



PHOTO: STAR

DMCH doctors march in procession in front of the hospital yesterday to protest Saturday's attack on two of their colleagues. They demand arrest and punishment of the perpetrators.

# Treatment denied for another day

FROM PAGE 1  
"Please help get my brother admitted," he said before getting on a CNG-run three-wheeler to go somewhere else.

Many indoor patients left the government hospital ahead of schedule since the 48-hour strike began on Sunday noon.

The interns and honorary physicians, however, withdrew the strike at 8:00pm yesterday and joined work.

"We made the decision as there was progress in the investigation of the case for the attack on our colleagues," said Mostafa Rezowan Siddiky, an honorary doctor.

The decision came after State Minister for Health Zahid Malek met the demonstrating doctors at 6:30pm at the DMCH and requested them to call off the strike.

He also assured them that the attackers would be arrested.

Earlier in the day, Mostafa had announced that the strike would continue till 10:00am on Wednesday.

"We want security at the workplace and demand the arrest of those who attacked our fellow doctors -- Rajib Bhomik and Mominul Islam," he said, as several hundred doctors held a human chain before the Central Shaheed Minar from 11:30am to 2:20pm.

**'CRIMINAL OFFENCE'**  
Rashid-E-Mahbub, chairman of the National Committee of Health Rights Movement, said strikes by doctors were in no way acceptable.

"But at the same time the government has to take prompt action if anything unlawful happens," the physician told The Daily Star last night.

According to him, the health sector needs to be disciplined through urgent attention to it.

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman described the strike as a criminal offence.

"If the state does not take effective steps to stop this practice, it will be

considered as a violation of people's human rights," he told a programme in the capital yesterday.

Unidentified people attacked five honorary doctors on Saturday night at Chankharpool in the capital, badly injuring one of them -- Mominul Islam. Several other doctors escaped the attack unhurt.

Earlier on May 6, intern Rajib Bhomik was wounded in a scuffle between some interns and attendants of a patient over using a hospital elevator, meant only for doctors.

One of the attendants was a Dhaka University student.

Some DU students then vandalised the emergency section of the hospital that day.

The DMCH authorities filed a case against 10-12 people, including three DU students -- Meraj, Ashik and Jewel -- of its Shahidullah Hall.

**HEAL OR KILL?**  
Smriti, 25, is a pregnant mother. The Munshiganj woman got admitted to the DMCH on May 3 with pregnancy-related complications, and was scheduled to have her baby there in four weeks.

"But doctors today [yesterday] suggested that I go home, and come back later if necessary. It is because of the strike," she told this correspondent.

Patients at a neurosurgery ward alleged specialist doctors were not visiting them for the last two days.

"It was basically the nurses who are taking care of us. Can nurses treat patients having serious problems?" a patient asked.

Abdus Salam, whose sister was denied treatment at the outdoor, said, "Doctors are playing with people's lives. The government must take tough action to stop it."

The NHRC chairman said interns and doctors might have some valid grievances, but they should never call a strike as it can cause irreparable damage.

Following strikes by doctors in India, its Supreme Court directed the doctors to refrain from calling strikes under any circumstances, he added.

**SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS**  
The DMCH has around 300 doctors and about 1,000 interns and honorary physicians.

All the interns and honorary doctors were on strike for the past two days, meaning all the patients were left to be looked after by the 300 doctors.

Honorary doctors are not DMCH staff, but are practising physicians. They provide free service at the DMCH as part of their higher education.

Contacted, DMCH Assistant Director Khaza Abdul Gafur said though there was a shortage of doctors, the authorities took special care so that patients were not denied services at the emergency.

From Saturday midnight to Sunday noon, 68 people were admitted to the emergency and 245 people were given primary treatment, he added.

According to DMCH sources, the figures are 120-150 and 300-400 respectively on a normal day.

Dr Gafur admitted that the demonstrating doctors prevented hospital staff from selling tickets for outdoor patients and that many patients had to go back without treatment.

**MORE SUFFERINGS**  
Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) yesterday announced that doctors would observe work abstention for an hour at all public and private hospitals and clinics across the country, form human chains and wear black badges tomorrow.

Its president, Prof Mahmud Hasan, said the association would form a human chain at Shahbagh intersection tomorrow, demanding workplace safety for doctors.

