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Burn unit compounds sufferings of patients

DMCH lacks space, doctors and nurses; unqualified people take care of serious injuries

ALPHA ARZU and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

For the past six years, a shortage of doctors and nurses has meant that unqualified volunteers are providing the majority of care for patients in the Burns and Plastic Surgery Unit of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

There are currently just 22 doctors and 14 nurses to care for around 270 patients in the 50-bed burns unit.

A lack of space means that many patients are undergoing treatment outside the unit in unsanitary conditions.

The relatives of a patient who was forced to undergo treatment in the hospital's corridor said that doctors and nurses simply do not have enough time to care for each patient.

Joinab Begum said, "My six-year-old

granddaughter was crying out in pain due to excessive bleeding from her burns, but the staff hurried during her dressing, completing it within 20 minutes."

She added, "I have to do a major part of the dressing myself even though I don't know how to do it properly. My little Khadija had to suffer."

Dr Samanta Lal Sen, the project director of the Burns and Plastic Surgery Unit of DMCH, said, "A patient requires at least an hour for dressing, but we don't have enough time to give more than 20 minutes because we have so many patients."

Dr Sen estimates that the unit requires at least 70 physicians, 100 nurses and 200 general employees, including ward boys, sweepers, security guards and ayahs.

The danger of being treated by unqualified persons can lead to excessive bleed-

ing and the spread of infections.

The volunteers are also charging the patients and their relatives to provide care.

Nasima Begum, 40, from Siddhirganj, has burns on 22 percent of her body but she was forced to wait 12 hours for a single painkiller injection.

Her sister Hasina Begum said that she repeatedly asked doctors and nurses to administer the painkiller, but it was not possible to receive the treatment any earlier.

Departmental Head Prof Syed Shamsuddin Ahmed said that there are clashes almost every day between hospital staff and frustrated relatives.

From 2:00pm until the morning, just two doctors are on duty in the emergency room and there are five nurses on each floor.

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The Kachalong river in Baghaichhari upazila of Rangamati has forever been a conventional waterway for transporting bamboo. Siltation has narrowed down the river almost to a canal putting transport of goods at stake.

PHOTO: JASIM MAJUMDER



Justice Khairul Haque made JSC chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice ABM Khairul Haque, a senior judge in the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, was yesterday appointed chairman of

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18pc dropout in HSC

Financial constraints main reason

WASIM BIN HABIB

Over 18 percent of the HSC and its equivalent level students will not be able to sit for their examinations scheduled to begin on April 1 as they failed to fill in exam forms mainly for financial constraints.

About 127,844 students or 18.29 percent of the total 699,171 who got registration in 2008-2009 session after passing SSC or equivalent exams have dropped out of their institutions failing to fill in the HSC and equivalent exam forms, said a statistic of the authorities concerned.

It also says about 571,327 regular students, out of 732,457 examinees, will take the exams this year under ten education boards including madrasa and technical education board.

However, such drop out rate came down this

year, as the rate was 19.92 percent in 2009 and 23.58 percent in 2008.

Officials concerned have identified some reasons behind the drop out including parents' financial inability to pay exam fees, disqualification in test exams and marriage of female students.

Academicians say most of the rural people do not have money to meet education expenses for their children.

Rasheda K Chowdhury, executive director of Campaign for Popular Education, said fear in examination preparation, dependency on private tuition and coaching and lack of social security for female students are among the reasons behind the drop out.

Urging the government to increase financial assistance to the poor people, she said, "More

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6 units of Ashuganj resume generation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Six suspended units of Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited (APSC) resumed electricity generation from early hours yesterday.

Sources said seven units were suspended due to a fire in a transformer at 8:00pm on Tuesday.

The engineers and technicians of the station are still working to restart another suspended unit.

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ORDER ON LAFARGE ACTIVITIES Ties with Dhaka to be affected

Indian govt tells SC

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

The Indian government has told the Supreme Court that New Delhi's diplomatic relations with Dhaka would be affected if the apex court's stay order on mining activities by French cement giant Lafarge in northeastern Indian state of Meghalaya was not lifted.

Earlier on February 5, a Special Forest Bench headed by Chief Justice K G Balakrishnan stayed the mining activities on the basis of the environment and forest ministry's report. The Indian report said the company was extracting minerals from the land falling in the forest area.

