

# PRIVATE HEALTHCARE CENTRES Law to ensure quality service soon

**MAHBUBA ZANNAT**

The government is planning to formulate an act soon aiming at ensuring quality health services at private health care centres at a reduced cost.

The plan to enact a private health service act has come to the front as the existing Medical Practice and Private Clinics and Laboratories (Regulation) Ordinance, 1982 has lost its relevance due to a boom in the private health service.

There is a common allegation that private health facilities charge higher costs from patients than the quality of their services.

Since May 27, 1982 to May 31, 2009 some 2,283 licensed hospitals and 4,755 licensed diagnostic centres are running in the country. But, the ordinance lacks power to control such a huge number of private health centres and to ensure patients' rights. That is why formulation of a new comprehensive act is a must, said sources at Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

The ordinance lacks control over user fee and establishments of new hospitals. Even the definition of the hospitals and clinics is not made clear in the existing ordinance, they said.

Furthermore, different hospitals and clinics have been charging differently from the ordinance.

An x-ray for the whole abdomen test costs Tk 300 to Tk 500 at most of the private hospitals. But at Labaid Hospital it costs Tk 1,200. As patients are not told about the charge before going through the process, they have to stumble down at the time of paying the bills, said a patient who sought treatment at a city's private health centre.

When contacted, the Labaid authorities said they charge more as they use 4D machine for x-rays.

"There is nothing in the ordinance about registration of the hospitals providing outdoor services. That is why an increasing number of hospitals has been set up without licenses from the Directorate General of Health Services,"

said Dr Md Aminul Hasan Palash, deputy programme manager (hospital services) of the DGHS.

"But, we cannot take any legal steps against them for absence of a strong legal support. Even the hospitals and clinics running illegally are getting impunity for this reason," he said.

The existing ordinance does not say anything about licenses for dental, acupuncture and dialysis clinics. That is why these clinics could not be brought under control.

There is also the same registration and renewal fees for a 10-bed clinic and a 500-bed clinic or a hospital for the last 28 years, he added.

"In the new law, there will be separate policy for private clinics and hospitals. Furthermore, a uniform user fee will be introduced for the sake of the patients and the registration and renewal fees will be reset," said AKF Mozibur Rahman, director (Hospital) of DGHS.

There should have a provision for minimum diagnostic facility to get license for hospitals and clinics, he said.

When asked about how much time it will take, the director said it depends on the government's political will. Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) should also have to play an important role here, he added.

"It is very unfortunate that the country is yet to have any act to control the private hospitals and ensure quality service there. The initiative is praiseworthy," said Prof Rashid E Mahub, former president of BMA and president of Health Movement.

Before finalisation, it should be made public and there must be a debate among the stakeholders on it, he said.

Earlier a private medical service ordinance 2004 was placed in the parliament. But it was withdrawn for some of its loopholes. Then it was again amended during the period of the caretaker government in 2007 and now the government is trying to formulate a comprehensive law.

The DGHS will submit the comprehensive document of the private health service act to the ministry by May, DGHS sources said.

# Plan to up power production to 9426MW by 2015

**UNB, Dhaka**

The government has a plan to increase the electricity generation to 9426 MW by 2015 through implementing a short, medium, and long-term projects, State Minister for Energy and Power Md Enamul Haque said yesterday.

"This may sound an ambitious plan, but it is a must to increase the power generation to transform Bangladesh into a middle income country," he told a discussion at the National Press Club in the city, organised by the Energy Reporters Forum.

He also said that about 40 percent of people are living below the poverty line who do not have access to electricity.

At present, the country's available generation capacity is 3800-4000 MW.

According to the government plan, about 920 MW will be added to the national grid by 2011. The generation will be raised to 1369 MW by 2012, 1975 MW by 2013, 1770 MW by 2014 and 2600 MW by 2015.

The minister said that 40-50 percent power will be generated in the private sector while the rest will come from public sector. An Energy Fund is being created to implement the power projects.

He also said that the government is likely to take a decision soon in favour of open pit coal mining.

"If coal is extracted through open pit mining method, we'll get the optimum output. So, it would be better to go for open pit mining operation after addressing the relevant social issues," he said.

