Patients overflow CMCH burn unit

SAIDUN NABI, Ctg

Even five years after inception, the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) is struggling with acute shortage of staff and spaces, resulting in belated services to both inpatients and emergency patients.

On a recent visit, this correspondent found that at least 80 patients were admitted to the 24-bed unit, with dozens of them and their relatives taking shelter on the floor, in corridors, on the landings of staircases, and in front of physicians' rooms.

Dr Hashmot Ali, assistant registrar of the unit, said an average of eight to ten patients turned out in the unit every day, half of whom required hospital admission.

Abdul Halim, who rushed his brother Sajib to CMCH on April 22, said Sajib had suffered 25 percent burns to his body but had to wait

for hours to have his wounds dressed.

He was allocated a bed three days later, Halim said, adding that Sajib also had his dressing redone a day after he needed it.

The burn unit currently has eight doctors, four nurses, two ward boys, five ayahs (attendants) and a sweeper working across three shifts.

Arju Begum, mother of fouryear-old Nasrin Akter who had burnt two hands and arms, said her daughter was attended at least one and a half hours after their arrival from Hathazari upazila. She said she could avail a bed for Nasrin only a day later.

A number of other patients alleged that the ward boys and ayahs often did dressings hurriedly and carelessly and charged excessive "tips".

A doctor said they trained ward boys and ayahs to do dressings, a job of the nurse.

At least 15 nurses and 10 more he added.

doctors are required to ensure proper treatment, said Associate Professor Mrinal Kanti Das, incharge of the unit.

He said dressing of a normal wound required 30 to 45 minutes, and the severe cases took twice or more time, while every single dressing was redone on alternate days.

Since there is no intensive care unit (ICU) in the burn unit, critical patients are sent to Dhaka, said Dr

"The burn unit has an operation theatre (OT) but all of the four approved posts, including that of an in-charge, two nurses and a ward boy, are vacant. It also lacks necessary instruments and appropriate lighting facilities," he said.

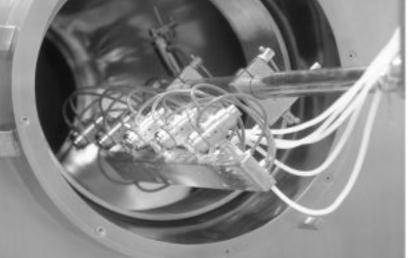
Dr Mrinal said they conducted surgeries in their own OT one day per week and in the OT of Urology Department two days a week. On average, 12-14 operations are carried out on each of these three days,



Patients being forced to make beds on corridors, above, and even in the staircases, right, due to a shortage of space in the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of Chittagong Medical College Hospital. The photos were taken recently.







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Human Resources Department





This mud splattered area resembling a dirt-bike track is actually a road in Beribadh area of the capital's Lalbagh. The condition is created even after short periods of drizzle, causing sufferings to the locals. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: STAR

Salahuddin rearrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective police yesterday rearrested BNP Joint Secretary General Salahuddin Ahmed after his release from jail in four cases filed over vandalism and assaulting police.

Masudur Rahman, a DC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star that the BNP leader was held at the gate of Dhaka Central Jail in the afternoon.

Earlier on April 9, police arrested Salauddin at the Gulshan residence of BNP Vice-Chairman Morshed Ali Khan.

Salauddin was a spokesperson of BNP after the arrest of senior party leaders including Acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

Police also arrested Joint Secretary General Barkatullah Bulu MP on Wednesday at Nayapaltan party office gate.

Nahid lays stress on vocational education

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Emphasising the importance of technical and vocational training, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the country needed the kind of education that was of practical value to people.

"Although the number of students receiving vocational education rose from 1 percent to 6 percent (of total students) during our tenure, we still have a long way to go," he told a seminar at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) in the capital. Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) organised it to mark its 23rd anniversary.

PKSF also organised a five day fair of handicrafts at BICC featuring products of the 88 of its partner

organisations, which came to a close yesterday.

At the closing ceremony, Finance Minister AMA Muhith complimented PKSF for fighting poverty in the country for over two decades.

"PKSF has made significant contributions in making micro-credit sustainable in Bangladesh and empowered 200 organisations that are working for the country's development," he said.

Chairman of PKSF Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad said microcredit schemes of PKSF were unlike the ordinary schemes, as loans were to be repaid not on a weekly basis but on a six-monthly or yearly basis depending on the need of the bor-

যশের মেডিকেল

কলেজের Lecturer

POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN BANGLADESH

Canada expresses concern

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Expressing deep concern over the current political unrest and violence in the country, Canada yesterday called for meaningful and constructive engagement of political parties to address political issues and ensure that the next general election is free, fair and transparent.

In a statement, Canadian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Heather Cruden said, "Canada remains deeply concerned by the political unrest and mounting violence in Bangladesh, including attacks on religious minorities.

"The unrest in Bangladesh carries a heavy toll on the people, their economic prosperity and their democracy. Engaging in peaceful protest is fundamental to democracy. However, we believe that violence has no place in the democratic process."

The Canadian envoy said the Bangladesh government and all opposition parties should clearly and publicly reject the use of political violence.

"Canada calls on them to engage one another meaningfully and constructively to address ongoing political issues and ensure that the upcoming general election is free, fair and transparent," she said.

Heather Cruden also offered condolences to the families and friends of those killed during these protests and wished speedy recovery of those injured.



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Citizens' rally

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and eight other organisations will stage a citizens' rally with a demand to open Dhanmondi ground for all; Venue: In front of the playground; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Agrasan Protirodh Jatiya Committee will hold a discussion on Farakka long march; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 3:00pm.

Rally

Bangladesh Tariqat Federation will organise a rally demanding a noncommunal country; Venue: Before Engineers Institution, Bangladesh; Time: 2:00pm.





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(পশ্চিম পান্তপথ), ঢাকা-১২০৫

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