

28 infants die at CMCH in only a week

ARUN BIKASH DEY AND TAREK MAHMUD, Ctg
At least 28 infants died within the last week at the Child Health Ward of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), leaving parents of other children admitted to the ward panic stricken. Ward doctors said they did not fear outbreak of any disease or any "faulty medicine" behind the deaths and termed the similar timing of the deaths a "coincidence". Dr Kazi Shafiqul Alam, deputy director of CMCH, said the infants, aged between one to five months, died in between October 12-19 suffering from 13 different complications. Most of the ward patients came from

poor families and were not admitted to the hospital at the initial stage of their sickness, said Dr Nasiruddin Mahmud of child health department of CMCH. "The delay in getting proper treatment caused aggravation and eventual deaths," he added. Dr Pranab Kumar Chowdhury of the department said infants are most vulnerable to pneumonia during this season. A visit to the Child Health Ward on Saturday found that 205 children and infants were admitted to the 66-bed ward with three to four nurses to attend to them. Only two nebulisers were available there against the high number of children admitted with respiratory complications.

RAMU VIOLENCE Expat Buddhists condemn attacks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi expatriate Buddhists in Thailand have condemned the attack on Buddhists in Ramu, Ukhia, Teknaf and Patiya on September 29. In a statement received in Dhaka yesterday, the Bangladeshi Buddhist Community of Thailand urged the ruling party Awami League and BNP to work together to bring back communal harmony in the area instead of blaming each other over the attack. The Buddhists demanded arrest of the real rioters immediately and security of all minority communities in the country. Terming the attack pre-planned, the expatriate Buddhists alleged that Islamic fundamentalists had instigated the incident to drive the Buddhist and Hindu minority people out of the country. Local police and administration had failed to act quickly to stop the attack, it said.

Chittagong in festive mood for Durga Puja

SHAHENOOR AKTHER URMI, Ctg

Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Hindu community, also known as Sharodiya (autumnal) Durgotsab, began this Saturday with the invocation (bohon) of the goddess Durga all over the country. After celebrating Maha Saptami yesterday, Hindu devotees will celebrate Maha Ashtami today and during it they will take part in Sandhi Puja, an integral part of Durga Puja which is performed at the juncture of the 8th and 9th day. As a part of celebrating Durga Puja, Chittagong's puja mandaps have been decorated using colourful lights and in

different themes. A total of 230 puja mandaps, excluding some 30 private ones, have been set up in the port city this year. "This year, we spent about Tk 15 lakh for our mandaps and we hope visitors, who are coming to see and pray there, will be pleased," Goutam Hazari, secretary of the Hazari Lane Puja Udjapon Parishad told The Daily Star. The puja mandaps are organising cultural programmes every day to entertain the devotees. College student Shomita Devi said, "Durga Puja brings happiness and festive mood for all. I really enjoy the festival."

Remand sought for five Amar Desh staff

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday sought to take the daily Amar Desh's four journalists and an employee on one days' remand in a case filed for assaulting and obstructing police from taking the daily's acting editor, Mahmudur Rahman, into custody two years ago. The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court of Dhaka may hear the remand prayer today, said Mahmudur at a press conference in the daily's office in the capital yesterday. Police did not appeal to take Mahmudur on remand. The five got bail from the High Court and later from the CMM Court over the case police filed on June 2, 2010 against some 400 journalists and employees, mentioning six staff by name, said Mahmudur. Mahmudur protested the remand appeal, saying that it aimed at suppressing the press and closing Amar Desh again. He said police prayed for the bails to be cancelled and take the five on remand to glean information about their correct and full names and addresses for the sake of proper investigation of the case. Those sought on remand are Amar Desh Executive Editor and Jatiya Press Club General Secretary Syed Abdal Ahmad, the daily's News Editor Jahed Chowdhury, Chief Assistant Editor Sanjeeb Chowdhury, Senior Staff Reporter Alauddin Arif and Office Assistant Saiful Islam.

4 contestants in Tangail by-poll

UNB, Tangail

The nomination papers of four candidates, out of five, were declared valid yesterday to contest the Tangail-3 by-election slated for November 18. The four candidates are Shahidul Islam Lebu of Awami League, AL rebel candidate Amanur Rahman Khan Rana, district Muktiyoddha Command Council commander Fazlul Haque and Abu Yusuf Abdullah Tuhin of Jatiya Party (Ershad). Officials said the nomination paper of independent candidate Ataur Rahman Khan was cancelled as he failed to collect support of 1 percent of the voters in the constituency. Returning officer Syed M Khurshid Anwar announced this in the morning. The deadline for withdrawal of nomination is November 1 while the election symbols will be distributed among the hopefuls on November 2. A total of 271,329 voters will exercise their franchise in the by-polls to the parliamentary seat which fell vacant following the death of Awami League MP Dr Matiur Rahman on September 14.



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