

Too many children, too few beds

Bhola General Hospital struggles to accommodate pneumonia patients

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barishal

Zidan, a seven-year-old pneumonia patient, has been lying on the floors of Bhola General Hospital for the last five days.

"The condition of my son is critical, but there are no vacant beds in the hospital, and their manpower is also very limited," said his father Zafar, a carpenter.

During a recent visit, this correspondent witnessed hundreds of patients crowding balconies, corridors, and open spaces in front of lifts and staircases due to a shortage of beds.

Almost half of them are children suffering from pneumonia.

Four-year-old Afina, one-year-old Jamima, and many others like them have been unable to find beds, as currently around 300 children are admitted there, despite a capacity of only 64 beds for children.

As this place is far from Barishal, people from the remote chars of Bhola come here for treatment. Most patients belong to poor families and cannot afford private facilities, they added.

According to consultant doctor Salahuddin, around 500-600 patients come to this 250-bed hospital daily.

Meanwhile, 34 out of its 60 doctor posts and 26 of its 80 nursing positions have been vacant for around a year, said Dr Monirul Islam, the hospital supervisor.

"There is only one consultant for the 300 kids being treated here. It is extremely difficult for us to treat them with such limited resources. We have asked the authority to recruit staffers but to no avail. We are trying our best to serve patients," he said.

Turkish embassy hosts exhibition

UNB, Dhaka

Turkish Embassy in Dhaka yesterday hosted an exhibition titled Ebru Art Exhibition. "Ebru art is very unique and traditional. It reflects the richness of Turkish culture," said Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Ramis Sen. In 2014, this traditional Turkish art was included in Unesco's Intangible Cultural Heritage.



PHOTO: MONIR UDDIN ANIK

Around 300 children, mostly pneumonia patients, are currently under treatment at the Bhola General Hospital against its capacity of 64 beds for them. Meanwhile, over half of the doctor posts are currently vacant at the facility.

Include RMG workers in policy framework

Speakers tell dialogue on green transition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A comprehensive policy framework, incorporating workers, is required to make the country's readymade garment sector environment friendly and mitigate climate change related challenges, said speakers at a dialogue yesterday.

To do so, joint effort from owners and other stakeholders is required, while relevant laws should also be amended to sufficiently address "green transition" or "just transition" related challenges, they added.

Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment (Oshe) Foundation organised the dialogue on "Green Energy Transition in RMG Sector" at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) said just transition is making the economy green in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind.

At the dialogue, ILO Bangladesh's Occupational Safety, Health and Labour Inspection Specialist AKM Masum Ul Alam said globally around 80 million jobs are at risk due to climate change.

Meanwhile, people in Bangladesh are not sufficiently aware about what "just transition" is and how to achieve it, he said.

He added that Bangladesh's labour law addresses some relevant issues like air and sound quality, but those are not sufficient.

Presenting preliminary findings of a baseline study on 30 RMG factories, Greenbud Chief Executive Officer Syed Tasnem Mahmood said 50 percent of respondents among managers and executives of the factories are well aware about the concept of green transition.

However, when it comes to both executives and workers, only 30 percent have knowledge about their factories' transition to green energy, he shared.

"This leads us to the answer that despite working at a factory, a worker may not be aware about the factory's green energy transition," he added.

Speaking about the kind of green transition their factories underwent, most respondents mentioned solar panel or light bulbs, Tasnem noted. He said the study incorporated 12 certified green factories, 10 factories which were undergoing the process to become green, and eight that were not planning to go green.

Although the country's RMG sector has the opportunity to transition to green energy, one key challenge is lack of policy support, as a comprehensive energy transition framework is currently absent, he added.

Pointing out the importance of ensuring wellbeing of workers, Razequzzaman Ratan, president of Samajtantrik Sramik Front, said many RMG factories are becoming green, but their workers are remaining "gray". He said combined effort is required to turn both factories and workers green.

Moderating the dialogue, Oshe Foundation Vice Chairperson SM Morshed said more research-based evidence on green energy transition is required, as there is a lack of knowledge regarding it.

The country's green energy transition should not only remain in infrastructural and technological changes, but also uphold workers' rights, said Harunur Rashid Sagar, communication and project officer at Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Bangladesh Office.