# BDR CARNAGE Court asks IO to submit probe report by May 19

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

A Dhaka court yesterday asked Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to submit by May 19 the probe report of a case filed in connection with the carnage at Bangladesh Rifles headquarters in Pilkhana in February last year.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AKM Enamul Haque passed the order after the CID's Special Superintendent of Police Abdul Kahar Akand, also the investigation officer of the case, failed to submit the report by yesterday, the scheduled date for submission of the report.

The CID has so far arrested 2,264 soldiers of BDR and civilians including former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu and Awami League leader Torab Ali in connection with the case.

Of the arrestees, 2,240 were earlier placed on remand, and 533 of them had given confessional statements before magistrates. Of them, 222 BDR jawans and civilians had submitted petitions for retraction of their confessional statements.

Sources said the jail authorities did not produce the arrestees before the court yesterday due to security reasons.

Earlier on April 8 last year, the jail authorities had produced 800 BDR jawans and civilians before the court that suspended the trial proceedings of several courts for over four hours.

At least 74 people, including 57 army officers, were killed in a mutiny of the border guards at their Pilkhana headquarters on February 25-26 last year.



Police intercept a procession of BNP led by Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka at Badda in the city yesterday. The procession was brought out as part of BNP programmes demanding adequate supply of gas, electricity and water.

# BNP protests at 11 city points today

**DU CORRESPONDENT**

BNP will stage demonstrations on 11 spots in the city today demanding adequate gas, electricity and water supply.

Senior leaders of the party will take part in the demonstrations, says a press release.

BNP Standing Committee Member Dr Khandoker Mosharraf Hossain will take part at a demonstration at Shyampur while Publicity Secretary of BNP and lawmaker Joydul Abedin Faruk will be there at Pallabi, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Mia at Pallabi 10, Barrister Nazmul Huda at Kafur, Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan at Dhanmondi, Sadeque Hossain Khoka at Ramna, Barkat Ullah Bulu at Hazaribagh, Mirza Abbas at Khilgaon, Brig Gen (ret'd) ASM Hannan Shah at Gulshan and Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir at Mirpur 1.

The demonstrations are scheduled to start at 3:00 pm.

Besides, the party will arrange similar programmes at Kamrangirchar and Sabujbagh tomorrow and at Kotowali and in Cantonment area on April 24 and 26 respectively.

# No headway in police officer murder case

**Law enforcement agencies interrogate Gautam's two friends**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Law enforcers are yet to arrest the killers or establish the motive behind the killing of police officer Gautam Roy, although two days have passed after the murder.

Gautam, second officer of Bangshal Police Station, was shot dead in the city's Dholaikhal area in the early hours of Tuesday.

The police are investigating the incident to find out whether SI Gautam had any rivalry with any individual or criminal gangs that led to the killing or some quarters hired the killers.

Law enforcement agencies yesterday interrogated several local people, including Gautam's friends Azam and Shamim, but failed to get any information regarding the motive behind the killing, said Officer-in-charge (OC) Nazrul Islam of Sutrapur Police Station.

Unidentified gunmen killed Gautam, and wounded his hotelier friend Mohammad Shamim near Mohiuddin Market at Dholaikhal at about 2:30 am when Gautam and his friends Azam reached the spot in Shamim's car where Shamim was waiting.

Gautam and Shamim came under gun attack, as Gautam tried to take out his firearm while searching three young men who were roaming there suspiciously.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Mahbub Alam of Detective Branch of Police said two DB teams under his supervision are investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday sanctioned Tk 3 lakh and Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) authority Tk 1 lakh from its welfare fund for Gautam's family, says a DMP press release.

# ZIA TRUST GRAFT CASE Hearing on charge framing June 29

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

A Dhaka court yesterday set June 29 for hearing on charge framing against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, her elder son Tarique Rahman and four others in connection with Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.

Special Judge Court-3 Judge Mozammel Hossain passed the order after counsels for Khaleda and Tarique submitted separate petitions seeking adjournment of the case.

Khaleda's lawyers submitted the petition saying that Khaleda could not appear before the court as she was busy with organising party activities while advocate Sanaullah Miah represented Tarique in his absence as he is staying abroad for treatment.

The four other accused are former BNP lawmaker Kazi Saleemul Haq Kamal, Sharfuddin Ahmed, former principal secretary Dr Kamal Uddin Siddique and former president late Ziaur Rahman's nephew Mominur Rahman.

# DU student expelled

**DU CORRESPONDENT**

The Dhaka University (DU) authorities have temporarily expelled a student who was arrested with firearms from Babubazar area in the city on Sunday.