Also, specialist doctors will not attend patients at their private chambers for two hours from 5:00pm on Thursday in protest against the attack on doctors, he added.

# Not 'cooperating', still getting job

FROM PAGE 1  
The cabinet committee on purchase yesterday approved a proposal of the home ministry under which the IRIS will set up four centres in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to enroll about 10 lakh expatriates, Finance Minister AMA Muhith told newsmen after chairing a meeting of the committee.

The company will collect necessary data from the Bangladeshis in the UAE through the regional centres and send those to the passport office in Dhaka online. After printing, the booklets will be sent to the Bangladesh mission in the UAE, from where IRIS will deliver the booklets to the expatriates.

The contractor will get \$13 as service charge for each passport booklet, according to the home ministry proposal.

Earlier, the government had decided to outsource the MRP booklet issuance job considering it a difficult one for the Department of Immigration and

Passports (DIP).

The government in February appointed local consortium Dataedge and ipeople to issue MRP booklets for about five lakh expatriates in Malaysia. Accordingly, the consortium set up enrolment centres in Kuala Lumpur and seven other states of Malaysia.

But the centres remained idle for about a month due to the IRIS's non-cooperation in the integration of the centres. The Dataedge-ipeople will get \$18 as service charge for each MRP booklet.

**INTER-MINISTERIAL MEETING**  
At an inter-ministerial meeting at the foreign ministry yesterday, Foreign Secretary (bilateral) Mostafa Kamal instructed officials of the home ministry and the MRP project to immediately resolve the integration of the MRP issuance centres and start issuing passport booklets.

He wanted to know from the offi-

cial the reason behind the delay and asked them whether the problem was technical or not, said meeting sources.

Representatives of the passport office and the MRP project informed the secretary that the problem was not-technical. The Malaysian contractor was not willing to allow others use their system for integration, mentioned the officials.

Dataedge-ipeople representative Maj (retd) Imtiaz Ahmed told the secretary that his company was facing huge financial losses for not being able to start work due to the integration problem.

Shafiqur Rahman, additional secretary of home ministry, Sirajuddin, additional director general of the DIP, and Lt Col Badruddoza, deputy project director of the MRP project, attended the meeting, among others.

The Daily Star could not reach IRIS project manager Lee Soo Mei over the phone for her comment.

# British museum launches online archive of WWI stories

AFP, London  
Museum curators made a global appeal yesterday for photos and stories about the millions who fought for the British empire in World War I as they launched an ambitious new digital memorial.

The Imperial War Museum in London has put the records of 4.5 million men and more than 40,000 women who served with the British army overseas on a new website, "Lives of the First World War".

But many of the records are just names and the museum wants mem-

bers of the public to add their own pictures and memories to provide a comprehensive picture of what life was like during the 1914-18 war.

Over the next four years, during the course of the centenary of WWI, the museum hopes to put details of about eight million people online.

The records of almost 17,000 conscientious objectors will be included, as will those of people who contributed to the war effort in their home countries.

"Everybody can contribute to Lives of the First World War, whether they choose to simply remember someone

online, upload a picture from their family album, share a story passed down through generations, or connect official records to build a full and factual picture of what happened to that person throughout the war," said Luke Smith, who is leading the project at the museum.

Richard Grayson, chairman of the museum's Digital Projects Academic Advisory Group, said the website was "an exceptional opportunity for the public and academics to work together in writing new histories of the war".

# Disband Rab

FROM PAGE 1  
national force. "It's now a political organisation," she said while exchanging greetings with the members of the Buddhist community at her Gulshan office on the occasion of Buddha Purnima.

The BNP chief for the first time claimed that not seven, 11 people were abducted and killed in the Narayanganj incident and the names of the other four were not being discussed as they were poor. She also alleged that Rab-1 has abducted eight people on December 4 last year.

Meanwhile, accusing the Rapid Action Battalion of "working as hired killers and abductors," BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir too has demanded that the elite force be disbanded immediately.

"The Rab has now become a killer force which is abducting people and making them disappear for money. They can be hired. There is no need to keep the force any more," he said yesterday.

He was speaking at a programme organised by the pro-BNP student body, Chhatra Dal, at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Termining Khaleda Zia's demand for disbanding the Rab "timely and justified," Fakhrul said not only the Rab but the government and the prime minister also will have to shoulder the responsibility for the Narayanganj seven-murder incident.