Faiza Farah Tuba, programme manager of Laudes Foundation, said workers from not only RMG factories, but various other sectors should be included in different climate change related policies.



Fortune favours the farmer

Habib sees success in commercial farming

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

After completing MBA in 2017, Habib Khan started his career in the ready-made garment sector, only to realise he had a different calling.

"After a while in the job, I could not achieve the financial solvency I was looking for through this profession. My salary was barely enough for my family. So I decided to switch to commercial farming," he said.

Habib was still employed when he started cultivating papaya and banana on his ancestral land last year.

"I decided to quit the job early this year and return to the village permanently," said the 32-year-old from Kalianpara village under Gajaria union in Tangail's Sakhipur upazila, who is now a role model for others in his hometown.

Starting his journey with YouTube videos and advice from others engaged in agriculture, Habib decided to cultivate cash crops. His family did not own enough land for this kind of farming.

"With financial aid from relatives, I leased around nine acres of land and established my farm, Khan Agro," mentioned Habib.



He is now invested in the cultivation of black sugarcane, an exotic crop variety of the Philippines, alongside growing moringa, lemon, papaya, and plantains, and rearing fish in a pond.

So far, Habib has invested Tk 30 lakh in his farm, a significant amount of which he plans to cash this year. Around 18-20 local workers are currently working on a daily basis for him.

"We produced 10,000 pieces of black sugarcane this year, spending Tk 8 lakh, and expect to earn double the investment. I plan to sell one-third of the production raw while the rest will be processed to produce molasses," he said.

Meanwhile, Habib has already started selling bananas and papaya, as these two products earned him double his investment last year. He also plans to expand his farm's operations next year using modern agricultural methods.

Niyonta Barman, agriculture officer of the upazila, lauded Habib's effort.

"The hilly lands in the upazila are very fertile. Local agriculture officials are providing necessary advice to Habib regarding his farming initiative," said Niyonta.

Muroichhara is dying UNOPS

FROM PAGE 5

Abdul Latif, former chairman of Prithimpasha union parishad, echoed the same.

Water for irrigation can be provided throughout the year if it is supplied from Manu River through the sluice gate by dredging the Muroichhara, said Muhibul Islam Azad, chairman of Karmadha UP.

Local farmers Abdul Ahad and Kaishar Ali corroborated the same.

Numerous hilly streams of the Muroichhara bit, including the river, flow naturally from the hills of the Prithimpasha and Harargaj Reserve forests, said Riaz Uddin, range officer of the Forest Department in Kulaura.

Sylvester Pathang, a Karmadha UP member, said locals from the Khasi

and Garo communities and tea garden workers use the river for their daily needs. They also carry out betel leaf cultivation and other agricultural activities along the river.

The Muroichhara river and waterfall are a popular sightseeing spot among tourists and visitors for scenic natural beauty, said Akhtar Hossain, a lecturer at Lungla Modern Degree College.

Javed Iqbal, executive engineer of WDB in Moulvibazar, said construction of more sluice gates and dredging of the river are necessary to revive the river for the convenience of agriculture.

He said they will discuss the issue with the authorities after a site inspection

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sustainable development goals by 2030. He will also visit the National Institute of Diseases of the Chest and Hospital (NIDCH) where UNOPS, together with partners such as National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP) and with funding from the Global Fund, is constructing oxygen plant facilities to support the national healthcare system.

In a statement, Silva said UNOPS has been supporting sustainable development in Bangladesh for over 20 years. "We now look forward to continuing our work in a stronger partnership with the government of Bangladesh, to support the country's renewed commitment to the SDGs and to build a sustainable, resilient and inclusive future for the people," the statement read.

Prabarana Purnima

FROM PAGE 3

to attain supreme wisdom and enlightenment, the strands would not fall down but go up instead -- which they did in the long run.

To mark this event, Buddhists will release candle-lit air balloons made of coloured paper (fanush) and set them free to flow towards the sky in the evening, which is the chief attraction of the festival.

The festival will be celebrated in all monasteries, respective offices of the religious organisations and educational institutions through daylong programmes.

