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HEALTH EXPENSES

People dig deeper into their pockets

Ministry study finds the out-of-pocket cost in Bangladesh highest in South Asia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's out-of-pocket (OOP) healthcare expenditure has continued to rise, leaving a sizeable population with catastrophic medical bills, found a recent study by the health ministry.

Between 2015 to 2020, the OOP -- which is the expense for treatment borne directly by a patient where neither public nor private insurance covers the full cost of the health good or service -- has increased to 68.5 percent from 67 percent, according to the study.

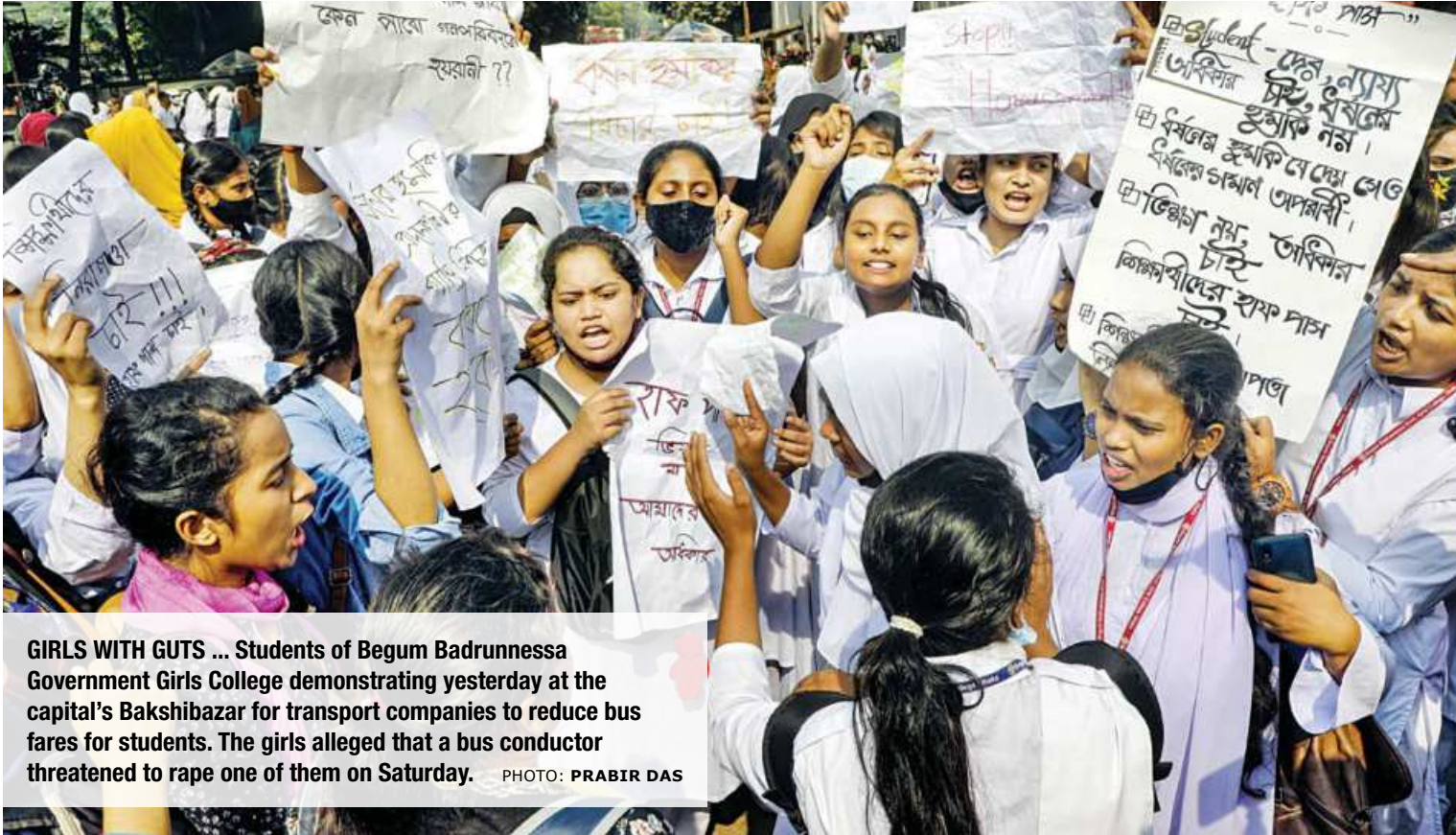
This is the highest among Saarc nations, said the technical study conducted by

the Health Economics Unit (HEU) of the health ministry to bring down OOP in the country. The findings of the study were shared yesterday at an event styled "Pathways to Reduce Household OOP Expenditure".

Thanks to the rising OOP, 16.4 percent of the households avoid getting medical help even when needed, 24.4 percent of families (at 10 percent income level) are facing catastrophic health bills and 4.5 percent of the people are pushed into poverty every year.

