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PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Cancer treatment facilities scanty

HELEMUL ALAM

For months, Halima Begum shuttled between her hometown Barisal and Dhaka several times for radiotherapy at the capital's National Institute of Cancer Research and Hospital (NICRH).

Every time, the 33-year-old had to return home without the therapy she badly needed, as she did not get an appointment.

The last time she visited the hospital was on October 26. On the same day, several other cancer patients were refused immediate radiotherapy as the hospital struggles to cope with the daily flow of patients.

On average, 1,000 patients seek appointments for radiotherapy every day at the NICRH in Mohakhali, the lone specialised government hospital of its kind in the country.

With only six machines, it can offer services to 450-500 patients at best per day, said hospital Director Moarraf Hossen.

Radiotherapy or radiation therapy is part of cancer treatment to control or kill malignant cells.

When the biggest cancer hospital in the country was built in 1989, it had only outdoor facilities. Three years later, it

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● 16 public & private hospitals treat cancer patients, although WHO recommends the number should be at least **160**

● Only some **500** patients treated with radiotherapy at NICRH every day against the demand of over **1,000**

● The NICRH needs at least **12** radiotherapy machines, but it has only six

● Many machines in other districts were bought at least **20** years ago



Ecstatic students of different schools holding up books that they were awarded at a book reading ceremony organised by Biswa Sahitya Kendra at Ramna Batamul in the capital. A total of 2,200 students won books yesterday for their reading performance.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

GRAFT IN SUPPLY CHAIN

TIB findings baseless, say RMG makers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rejecting the TIB findings on garment supply chain, apparel makers yesterday said the report of Transparency International Bangladesh is baseless and it intends to damage the sector's image.

Siddiqur Rahman, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, strongly protested the TIB report at a hurriedly called press

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Life at death yard

Lack of safety measures, monitoring puts ship-breaking workers in peril

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chittagong

Frequent accidents have been claiming lives or seriously injuring many workers in Chittagong shipbreaking yards over the years, largely due to lax safety measures and monitoring.

The High Court had issued directives asking the government to ensure workers' safety. The government also set safety guidelines on shipbreaking, yet 60 workers were killed and 125 injured in accidents in the last five and a half years, according to Shipbreaking Workers Trade Union Forum.

Last year, accidents killed at least 13 workers,

including three at RA Enterprise Shipbreaking Yard. The three were badly burnt on October 13, and later they died at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) on October 18 and 19.

Dr MS Khaled of the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit at the hospital said they over the years treated most of the injured workers for inhalation wounds.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, chief executive of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), held the negligence of owners responsible for repeated accidents.

Referring to the September 5 accident at Shital

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60 workers killed, 125 injured in last five and a half years

Not enough safety gears for workers

Some owners negligent in enforcing safety regulations

Lax govt monitoring blamed on manpower shortage

TORTURED BY COPS

Rabbi now 'threatened'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Bank official, who was tortured by police on January 9, has allegedly received "indirect threats" to refrain from seeking legal actions against his torturers.

Two men posing as journalists entered the Dhaka Medical College Hospital cabin, where BB Assistant Director Golam Rabbi is being treated, around 12:30am and issued the threats, said Rabbi's brother Rashed Alam.

"The men, aged between 27 and 30, told

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Bangladesh all-rounder Sabbir Rahman lit up Sheikh Abu Naser Stadium in Khulna yesterday with his 36-ball 46. Promoted to the number three spot, Sabbir gave the innings impetus, smashing four 4s and a six, as the hosts surpassed Zimbabwe's score with eight balls and four wickets to spare in the first T20I. Stories on Page 14

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

DSCC staff tortured by policemen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In another incident of police brutality, a sub-inspector (SI) along with his subordinates yesterday beat up a staff of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) in the capital's Jatrabari area.

SI Arshadul Islam Akash of Jatrabari Police Station and his men "pounced" on DSCC Conservancy Officer Bikash Chandra Das "without any reason" when the latter was going to work around 4:15am, the victim's family alleged.

The incident happened less than a week after a Bangladesh Bank official was tortured and threatened with life by some cops led by another SI in the city's Mohammadpur area.

Bikash's wife Saraswati Das told The Daily Star that her husband left their Doyaganj residence around 4:00am on a motorcycle to supervise the road cleaning work.

"When he reached Mirhazirbagh, some



Bikash with his wife at DMCH. PHOTO: STAR

plainclothes policemen signaled him to pull over. My husband stopped a little bit ahead."

"Sub-Inspector Akash then went to him and hit him on the back of his head without saying anything," Saraswati said, quoting some DSCC cleaners who were working at the scene and witnessed the incident.

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LUXURY POOL VILLA / 3000 SFT (actual image)

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