



LEAD POISONING 35.5m children affected in Bangladesh

Say experts at study launch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The situation regarding the blood-lead level among the children is very alarming in the country as its presence is found in all samples tested in a survey, conducted by the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR).

Lead was found in the blood samples of 980 children from four districts -- Khulna, Tangail, Sylhet and Patuakhali.

According to experts, recycling of used lead-acid battery, adulteration of turmeric and industrial paints are among the major sources of lead exposure.

Speaking at the launch of the survey at a seminar in the capital, experts yesterday said over 35.5 million children in Bangladesh are affected by lead poisoning.

Calling for interventions from the authorities, experts warned that the country may face serious consequences if actions were not

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People of low-income group queueing in front of a TCB truck in the capital's Donia area. The high prices of daily commodities at kitchen markets are only making such queues longer. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

JOJ MIAH SAGA Why should he not be adequately compensated?

HC asks about wrongful detention of Md Jalal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking why Md Jalal, who had been tagged as Joj Miah and wrongfully detained for four years in connection with the August 21 grenade attack, should not be given adequate compensation.

In the rule, the court asked the respondents to give an explanation in four weeks and also asked them to show cause as to why Jalal's detention should not be declared illegal.

Six government officials, including the home secretary; the inspector general of police; commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police; and five convicts in an August 21 grenade attack case have been made respondents to the rule.

The convicts are Lutfozzaman Babar, former BNP state minister for home; Khoda Baksh Chowdhury, the then inspector general of police;

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Md Jalal

GROUND HANDLING OF HSIA 3RD TERMINAL Unhappy with Biman, CAAB to outsource

RASHIDUL HASAN

Disappointed with the ground and cargo handling services of Biman at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, authorities have decided to outsource the job for the new third terminal to a firm of international standards.

Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) made the decision recently amid widespread dissatisfaction of government's high ups and passengers with the poor luggage handling services, sources in the regulatory authority said.

CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman said they have appointed a consultant to prepare an outline of the expected ground services quality at the third terminal.

Sources said once a firm gets the job and the authorities are satisfied with its services, it could be given the work for the entire airport.

This would have a serious impact on Biman's bottom line. Biman is likely to face huge loss as its major source of yearly income -- around Tk 1,500 crore -- comes from ground handling services.

Even though ground handling is a key earning source of Biman, the company has apparently been doing little to ensure smooth management and services, claimed aviation experts.

It seems it has surrendered to the idea of losing the job.

Biman Managing Director and CEO Zahid Hossain at a press conference recently said the government would award the work of ground handling to those it deems fit.

"I think there is no reason for Biman to show interest in this regard," he added.

Passengers at HSIA have been facing problems like mishandling of luggage for decades. Sometimes it takes passengers more than an hour to get their checked-in luggage after arrival.

Even Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen blasted officials at the airport for the sufferings of passengers.

"Expatriate Bangladeshis have been



contributing to the country's economy with their hard-earned remittance but they have to wait hours to get their luggage upon arrival," he said.

Salman F Rahman, adviser on private industry and investment to the prime minister, said, "An airport gives the first impression about a country. If the experience at the airport is poor, it makes a bad impression on the country."

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Another Rohingya youth killed in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Cox's Bazar

A Rohingya man was shot dead by a group of unidentified criminals at Kutupalong refugee camp in Ukhiya upazila of Cox's Bazar last evening.

Mohammad Salam, 37, was a resident of Block-C at Kutupalong camp-2, said Additional Deputy Inspector of Police Syed Harunur Rashid, who is also the commander of APBn-14.

A group of eight to 10 masked criminals suddenly shot the Rohingya youth at 6:00pm and fled the scene, he said.

Salam was rescued and taken to a hospital run by MSF where the on duty doctor declared him dead, he added.

The motive behind his death could not be known immediately, he said, adding that the body was sent to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Police were conducting drives to nab those involved with the crime, he informed.

Earlier this month, another Rohingya youth was killed in Cox's Bazar.

Two cops, one accused killed in road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Two police constables and an accused in a case were killed and three others injured after a microbus carrying them rear-ended a stationary truck on the Elega-Jamalpur highway in Tangail's Madhupur upazila Monday night.