About 64 percent of the OOP expenditure goes for medicine, whereas it

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GIRLS WITH GUTS ... Students of Begum Badrunessa Government Girls College demonstrating yesterday at the capital's Bakshibazar for transport companies to reduce bus fares for students. The girls alleged that a bus conductor threatened to rape one of them on Saturday. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Army should be people's

PM says on Armed Forces Day

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the members of the Armed Forces to uphold the glory of the country by contributing to its development activities alongside protecting the sovereignty.

"I believe you can earn admiration everywhere by your discipline and professions and can uphold the glory of the country by contributing to the development activities alongside protecting its sovereignty," she said while



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Show your plan for protecting rivers

HC gives govt six months' time to list all rivers too

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the government to make a complete list of all the rivers in the country and to come up with an action plan on how the rivers will be protected from encroachers.

The list and the action plan must be submitted to the court in six months.

The finance ministry, National River Conservation Commission (NRCC), Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority, and the divisional commissioners were asked to comply with this directive.

The HC also ordered the authorities concerned to demarcate the boundaries of the Turag river as

per cadastral survey record from 1940.

At the same time, the HC issued a rule asking the authorities concerned of the government to explain why they should not be directed to evict the land grabbers and encroachers from the rivers across the country and why their failure in this regard should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Kamrul Hossain Mollah came up with the orders and rule while hearing a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), seeking necessary directives on the issue.

Bela's Chief Executive Officer Syeda Rizwana

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Let Khaleda go abroad

Family members, alliance partners make plea to govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health condition of BNP Chairperson Khaleda

Zia, now admitted to Evercare Hospital in the capital, remained unchanged yesterday, said physicians.

Khaleda's personal physician AZM Zahid Hossain said, "Her physical



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MATARBARI POWER PLANT PROJECT Cost goes up 44pc with channel expansion

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and ASIFUR RAHMAN

The outlay for Matarbari coal-fired power plant, one of the mega-projects of the government, is set to increase by 44.1 percent to Tk 51,854.9 crore following the decision to expand the channel to bring in coal.

As per the original plan, the channel was supposed to be 3km-long, 250 metres wide and 15 metres deep.

Now, the project consulting agency -- a consortium of Japan's Nippon Koei and Tepsco, Germany's Fichtner and Australia's SMEC -- has advised the channel be usable for deep-sea vessels deep sea port.

As a result, the channel will now be 14.3 km long, 350 m wide and 18.5 m deep.

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Bangladesh players celebrate the dismissal of a Pakistan batter during their Women's World Cup Qualifier match in Harare yesterday. Bangladesh restricted Pakistan to 201 for seven before chasing down the target with two balls to spare to seal a thrilling three-wicket victory.

PHOTO: BCB

Tigresses stun Pakistan

STAR SPORT DESK

Bangladesh started their Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier campaign with a thrilling three-wicket victory over Pakistan in Harare yesterday.

The Nigar Sultana-led side restricted Pakistan to 201 after opting to field first before chasing down the target with three wickets in hand and two balls to spare.

An unbeaten 50 off 44 deliveries from Rumana Ahmed and a 13-ball 18 not out from former captain Salma Khatun led the victory charge after Bangladesh had stagnated hopelessly in the middle overs despite making a solid start to their chase.

Despite losing Murshidha Khatun (9) early, Bangladesh had looked comfortable when Sharmin Akter and Fargana Haque took the total to 80 in 25 overs. But the dismissal of Sharmin (31), Fargana (45) and Nigar (4) in space of 18 runs derailed the chase as the asking rate started to climb and scoring rate all but came to a halt.

Ritu Moni and Rumana then steadied the ship with a slow 61-run partnership before Ritu (33) was dismissed and was followed by two more wickets for the next one run. But Rumana and Salma made sure there was no more damage as they

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CUSTODY BATTLE

Japan-born kids to stay with father

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed that two Japan-born children of Japanese national Eriko Nakano and Bangladesh-born US citizen Imran Sharif will remain with their father

It also said their mother will be allowed to meet them three times a year.

"Eriko can meet her daughters, Nakano Jasmine Malika, 11, and Nakano Laila Lina, 9, exclusively for 10 days at a time and Imran will bear her travel and other relevant expenses during these periods," the court said.

Besides, she can also meet her children in Bangladesh at any other time at her own expenses because she lives in Japan and is a service holder there, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Md Mostafizur Rahman said.

Delivering the verdict, the bench expressed hope that both parents will take constructive and positive steps for their welfare.

"Any party involved in this case [writ petition] may win, but it is the two children who will be the victims. We have heard statements from the children three times and we are delivering the judgement considering their welfare in our conscience," Justice Enayetur Rahim said.

In the observation, the bench directed the father to ensure that Jasmine and Laila can talk to their mother over video calls twice a month.

Imran, 58, has also been ordered to give Tk 10 lakh, within seven days, to Eriko for her expenses so far in Bangladesh.

The court asked the social welfare officer concerned in Dhaka to submit a report on the status of the children before it through the Supreme Court

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