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PART-2 PRABIN HOSPITAL

Hospital of neglect

TAMANNA KHAN

It was around noon. The 2nd and 3rd floors of the old home and hospital were quieter than its ground and 1st floors. The post-operative ward for male patients, which is in a corner on the 2nd floor, was locked with empty beds inside. "Forty percent of our patients are senior citizens and about 60% of them are young," said ASM Atiqur Rahman, secretary general of Bangladesh Association for the Aged & Institute of Geriatric Medicine (BAAIGM). Established in 1960 and run by BAAIGM in the capital's Agargaon, the old home is part of a non-profit social welfare project, which is partly funded by the government. "People think it is a hospital only for the old, but actually it is a general hospital where people aged above 60 receive treatment at a reduced rate and those who are life time members get a 50% discount. The poor, however, get totally free treatment," Rahman said. Rahman was talking about the hospital attached to the old home. He said they are having difficulty attracting patients to the hospital because many people do not know about it. In the 50-bed hospital, there are four wards: two for males and two for females, and each ward has seven beds. Only three wards were found occupied.



In a country where hospital beds seldom remain vacant, the picture at the Prabin Hospital is quite the opposite. Most of the beds at the hospital's male ward are empty, as patients hardly visit the hospital for its lack of necessary equipment and experienced staff. Elderly women, inset, wait for their turn to see a doctor.



PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

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Kalam had no property

THE HINDU ONLINE
Former Indian president APJ Abdul Kalam, who died in Shillong on July 27, had no property in his name, his scientific advisor V Ponraj said.

Talking to reporters on Saturday, he said Kalam's only properties were his books and 64 crore youths in the country. The former president had a property in Bengaluru, but he disposed it off for a cause, said Ponraj, who had been with Kalam for about two decades. He was not aware whether Kalam had bequeathed anything to anyone in his will, he said answering a question.

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Businessman shot dead on a bus

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj
Criminals last night stopped a bus by exploding crude bombs and killed a businessman on the vehicle on Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road at Mahmudpur.

The victim, Nurul Islam, 42, owned a mobile phone store in the capital and lived near Fatullah Rail Station. He was returning from Dhaka on a bus of Utsab Paribahan.

A gang of four-five intercepted the bus around 9:45pm. They got inside, shot Nurul Islam in the chest and left with his bag.

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PRAYER TIMING
AUGUST 4
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-47 8-15
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-50 8-45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Floods bring misery

Floodwaters breach embankments; Sangu devours 50 houses

STAR REPORT

A few lakh more people were hit by flood in three coastal districts as flood water breached several embankments there. In Bandarban, the Sangu devoured at least 50 houses on its bank early yesterday. Some villages in the bordering Sharsha and Jhikargachha upazilas of Jessore were inundated due to onrush of water from rivers upstream in West Bengal. The overall flood situation in Noakhali improved yesterday, but deteriorated in Cox's Bazar and remained unchanged in Bandarban. The Dhaka Met office said many areas of the country might experience further rainfall today. Over five lakh people have been suffering from flooding in Cox's Bazar, Noakhali, Feni, Patuakhali and Barguna since the tropical storm Komen hit the Bangladesh coast on Friday.

Hundreds of villages near the coasts went under water. Standing crops and fish farms were washed away, said local people. Flood water broke through about five kilometres of embankments in Barguna, Patuakhali and Cox's Bazar, submerging around 50 villages along the coasts. Mir Tariquzzaman Tara, chairman of Lalua Union Parishad in Kalapara upazila of Patuakhali, said families of over 5,000 farmers in 10 villages were marooned as tidal water submerged the villages in the last four days. In Noakhali, nearly four lakh people were affected by flooding as 353 villages in Hatiya, Subarnachar, Senbag, Sonaimuri, Begumganj, Kabirhat, Companiganj and Noakhali Sadar upazilas went under water, said sources at the deputy commissioner's (DC) office.

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Triggered by a depression from Cyclone Komen, heavy downpour over the last few days has flooded many areas in Patuakhali. In this photo, Banatipara Government Primary School building in Kalapara upazila remains inundated. The photo was taken on Sunday.

Stop plying of unfit vehicles immediately

HC asks govt; orders freezing fake driving licences

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to immediately stop plying of all unfit motor vehicles across the country. Issuing a suo moto rule, the court also ordered the authorities concerned to freeze around 19 lakh fake driving licences. The HC bench of Justice Quazi-Reza-Ul-Haque and Justice Abu Taher Md Saifur Rahman asked the authorities to take legal

action against the persons who are using fake licences. Besides, the court also asked the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) chairman to submit a report after complying with the order in 30 days. In the rule, the court asked the authorities concerned to explain in four weeks what actions have so far been taken as a large number of vehicles are running without

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Monsoon rains heap misery across Asia

Hundreds dead, millions displaced in flash floods, landslides

AFP, Yangon

Monsoon rains have claimed the lives of hundreds of people across Asia, authorities said yesterday, as rescue workers scrambled to reach remote areas of India, Pakistan and Myanmar in the wake of flash floods and landslides. Authorities in India say more than 120 people have died across the country in recent days, while more than a million have been displaced by rains worsened by a

cyclone that barrelled through the Bay of Bengal last week. Yesterday, rescuers resumed their search for villagers after downpours caused a landslide in remote northeastern Manipur, where an official said four bodies have been recovered from a hamlet buried by a collapsed hill. In neighbouring Myanmar the belt of heavy seasonal rains -- augmented by Cyclone Komen -- have killed 46 people so far and affected more than 200,000 with

DEMO ON HIGHWAYS

People suffer for 3rd day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

People continued to suffer for the third consecutive day yesterday as auto-rickshaw workers and owners demonstrated against the government ban on three-wheelers and slow-moving vehicles on highways. The agitators blocked highways, causing long tailbacks. On July 27, the road transport and bridges ministry issued an order banning three-wheelers like auto-rickshaws and other slow-moving and unfit vehicles on highways from August 1. Protestors remain vehement in carrying out demonstrations until their demand for withdrawal of the ban is met. "We demand separate lanes on highways for auto-rickshaws and other three-wheelers. Ignoring our demand, the government imposed the ban," said Golam Faruk, convener of Bangladesh Auto-Rickshaw Auto-Tempo Shilpa Bachao Sangram Parishad that is conducting the protest. Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary MAN Siddique, however, said the protest was irrational. The country has around 2.5 lakh kilometers regional roads and over 3.5 thousand kilometers national highways. "Operation of these vehicles is banned on national highways only. They are allowed on other roads," Siddique told The Daily Star.

Phone batteries track users

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Phone batteries are sending out information that could be used to identify their owners and track them around the internet, even if they have taken very careful privacy precautions, according to a paper by security researchers. A piece of software in HTML5 — the technology used to let people read sites on the web — tells websites how much battery is left in a users' phone, and is intended to allow websites to help

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PHOTO: SOHRAH HOSSAIN