'.

Four unnatural death cases were filed with Daulatpur police station. Police said they handed over the bodies to the families concerned.



A fire guts over two hundred shanties and six shops at Bastuhara Colony in Bakolia of Chittagong city yesterday.



Baneshwar Hat in Puthia upazila of Rajshahi district sees abundant supply of plums as the surrounding villages produced a large amount of the winter fruit this season.

Trawler with rice sinks

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

A trawler carrying 447 sacks of government rice sank in the Dakatia River in Chandpur early yesterday.

The incident occurred at Lantanghat in the town.

Sources said the Gazi Paribahan trawler was carrying rice from the government's special project meant for the fishermen families to prevent catching of Jatka (hilsa fry). The accident occurred as the trawler was being loaded with rice from the CSD godown. The trawler tilted under the impact of waves as a sand-laden ship which was passing by. It then capsized and went 60 feet down the river.

Local divers later lifted about 200 sacks of rice from the river. But the trawler could not be salvaged till yesterday morning.

Chairman of Char Bhairabi union under Haimchar upazila said rice could not be distributed among the fishermen in his union due to the accident.

Carpet factory, 200 shanties gutted in Chittagong

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Finished carpets worth Tk five lakh were gutted in a fire at a state-owned carpet factory in Chittagong yesterday while over 200 tin-shed houses and six shops were reduced to ashes in Bakolia area on Saturday.

Our Staff Correspondent in Chittagong quoting sources said the fire originating from electric short circuit broke out at a tin-shed godown of Dhaka-Baghdad Carpet Factory Limited at around 9:20am.

Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation Limited owns the factory, said the sources.

Six fire fighting units from two fire stations of the city rushed to the spot and doused the blaze at around 11:45am.

At Bakolia, more than 200 tin-shed houses, six shops and property worth around Tk 20 lakh were gutted on Saturday afternoon.

Fire Service and Civil

Defence sources said the fire broke out at a house of Bakolia Bastuhara Bahumukhi Samabay Samity colony at around 12:15pm and soon engulfed the whole area rendering over 1,000 people homeless.

Thirteen fire fighting units from different fire stations of the city rushed to the spot and extinguished the fire that originated from an earthen oven after a four-hour battle, said Chittagong Fire Service and Civil Defence assistant director Nurul Haque.

Two firemen-Ujjawal Barua and Jahangir Alam- were injured while fighting fire, he informed.

Damages in the fire were estimated at Tk 20 lakh, he added.

In Sherpur district, a fierce fire gutted at least 22 shops at Panchgaon Bazaar in Nalitabari upazila on Saturday night.

UNB quoting fire brigade sources said, the fire originated from an electric short circuit at

Shamsul Haque Member's grocery shop at around 11:30 pm and soon engulfed 21 other adjacent shops.

The affected shop owners claimed that the losses caused from fire could go upto Tk 30 lakh.

In Sirajganj, a mother and her four-month-old daughter were burnt alive in a devastating fire at Chhongachha village early Wednesday.

Earlier, a cotton godown and at least 32 shops were gutted in Thakurgaon, Chittagong and Netrakona on Monday and Sunday last.

The victims of Sirajganj fire were identified as Sokhiron Begum, 30, wife of Nazrul Islam of Chhongachha village and Sokhiron's four-month-old daughter Subarna Khatun, reports our correspondent.

Police, fire fighters and locals said the incident took place at around 1:30am when the victims were sleeping in their bedroom.