Proctor Dr KM Saiful Islam Khan told The Daily Star that Arifur Rahman, who is also an activist of Bangladesh Chhatra League at Surya Sen Hall, was expelled on charge of tarnishing the image of the university.

"We will serve a show-cause notice on him tomorrow [today] asking him to clarify why his studentship would be cancelled permanently," he added.

# Death anniversary

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Today is the 21st death anniversary of Hachen Uddin Fakir, former Hrishij Shilpi.

Goshthi chairman and father of noted singer Fakir Alamgir.

On the occasion, a milad and doa mahfil will be held at Chowdhury Para Matir Mosque at Khilgaon after Asr prayers.

Relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to join the milad mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

# Salehuddin Mahmood

**METRO DESK**

Today is the 4th death anniversary of Syed Salehuddin Mahmood, former deputy principal information officer of the Press Information Department (PID), says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at Martyred Intellectuals Graveyard Mosque after Asr prayers today.

His relatives and well-wishers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

# Mahtab Uddin Ahmed

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Today is the 39th death anniversary of Mahtab Uddin Ahmed (Atom-master), a poet who was killed by the Pakistani army during the liberation war.

Author of many published and unpublished books, Mahtab also had contributions to the anti-British movement.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at Zabel-e-Noor Mosque at Dhanmondi 8/A after Asr prayers today.

# Syed Jahur Ali

**METRO DESK**

Today is the 2nd death anniversary of Syed Jahur Ali, a former police officer, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at his residence Block-E, Road-03, House-73, Shahjalal Upashahar in Sylhet.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Huji on fresh remand

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The UK unit chief of banned Islamist outfit Harkat-ul-Jihad al-Islami Bangladesh Golam Mostofa was taken on a fresh five-day remand by detective branch (DB) of police yesterday.

Assistant Commissioner ASM Rafiqul Islam of DB told The Daily Star on completion of a four-day remand they produced Bangladesh-born British citizen Mostofa before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court seeking remand for 10 days and the court granted for five days.

He was taken on the fresh remand in a separate case filed on Tuesday with Hazaribagh Police Station under Anti-terrorism Act 2009.

## Condition of Ershad improves

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The condition of former president and Jatiya Party chairman HM Ershad has much improved, said United Hospital authorities yesterday.

He was taken to the hospital early Monday following a hypovolemic shock.

Though the physical condition of Ershad, who is also a lawmaker, has improved, he needs to stay at the hospital under direct observation of the doctors, said the hospital authorities.

Secretary General of Jatiya Party Ruhul Amin Hawladar said Ershad will be taken home after one or two days.

## 4 killers of BCL leader held

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Tuesday night arrested four alleged killers of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) Ward 43 unit General Secretary Mohammad Ahiduzzaman alias Ramiz from the city's Shekhertek and College Gate areas.

The detainees were identified as Saiful Islam Kazal, 21, Shahidul Islam Swapan, 21, Maruf Amin, 18, and Al Mamun alias Rony, 18.

Rab-2 officials said among the four arrestees, Kazal was the killer while the other three helped him kill the BCL man.

## SQ Chowdhury gets bail

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig**

A Chittagong court yesterday granted bail to BNP leader Salehuddin Quader Chowdhury in a seditious case filed against him for making derogatory comments about August 15 and the historic verdict in Bangabandhu murder case.

District and Sessions Judge Abdul Quddus passed the order after the defendant appeared before the court at about 11:30 am and sought bail.

Prosecution lawyer Ashok Kumar Das told The Daily Star that SQ Chowdhury also obtained bail from the High Court in the case earlier.

## 'Resist cultural aggression'

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

BNP joint secretary general Mahbubuddin Khokon yesterday called on all like-minded cultural organisations to be united to resist cultural aggression of different countries.

Termining such aggression a major threat to Bangladeshi culture, he said some foreign countries, especially a neighbouring country, are trying to inject their culture into Bangladesh through different ways and it is damaging Bangladeshi culture day by day.

The BNP leader made the remarks while addressing a discussion on 'National unity to resist cultural aggression' organised by the Bangladesh Nationalist Cultural Foundation at the National Press Club.

# BCL activists vandalise 30 rooms at JU

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

At least 30 persons were injured early yesterday in a clash between activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League from different dormitories of Jahangirnagar University over a trifling matter.

