



NATIONAL MOURNING DAY OBSERVANCE IN DISTRICTS:
1) Mymensingh district administration brings out a mourning procession in the city, 2) people pray after placing wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on the premises of Thakurgaon Zila Parishad Dak Bungalow, 3) public representatives, officials and political leaders pray after placing wreath at Bangabandhu's portrait at Central Shaheed Minar in Bagerhat, 4) teachers, officials and students of President Prof Dr Iajuddin Ahmed Residential Model School and College in Munshiganj bring out a mourning procession, 5) public representatives, officials and politicians pray in front of Bangabandhu's portrait at Shaheed Smriti Poura Udyan in Tangail, and 6) the local administration and Department of Women Affairs bring out a mourning procession in Juri upazila of Moulvibazar on the 44th anniversary of the martyrdom of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Quality treatment for kids at government hospital

Underprivileged people benefit as Moulvibazar District Hospital arranges special care unit, neatly decorated ward for new mothers, kids

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

The 250-bed District Hospital in Moulvibazar is now playing a significant role in providing quality treatment facilities for women in labour, newborn babies and children, thanks to the authorities' special initiative that started in January 2017.

Koloti Robidas, a worker of Baghacherra tea garden in Kamolganj upazila of the district, said her second baby was born at the hospital a few days ago.

"As the baby was facing some problems, doctors took him to special care unit. And he became normal within a few hours," she said.

Ironically, her first baby died shortly after birth at the same hospital three years ago.

"I think my first baby would also remain alive if there was quality treatment at this hospital that time," said Koloti.

Joyal Abedin, a resident of Pachgaon village in Rajnagar upazila, said after knowing from ultrasonogram report that his wife would give birth to twin babies he came to the hospital to know the facilities.

"As I learnt that there are adequate treatment facilities at the children's ward and modern special care unit for newborn babies at the hospital I admitted my wife here on August 8 and the twins were born the next day. Now the mother and babies are okay," he said.

"Unaware of the treatment facilities here, many people go to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital," he added.

Momtaz Begum, 43, a resident of Giasnagar village in Sadar upazila, said she admitted her kid to the 250-bed district hospital five days ago and authorities discharged her after completion of treatment on Thursday.

"My kid was treated at Green zone of the ward as a normal patient. For the first time in life, I have seen such a colourful hospital ward. Earlier I had seen it in movies," she added.

Partho Sarathi Datta Kanungo, superintendent of Moulvibazar district hospital, told this correspondent, "After joining here a few years



A scene of the colourful children's ward of Moulvibazar District Hospital. PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

ago, I saw that many newborn babies, especially premature ones, face problems, including breathing difficulties, feeding problem and low weight."

"It was painful to hear that a few babies died on the way after we referred them to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital for better treatment on different occasions. After long observation and planning, we started a modern special care unit for newborn babies. Simultaneously colourful children's ward was established for providing better treatment to kids. UNICEF supports us to run this programme," he said.

"Considering the health conditions of children, we have made three categories of

arrangement under Red, Orange and Green zones and painted those with respective colours.

"After check-ups, patients in danger are admitted to Red zone where they are under full time supervision of nurses and doctors. When they show considerable improvement they are taken to Orange zone while Green zone is for those who are under care prior to discharging," said the hospital superintendent.

According to the information provided by Moulvibazar district hospital, 99 kids died at the hospital in 2016 while the number came down to 63 and 34 in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

500 tonnes of Bhutanese stones stuck at Chilmari river port

2 Bangladeshi vessels arrived at the port on July 25 through the Brahmaputra river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, DINAJPUR

Two Bangladeshi vessels carrying 500 tonnes of Bhutanese stones have been stuck at Chilmari river port in Kurigram for more than two weeks as the customs authorities refused to let those sail further ahead, citing legal constraints.

The boats arrived at the port on July 25 through the Brahmaputra river, and are supposed to dock at Narayanganj port for unloading.

The importers said they followed due procedure in using the waterway.

The stones were imported after Bangladesh and Bhutan signed a waterway protocol recently. The first waterway load under the instrument came to Bangladesh through the same route on July 18.

The stones were transported by truck from landlocked Bhutan to Assam, from where the vessels received the cargo and sailed back to Bangladesh.

Importer Nasir Khan said he was told that Chilmari River Port was not authorised yet for passing imports from a third country like Bhutan.

He said they followed all rules before sailing for Assam. "If we violated the rules, why did the customs permit the vessels to go to Assam and receive the consignment?"

The vessels left Chilmari port on July 13 after getting approval from Mizanul Haque, a customs official in Kurigram, he said.

The Daily Star tried to contact the official but his phone was switched off.

Nasir claimed that they also took permission from the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

"I opened an LC (letter of credit) for importing the stones, and the customs authorities are aware of everything," he

said. "Why didn't they tell me anything before?"

The market price of the imported stones is Tk 30 lakh, Nasir said. "I'm incurring a loss of Tk 30,000 daily for the delay."

Contacted, Aktar Hossen, second secretary (import and agreement) of Customs in Rangpur, said the goods from third countries like Bhutan can be imported through Burimari (Lalmoirhat) and Banglabandha (Panchagarh) land ports.

But the existing law does not permit any import through Chilmari River Port, he told The Daily Star. The river port lacks manpower and infrastructure, he added.

The official, however, did not answer when asked why the vessels were allowed to sail for Assam in the first place. "We are looking into it," he said.

Meanwhile, a senior official of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) said no cargo vessel from Bhutan is permitted through Chilmari port.

"In absence of permission, there is a legal bar in assessing tax and duties of imported goods and give clearance," he said, seeking anonymity.

The official said Chilmari port was mentioned in the waterway protocol but its infrastructure is not ready yet. That's why this port was not included as a point of entry in a notification NBR issued recently, he said.

"The importers brought cargo through this route without prior discussion. Now we have taken an initiative to give special permission for the vessels."

NBR has submitted a proposal to the finance minister for special permission and amendment of the notification, the official said. "We will take necessary measures after getting the approval."