

TOXIC PARACETAMOL CASE AT STAKE

Fingers pointed at drug admin

EMRAN HOSSAIN

The statement Dr Abul Khair Chowdhury of Directorate of Drug Administration (DDA) gave in court on Wednesday is a glaring example of the authorities' neglect and an existing nexus between dishonest officials and drug adulterators.

Dr Hanif, who acted as a whistleblower in early 1990s about availability of toxic paracetamol syrup in market, Public Prosecutor of the Drug Court Mahmud Hossain Jahangir, and the family of a victim made this observation yesterday.

Dr Hanif argued the drug administration's mysterious failure to hold trial of the cases even in 16 years made the way for another spell of

paracetamol syrup adulteration by Rid Pharma Ltd in 2009 that killed 28 children.

"Abul Khair must have some personal interests in this matter. Otherwise there is no scope of forgetting such an important case in which government test confirmed adulteration of paracetamol syrup by at least five companies," said Dr Hanif, also a professor at Dhaka Shishu Hospital.

During cross-examination in connection with a case filed against Adflame Pharmaceutical, DDA Assistant Director Khair said he could not remember from where he collected the sample of paracetamol syrup that was tested positive for containing lethal chemical diethylene glycol.

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Drug DG's anti-RTI sermon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Maj Gen Abul Kalam Azad, director general of Directorate of Drug Administration, yesterday said journalists are not authorised to talk to him.

"As a journalist you are not authorised to talk to the Drug Administration DG," said Abul Kalam Azad as this correspondent tried to get a comment from the drug administration boss over Wednesday's statement of DDA Assistant Director Abul Khair during the trial of a drug adulteration case against Adflame Pharmaceuticals.

"You can talk to Abul Khair, not me," Abul Kalam Azad suggested during the

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Railway not responsible

States its probe report on train accident-arson; blames BNP men for holding rally inside danger zone, burning train; another govt probe underway

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The committee formed by Bangladesh Railway to investigate the October 11 Sirajganj incidents has identified construction of podium for a BNP rally in risky proximity of rail line as the main cause of the accident that claimed five lives.

The probe body in its report also held local BNP activists responsible for torching the Drutajan Express, obstructing Fire Service staff from dousing the fire, damaging government property, looting passengers' possessions and beating up on-duty railway employees.

All the 11 compartments of the Dhaka-bound inter-city train were burnt down soon after it ran through the crowd at the rally spilling onto the railway track at Soyadabad in Sirajganj.

The report says five persons were killed and six others were injured as the train hit. The loss from burning of the engine and the 11 compartments was estimated at Tk 23,05,26,868.

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The burning compartments of Drutajan Express at Soyadabad in Sirajganj on October 11. PHOTO: STAR

Cyclone Giri in Bay

UNB, Dhaka

The deep depression over east central Bay and adjoining northeast Bay moved slightly northwards and intensified into cyclonic storm "Giri" over the same area.

It was centred at 3:00 pm yesterday about 505 km south of Chittagong Port, 415 km south of Cox's Bazar Port and 525 km of south-southeast of Mongla port.

It is likely to intensify further and move in a north-easterly direction, said a special bulletin of Met office.

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Media worries over freedom, ethics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

News media editors and senior journalists yesterday called for bolstering ethical practices in the field, saying the media has to play its due role in strengthening democracy, although money has started influencing it, and some politicians are attacking it viciously.

Condemning some lawmakers' recent diatribes against the media in the parliament, the journalists said despite some mistakes, the media in Bangladesh has always favoured democracy, but politicians often forget that.

At a roundtable, the journalists said there must be a policy for issuing licenses to electronic media outlets, cautioning that political considerations in the process for the last several years have led to instability in the sector to a great extent.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad, however, said the present government believes in full freedom of the press, and comments of an individual member of the parliament can never be the official statement of the government which considers the media as a complementary force.

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Health minister unaware of UNFPA report on population

BSS, Dhaka

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is unaware about the statistics of the country's new population figure revealed by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in Dhaka on Wednesday, highly placed sources said yesterday.

Neither Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque nor Secretary Humayun Kabir knew anything about the UN

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Over 3cr children under poverty line

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 3 crore children of Bangladesh live below the poverty line, said the Unicef yesterday urging the government to raise the allocation for the disadvantaged.

Investments targeting the poor and the disadvantaged children should be made and age-based projects implemented, which would help cut the cycle of poverty, the Unicef said while launching a survey report on Progress of Children: Achieving the MDGs (millennium development goals) with Equity at a national seminar in the capital.

The Unicef and Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) jointly organised the seminar on poverty reduction by mitigating

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CTG ARMS HAUL Ex-NSI chief reveals 'role of Babar'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former NSI chief Rezaqul Haider has told CID that former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar assigned him to handover the 10-truck arms to United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) on Sherpur border.

Rezaqul, however, claimed that he couldn't play any role regarding the 10-truck arms smuggling bid as the arms

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NOTICE FOR BIDDING

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Issue Manager	: Prime Finance & Investment Limited
Registrar to the Issue	: Grameen Capital Management Limited
Size of Public Offer	: 40,000,000 Ordinary Shares of Tk10/- each
Quota for EIIs	: 8,000,000 Ordinary Shares
Indicative Price	: Tk. 127/- per share (including a premium of Tk. 117/- per share)
Price band for Bidding	: 20% Upward and Downward band of Indicative Price (i.e. Tk. 101.60 to 152.40)
Bidding Period	: 07 November 2010 at 11:00 am to 10 November 2010 at 4:00 pm
Time of Bidding	: Round the clock
Period for Depositing Bid Money	: 02 November at 10:00 am to 10 November at 1:00 pm
Mode of Payment	: Payment Order/B.B. Cheque/Cash/Electronic Transfer

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