



A ward full of patients at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in Barisal city, with no interns in sight, yesterday. The interns in several hospitals including this one have been on strike since Thursday after four of them in Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogra were suspended for beating the son of a patient.

PHOTO: STAR

Islamist parties' 25 men face arrest warrants

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued arrest warrants against 25 leaders and activists of the 12-party alliance of Islamist parties, including Jamaat-e-Islami, in a case filed under the Explosive Substances Act.

After accepting the charges against 29, including the 25, the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order declaring them fugitives.

Jamaat leaders Moulana Rafiqul Islam, Selim Uddin, former lawmaker Hamidur Rahman Azad, Islami Oikya Jote Chairman Abdul Latif Nezami, its Secretary General Mufti Faizullah, Mufti Wakkas, Khelaphat Majlish chief Mohammad Ishaq, Secretary Ahammad Abdul Kader, and Nezami Islam Party President

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8

UK expects to see participatory 2019 election

British official Sharma tells Star

REZAUL KARIM



In the run-up to the 2019 general election, the UK said it would keep eyes on Bangladesh's political developments and hoped to see a free and fair vote with the participation of all political parties to advance democratic values.

"We of course observe and see what happens between now and the elections 2019. For us, it is important that the elections are free and fair and they embed democratic values," said British Foreign Office Minister for Asia and the Pacific Alok Sharma.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, Sharma said in his meetings with political leaders of ruling and opposition parties he emphasised the need for an inclusive election.

"And clearly at the end of the day the best way to make it sure that you have strong democracy is full participation of all parties in elections -- that's a message I delivered consistently in my visit," he said.

Sharma, who made his first visit to Bangladesh, left Dhaka on

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

No end in sight to interns' strike

Patients keep on suffering as work pressure on doctors, nurses mounts

STAR REPORT

In order to undergo a surgery on his left leg, Shahjahan Mia was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital a week back. He needed to have the infected wound dressed, but no doctor has visited him in the last three days.

"I badly needed a dressing, but the nurses were not doing it without the consent of doctors," he said.

Holding her two-year-old ailing son in the arms, Marjina Khatun, 34, stood in a long queue outside Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogra. After one and a half hours, when she came near the ticket counter, she found it shut.

"I continued waiting in the queue. It was so tiring," said the resident of Shajahanpur upazila, around 9:30am. Her son got cold and fever three days ago.

Marjina is one of a few hundred patients who faced the similar fate -- waiting in the sun for long hours, only to find the counter closed.

A staff at the hospital said interns forced the employees to keep the counter shut for an hour.

Similar situations -- in some



PHOTO: STAR
Interns of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital protest the suspension and transfer of four fellows, on the campus yesterday.

places, it was worse -- have been prevailing in various medical college hospitals across the country as interns have been on a strike since Thursday.

The strike started after the health ministry suspended four interns of Bogra medical college for six months and transferred them to four other colleges, following findings of an inquiry that they beat up the son of a patient on February 19 over a trifling matter.

Interns say the inquiry was not

done properly and a female intern faced misconduct by the patient's relative. They demand withdrawal of the penalty and security of the interns.

With the interns staying off work, doctors and nurses are facing tremendous pressure.

"Sufferings mount if a single regular staff abstains from work. Now think of the situation when all interns are absent," said Shahidul Islam, a nurse at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

At Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in Barisal, no doctor visited Omar Farque, 25, in the last 48 hours after he got admitted, let alone start treating him.

"Only nurses came to me and inquired, but there was no treatment," he said.

Dr Solaiman, a doctor of the ward, said they were now attending only critically-ill patients due to the strike.

Another physician said every day around 350 patients visited the outdoor, and they were facing problems to see them amid the work stoppage of the interns.

He also spoke of an elderly blood pressure patient who left the hospital yesterday for Dhaka, failing to avail treatment in the hospital.

The interns were on strike also in Mitford Hospital, Chittagong Medical College Hospital, Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital, Jalalabad Ragib-Rabeya Medical College Hospital, Sylhet Women's Medical College Hospital, North East Medical

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

PLAIN LAND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE Form separate land commission for them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of indigenous communities, lawyers and lawmakers yesterday demanded that the government form a separate land commission for the ethnic people living in plain land areas of the country.

The commission must have the power to exercise rather than just making recommendations to the government, they said.

As the ethnic people have been living in and cultivating their land over the years based on their ancestral tradition, they never had had any ownership documents as required by the country's law, they added.

The speakers made the remarks at a national dialogue on "Draft of Separate Land Commission for the Plain Land Indigenous Population" at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), Indigenous Peoples Development Services (IPDS), Caritas Bangladesh, Brottee, Gram Bikash Kendra and Jatiya Adivasi Parishad jointly organised the event.

Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum, said, "The land rights of plain land indigenous people cannot be protected under the current land laws of the country. So, the government must form a separate land commission for them."

The ruling Awami League made electoral pledges in this regard but has not taken any step yet, he added.

Titus Hillol Rema, a member of Bangladesh Indigenous

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Verdict on attempting to murder Khadiza on March 8

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A Sylhet court yesterday fixed March 8 for delivering the verdict in a case filed over attacking college student Khadiza Begum Nargis.

Metropolitan Sessions Judge Akbar Hossain Mridha fixed the date on completion of hearing arguments from both the prosecution and defence, said Misbah Uddin Siraj, public prosecutor.

On October 3 last year, Khadiza, a student of Sylhet Government Women's College, was brutally hacked by Badrul Alam, a student of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology and a leader of Bangladesh Chhatra League unit at the university.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

CALL FOR PROJECTS

Do you have a project with a high social or environmental impact?

Share and be the next to inspire the world!

tellsparknews.com GO

DEADLINE MARCH 15th

Credits: Ron Gautreau



Participants at a national dialogue on "Draft of Separate Land Commission for the Plain Land Indigenous Population" at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Indian citizen flees CMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An Indian citizen, who was undergoing treatment at Chittagong Medical College Hospital on a court's order, fled the hospital on Saturday morning.

Mohammed Jalal, 46, of Shiliguri, was sent to Chittagong jail after police arrested him in Rangunia upazila on October 27, 2013 for intruding the country without any document.

A judicial magistrate court on February 27 granted him bail and on March 2 directed the CMCH authorities to give him psychiatric treatment for his "abnormal behavior".

Jalal's lawyer TR Khan said he would issue a legal notice to the medicine ward from where he fled as well as to the hospital authorities. Contacted over the phone, Dr Tanvir, assistant registrar of medicine ward, said he would talk about it in person.

Deputy Director Didarul Islam of CMCH said he was not aware of the incident.



PHOTO: STAR

Indian citizen Mohammed Jalal, 46, of Shiliguri at Chittagong Medical College Hospital on Friday night. He had been undergoing treatment for mental health conditions following a court order, but he fled the hospital Saturday morning.

FOUR POINTS
BY SHERATON
Dhaka Gulshan

2542 sqft
AVAILABLE FOR LEASE
+880 1713 193355

IMPACT Journalism Day

On June 24th 2017, 55 of the world's most prestigious newspapers will highlight 60 innovative projects, reaching 120 million readers around the world. **More info at** impactjournalismday.com

In partnership with