The deceased are constables Nurul Islam and Sohel Rana of Narayanpur Police Outpost in Jamalpur and Mohammad Lalon of Gojarhata village in Jamalpur.

Lalon was accused in a case filed under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

Shariful Islam, additional superintendent of police in Tangail, said the accident occurred in Golabari area of Madhupur around 8:15pm when the cops were returning to Jamalpur from Dhaka with two accused after they provided samples for DNA testing.

The three died on the spot.

Injured Sub-Inspector Azizul Islam of Narayanpur Police Outpost and Abdul Latif, accused in another case filed under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, were undergoing treatment at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

The other wounded, microbus driver Saiful Islam, was receiving treatment at Madhupur

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Lost 17th-century warship 'Applet' found in Sweden

AFP, Stockholm



Swedish maritime archaeologists have discovered the long-lost sister vessel of the iconic 17th-century warship "Vasa", which sank on its maiden voyage, the Swedish Museum of Wrecks said on Monday.

Launched in 1629,

"Applet" (The Apple) was built by the same shipbuilder as the famed 69-metre (225-foot) "Vasa", which is now on display in Stockholm after being salvaged in the 1960s.

"Our pulses raced when we saw how similar the wreck was to Vasa," said Jim Hansson, maritime archaeologist at the museum.

The huge shipwreck was discovered in December 2021 in a strait off the island of Vaxholm just outside the capital, Stockholm, according to the museum.

Hansson said the construction and the dimensions seemed "very familiar" to them, sparking hope it could be one of Vasa's sister ships.

While parts of the ship's sides had fallen off, the hull was preserved up to the lower gundeck, and the parts that had fallen off showed gunports on two levels.

A more thorough survey of the wreck was carried out in the spring of 2022, which revealed ship details that had previously only been seen on the Vasa.

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CAPTIVITY IN KSA 24 Bangladeshi women rescued

BSS, Dhaka

Twenty-four Bangladeshi women, who were captivated by a Saudi recruiting agency in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, have been rescued recently.

Bangladeshi embassy in KSA, with the help of Saudi law enforcers, rescued them from Arar city, around 1,100km away from Riyadh, read a press release yesterday.

Bangladeshi ambassador to Saudi Mohammad Javed Patwary directed the embassy's Labour Welfare Wing to take necessary steps and send the victims home soon.

According to the Labour Welfare Wing, a Saudi recruiting agency named "Maqtab Taowasul Alsari" took the women to KSA.

A Bangladesh recruiting agency named "Messrs S. Anwar Overseas" were involved in the process of taking them to KSA.

After they reached Saudi, Maqtab Taowasul Alsari kept them in captivity instead of sending them to their respective workplaces.

Later, the women lost all contacts with their native homes.

They were not even provided with proper treatment if someone fell sick due to insufficient food and safe water, said the Labour Welfare Wing.

The Saudi recruiting agency was shut down after the filing of a case.

Meanwhile, the victims were undergoing treatment at the Saudi Female Deportation Centre.

The Saudi authorities were trying to send the women to Bangladesh quickly.



WHAT NOT TO DO ... A man is riding his motorcycle and is simultaneously on Facebook Live on Dhaka-Sylhet highway near Bhulta overpass in Narayananj district. Such acts can cause a serious accident leading to injuries and can even claim lives. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

24 Chhatra Odhikar men denied bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday rejected separate remand and bail prayers for 24 Chhatra Odhikar Parishad members in the second attempt-to-murder case filed by the Bangladesh Chhatra League.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Syed Mostafa Reza Nur passed the order and sent all accused, including the parishad's DU unit President Akhter Hossain, to jail.

On Thursday, Sub-Inspector Ariful Alam Apu of Shahbagh Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case, appealed for seven-day remand for each.

In the forwarding report, the IO said the accused, including several unnamed people, assaulted the complainants and their associates.

The defence submitted separate petitions seeking bail along with petitions for the cancellation of the remand prayers, claiming it was actually the BCL men who attacked their clients. But the victims, who were supposed to file cases against their attackers, were instead sued,

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