Fakhrul also rejected criticisms from different quarters that the BNP had initiated the elite force when it was in power to use it for extrajudicial killings and now is demanding its abolition only for political purposes.

The BNP government formed the Rab to combat militancy and serious crimes only, he argued.

**KHALEDA TO VISIT N'GANJ**  
BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will visit Narayanganj today to console the family members of the seven people who were recently abducted and killed.

She is scheduled to leave her Gulshan residence around 11:00am and go straight to the residence of slain panel mayor Nazrul Islam in Siddhirganj upazila.

From there, she will go and meet the families of the other victims, said Taimur Alam Khandaker, president of the BNP's Narayanganj unit.

# Maya skips cabinet meeting

FROM PAGE 1  
secretariat around 3:15pm.

"I went to my office as I needed to do some work," Maya told The Daily Star in the afternoon.

On his absence at the cabinet meeting, he said it was not only him who did not attend the meeting. "What's wrong with my absence when some other ministers also did not turn out to join the meeting?" he questioned.

When some journalists went to his office to know the reason behind his absence at the meeting, he requested the newsmen to take tea, pray for him

# Four military deals signed

FROM PAGE 16  
the signing.

General Xu, who leads a 21-member Chinese delegation, was given a guard of honour at Senakunja in Dhaka Cantonment, said a press release of the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

The Chinese delegation also called on President Abdul Hamid at Bangabhaban and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Gono Bhaban yesterday.

During the meeting with the president, General Xu, who is also vice-chairman of the central military commission of the Communist Party of China, said his country wanted to add a new dimension to the friendly relations between Dhaka and Beijing.

President Hamid expressed hope that this visit would further deepen the cooperation between the two countries.

**VISIT TO PM**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina sought Chinese cooperation in Bangladesh's bid to become a developed and prosperous nation by 2041.

General Xu, who called on the premier at Gono Bhaban, assured her that the Chinese government would provide support to Bangladesh's steps to modernise its armed forces.

He also highly appreciated Bangladesh's "one China policy", PM's special assistant Mahbubul Hoque Shakil told reporters.

Hasina hoped that the construction of the Trans-Asian highway through China, Myanmar and Bangladesh would be completed soon. The highway will boost trade between Bangladesh and China, she said.

The premier invited the Chinese president and prime minister to visit Bangladesh at a time convenient to them. Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Li Jun was present during the meeting.

# Exit polls forecast big win

FROM PAGE 1  
Ruling Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was tipped to get between 101 and 148 seats while others, including regional parties and Left, were projected to get between 146 and 156 seats, according to the polls shown on TV channels at the end of the ninth and last phase of polling yesterday.

Ananda Bazar Patrika News-Nielson poll projected a clear majority for the NDA with 281 seats while the UPA was projected to get 97 and others 165.

The poll said the NDA would make major gains in the key battleground states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra, which together account for 168 seats.

In West Bengal, Trinamool Congress is expected to reassert its supremacy with most exit polls giving it 20 to 31 seats and showing the Left Front, voted out of power in the state three years ago, making a slow comeback with 7 to 15 seats. The BJP is projected to get 1 to 3 seats in West Bengal.

The survey results confirmed opinion polls forecasts before voting started on April 7 that the BJP and its allies should be able to cobble a majority (272) in the Lok Sabha parliament after trouncing the ruling Congress party.

After the ninth and final phase of polling yesterday, the Indian Election Commission said a total of 551 million have voted -- 130 million more than in 2009 -- in all the phases of national elections this year with turnout at a record high of 66.38 percent, surpassing the previous best of 64.01 percent in 1984 after the assassination of the then prime minister Indira Gandhi.

"Today's figures may still go up marginally because of postal ballots and other factors," Akshay Rout, director general of the Election Commission, told reporters yesterday.

The focus in yesterday's polling was on the holy city of Varanasi, where the 63-year-old Modi was in the fray and

and leave the office.

The minister on Friday claimed that none of his family members had any links in the abduction and murder of seven people. "I believe that the truth will definitely be revealed through an investigation," he mentioned.

Several cabinet members told this correspondent that Maya was avoiding the prime minister as he felt embarrassed to come across her following the allegation that his son-in-law Lt Col Tareque Sayeed Mohammad, former commander of Rab-11, and son Dipu Chowdhury were involved in the incident.

hoping for a crowning victory on the final day of voting. He was challenged by Arvind Kejriwal of the Aam Aadmi Party, and Ajai Rai of the Congress.