The BCL activists vandalised 25 to 30 rooms in Kamal Uddin Hall and Shaheed Salam Barkat Hall.

Police have been deployed around the dormitories to prevent further unpleasant incident.

Ten of the injured were admitted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital while others were given first aid at a local clinic in Savar. The condition of an injured named Sumon were said to be critical.

The other injured include Monir, Tanvir and Shimul of history department, Rajib, Tanvir and Lelin from philosophy department, Milon of the Department of International Relations, Samir of zoology department, and Mishu of the Department of Environmental Science.

Sources said the clash erupted following a row between BCL activists Shishir and Miraj of Kamal Uddin Hall and Rajib, Biplob and Monir of Shaheed Salam Barkat Hall.

The dispute took place at 12:15 am when Shishir and Miraj went to have tea at a shop of Salam Barkat hall without wearing any shirt. This enraged the BCL leaders of that hall, which led to an altercation.

Following the incident, 12 BCL activists from Kamal Uddin Hall led by Shishir and Miraj went to the other dormitory to stage a showdown but Shishir got beaten up.

Soon activists from Kamal Uddin Hall and Maulana Bhasani Hall attacked Salam Barkat Hall and vandalised 15 rooms including its office room.

BCL activists from Salam Barkat and Al Beruni Extension halls then damaged 15 rooms of Kamal Uddin Hall.

Three rounds of blank shots were fired during the conflict.

Later, police brought the situation under control.

# Special cell opens for Bhola-3 by-election

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The home ministry yesterday opened a special cell to observe the law and order situation of Bhola-3 by-election scheduled to be held on April 24.

Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder will act as the coordinator while Joint Secretary (political) Kamal Uddin Ahmed will monitor the activities of the cell, which will formally start functioning today, said a circular of the ministry.

The special cell has been set up at room No. 313 of the ministry and will work from April 22 to April 25. Different information and complaints relating to law and order of the by-election will be received here.

Information can be sent through telephone No. 7168208 and fax No. 7162753. The cell will remain open round the clock.

The initiative was taken to make the Bhola-3 by-election a success, the circular added.

Inspector general of police, divisional commissioner of Barisal, deputy commissioner of Bhola, police superintendents and other local administrators have been urged to provide the cell with all necessary information of the polling area.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Sylhet division and one or two places over Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal and Rajshahi divisions in next 12 hours till 6:00 pm today.

Severe heat wave which is sweeping over the region of Rajshahi and mild to moderate heat wave over the regions of Pabna, Khulna, Mongla, Jessore, Kushtia, Dhaka, Tangail and Faridpur may continue, Met Office said.

It said day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:23pm today and rises at 5:31am tomorrow.**

Country's highest temperature 40.6 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 21.2 degrees at Sylhet.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.8	29.0	67	62
Chittagong	31.9	27.2	71	76
Rajshahi	40.6	27.0	73	52
Khulna	36.0	28.5	73	67
Barisal	34.5	28.7	74	77
Sylhet	30.5	21.2	97	79
Cox's Bazar	34.2	26.8	68	73

# Save Apu Islam

**METRO DESK**

Apu Islam, a seven-year-old boy, has been suffering from blood cancer since October 2009, says a press release.

He has been under treatment of Dr Md Belayet Hossain, Assistant Professor, Department of Haemato-Oncology, Dhaka Shishu Hospital. He is now receiving regular chemotherapy treatment, which will continue for two more years.

But his family could not afford such an expensive treatment. His father Md Bashir Uddin Ahmed has appealed to generous people to extend a helping hand to save the boy's life.

Contributions can be sent to Md Bashir Uddin Ahmed, Saving A/C No. 33326, Farmgate Branch, Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited, Dhaka-1215.

Interested persons can also call his father at 01716-793678 for details.

## DHAKA TODAY

### Roundtable

The Daily Star, Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) and Save the Children will jointly organise a roundtable on 'A national priority for EFA: Reaching vulnerable children'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 11:00 am.

### Seminar

Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum organises a seminar titled 'Importance of ratification of ILO Convention 138 to eliminate child labour in Bangladesh'. Venue: Biam auditorium. Time: 9:30 am.

### Roundtable

Peshajibi Samannaya Parishad organises a roundtable titled 'Trial of war criminals: National duty'. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:30 pm.