Prior to the stay, Lafarge was carrying out extraction of limestone from its mines in Meghalaya for transporting the same to its cement plant in Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Govt to supply more gas to power sector

BSS, Dhaka

The Energy Division of the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources yesterday directed the Petrobangla to allocate more gas to the power sector to help reduce the frequent power outage and keep the load-shedding within a tolerable level.

It also asked the Petrobangla officials to work on gas staggering issue or explore the way to stop the misuse of gas to further accelerate power generation in the country.

A decision to this effect came at an emergency

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A typical evening at Sonargaon intersection. People rush home regardless of the risk they are taking while jaywalking. Lives can be saved if only people act safe and use the underpass just yards away.

PHOTO: STAR

NBR asks for transaction records of Farroque

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue yesterday asked commercial banks to provide information about financial transactions made by Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abidin Farroque within the last five years.

A commercial bank official who spoke on condition of anonymity said the Central Intelligence Cell of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) directed the banks to provide the information within a week in the interests of an internal investigation.

A Dhaka yesterday court issued an arrest warrant against Farroque in a defamation case relating to his

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AL men snatch bid documents

Tender for 22 Sirajganj roads cancelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

LGED office in Sirajganj yesterday suspended the bidding process for construction works of 22 roads as ruling party men snatched tender documents from a peon of LGED at Baoitara on Sirajganj-Belkuchi highway.

Abdur Rashid Mian, executive engineer of LGED, told The Daily Star, "Today's tender process has been suspended following the snatching incident of tender documents at Baoitara."

The decision came after the Awami League activists snatched 61 of 74 bidding documents from Golam Mostafa, a peon of LGED.

Police and local sources said yesterday was the date scheduled for submitting tender documents for construction works of 22 roads.

Witnesses said Mostafa was going to Sirajganj LGED office with the tender box having 74 bidding documents in it after completion of bidding documents submission at Belkuchi UNO office.

When contacted, KM Hossain Ali Hasan, general secretary of district AL said, "No one from AL was involved in the snatching incident."

Earlier in the morning, at least 10 people, including contractors, were injured as AL men attacked them during submission of the tender documents at Sirajganj LGED office.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

AMNESTY REPORT Migrant workers unpaid, abused, raped in Malaysia

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Amnesty International yesterday urged Malaysia to end appalling treatment of migrant workers, saying many were raped, abused and unpaid and endured conditions "close to bonded labour".

In a damning report, the human rights group accused the Malaysian government of "facilitating" human trafficking after it found cases of immigration officials delivering Myanmar detainees to gangs on the Thai border.

Malaysia is one of Asia's largest importers of labour, with a workforce of 2.2 million, but Amnesty said they were too often "lured" to Malaysia and "used in forced labour or exploited in other ways".

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South Talpatti 'disappears' in rising sea

Say Indian scientists

BBC ONLINE

A tiny island claimed for years by India and Bangladesh in the Bay of Bengal has disappeared beneath the rising seas, scientists in India say.

The uninhabited territory south of the Hariabhanga river was known as New Moore Island to the Indians and South Talpatti Island to the Bangladeshis.

Recent satellite images show the whole island under

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Obama-Netanyahu talks fail to break deadlock

AFP, AP, Washington/ Jerusalem

Two rounds of talks between US President Barack Obama and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have failed to produce signs of an Israeli shift on new settlements in east Jerusalem.

Obama initially hosted Netanyahu at the White House late Tuesday for 90 minutes, but with the two sides embroiled in their worst disagreement in years, the leaders unusually did not appear before the cameras.

Netanyahu then huddled privately with his staff for more than an hour, after which he met a second time with the president in the Oval Office for 35 minutes, officials said.

The Israeli prime minister's office later issued a statement to say the talks had unfolded in a "good atmosphere".

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ACC seeks to quiz Khaleda

Third notice to be sent today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission will issue its third notice on former prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia today seeking appointment with her for questioning on two allegations against her now being probed.

In reply to the ACC's earlier two notices, Khaleda had said she needed to go through

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Prayer Timing		
March 25		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-55	5-30
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-16	6-20
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

OnlinePoll ✓

Do you think the government is on the right track towards holding war crime trial?

Yes (56.8%) No (41.6%)
 No Comments (1.6%)

Total votes: 936

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think shutting down telecom companies for alleged involvement in illegal VoIP business and allowing them to restart operations shows that BTRC is confused about the issue?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

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