In a video message, Modi paid tribute to the hundreds of thousands who "stood out in the scorching sun for hours to give strength to our democracy" over the last five weeks.

Modi's seeking a parliamentary election debut in Varanasi was rich in religious symbolism and seen as reinforcing his Hindu nationalist credentials during a campaign in which he largely steered clear of his customary headline rhetoric and focused on governance and development to revive a flagging economy after 10 years of left-leaning rule by the Congress party.

But Modi also remains a highly controversial figure over allegations that he failed swiftly to curb the deadly 2002 anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat which left at least 1,000 people dead shortly after he came to power there.

# No fresh

FROM PAGE 16  
at the Appellate Division from seven to 11 prior to disposing of some important cases on the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, among others.

Currently, there are around 1,600 judges working in lower courts across the country, according to sources.

# Halda sees fish

FROM PAGE 2  
watchful eye on the river as the torrential rains coupled with thunderstorms continued for many hours on Sunday.

Around 3:30 am yesterday, they noticed that mother fish started releasing spawn at different points covering around 10-km area of the Halda.

The points include Napierghona, Ankurighona, Azimerghat, Garduara and Ram Das Ghat.

"We were waiting for the moment," said Md Firoj, a spawn collector of Pashchim Garduara.

"I engaged five boats to collect 20 buckets of eggs," said Sridham Jaladas, another local fisherman.

At the beginning of April, indigenous fish species migrate from different rivers including the Kamaphuli and Sangu into the Halda to spawn.

After collecting the eggs, fishermen nurture those in mud-made pots and also in cisterns of eight hatcheries established by the fisheries department, said spawn collector Firoj.

After 96 hours, the eggs transform into fries which are then sold to the fry collectors or hatchery owners at Tk 50,000 to 80,000 per kg, said local fishermen.

Constructing rubber dams and unplanned sluice gates for irrigation and discharge of industrial wastes are destroying the environment for spawning in the river, said Halda expert Kibria.

# Rab official

FROM PAGE 1  
"It is Colonel Zia who helped him [Nur] with safe passage. They all now want to save the Rab," Shahid told The Daily Star, holding a copy of the newspaper report.

Referring to the fact that the accused Rab officials were not arrested even after a High Court order, he said, "What does it mean? It means the Rab is trying to save the accused."

On April 27, Narayanganj panel mayor Nazrul Islam and his four aides and senior lawyer Chandan Sarker and his driver were kidnapped from the Dhaka-Narayanganj link road at around the same time in broad daylight.

Six bodies, including that of Nazrul and Chandan, were found floating in the Shitalakkhya river on April 30, and another was found the following day.

Shahid said though the law enforcing agencies had been requested to arrest Nur Hossain and a case had been filed against him, the law enforcers did not arrest him. Instead, they said Nur was under their watch.

"How did he escape under their watch then? It raises suspicions," he said.

Col Ziaul admitted that Nur is currently in Kolkata.

# France's black justice minister in anthem row

AFP, Paris  
France's black justice minister faced calls to resign yesterday for refusing to take part in what she called "karaoke" by singing the national anthem at a weekend event commemorating the abolition of slavery.

The centre-right main opposition UMP roundly criticised Christine Taubira for refusing to sing the Marseillaise while the far-right National Front party demanded that she quit her post.

After critics posted remarks on her Facebook page concerning the event at Paris's Luxembourg gardens, Taubira hit back saying: "Some events are more a time for reflection than onstage karaoke."

# Ctg Jamaat chief

FROM PAGE 16  
Sayeed by the apex court, he said.

"We recovered 50 empty bottles meant for making petrol bombs, a large bottle containing petrol and one and a half kgs of potash from the office," the police official added.

Of the arrestees, Shamsul Islam was accused in around 15 cases, Nazrul in around 20 cases and Obaidullah in several cases for different criminal offences, including vandalism, arson attacks and attacks on on-duty police officials, Mohiuddin said.

Chittagong city nayeb-e-ameer Mohammad Ahsanullah said the Jamaat leaders sat in a regular monthly meeting, and denied the allegation of planning subversive activities.

A case has been filed.

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AFP, London

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