President Shahabuddin,

in a message yesterday, conveyed greetings to the members of the Buddhist community.

In Dhaka, the main religious congregations will be held at Dharmarajika Bouddha Bihar, International Bouddha Temple, Kalachandpur Bouddha Bihar, Uttara Bouddha Bihar, Adibashi Bouddha Temple in Mirpur and Ashulia Maithree Bhabona Kendra.

A number of Buddhist periodicals will be brought out on the occasion.

Special prayers will be held in all monasteries seeking peace and prosperity of the nation and the world.

SCC plan

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As part of the project, 600 families of ward-18 were provided a blue basket for perishable wastes, a red basket for sharp materials and medical wastes, and a sack for plastic-polythene wastes, as part of waste management.

However, due to the lack of awareness among people, the plan of waste segregation at source failed.

"Many people used the baskets for other household purposes instead of collecting and separating wastes according to their types, and their lack of awareness failed the otherwise good plan," said Ward-18 councillor ABM Zillur Rahman Uzzal.

Amid the situations, the sanitary landfill initiative and the contract with Geocycle both got stalled since last year.

The SCC is now all set to start waste segregation at the landfill in a mechanical way as per suggestion by Geocycle experts, and has already purchased one pre-shredder, one splitter, one air separator, and conveying belt from Austria, Germany and India spending Tk 15 crore.

"The equipment will arrive by December and will be put into operation as soon as possible. These machines will separate the organic and heavy waste, which will then be disposed of accordingly in the sanitary landfill and by Geocycle," said SCC chief engineer Nur Azizur Rahman.

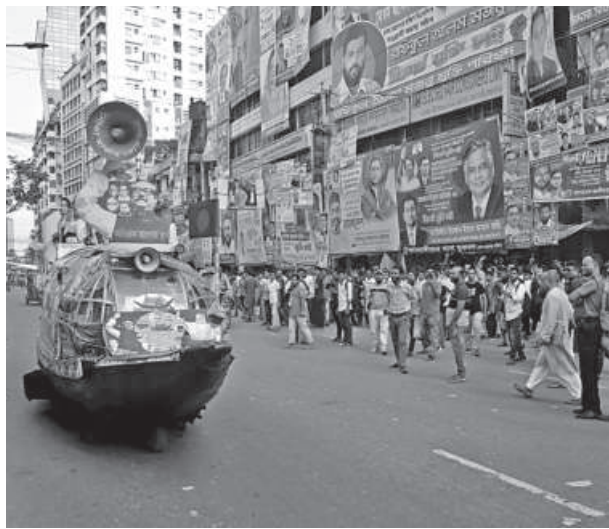


PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Supporters of Awami League drive a boat-shaped vehicle through the Nayapaltan area where BNP will hold its grand rally today.

Mother, I am here

FROM PAGE 3

Mostafa Anwar, officer-in-charge of Kamrangirchar Police Station, said, "We arrested only those who have a case or arrest warrant against them."

Similar to the couple, many people were seen gathering at the court premises to see their kin who had been arrested on Thursday.

A 30-year-old woman was waiting on the stairs of the ground floor of the CMM Court with some food to give her husband, Al-Amin Rajib.

A local water trader, he was arrested at Bangshal's Nazira Bazar the previous night around 9:30pm.

His wife, unwilling to disclose her name, told The Daily Star, "My husband was a supporter of BNP

before 2018. Since 2018, he has been out of politics."

Kowsir Howlader, 30, was arrested at Gausia Market under the New Market Police Station on the same day.

His two elder brothers, Rasel and Masud Howlader, came to the CMM Court from Patuakhali upazila yesterday at noon.

"Police in a prison van told us my brother was seen attending a BNP gathering a few months ago. So, he was arrested."

PRAYER
TIMING

OCTOBER 28

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:50	12:45	4:00	5:36	7:15
JAMAAT 5:25	1:15	4:15	5:39	7:45
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION				



World Health
Organization
Bangladesh

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The World Health Organization in Bangladesh invites proposals/bids from the interested Companies in Bangladesh for the following service:

1. RFP/BAN/2023/028: Clearing and Forwarding Agent Services for imported/exported consignments for WHO Bangladesh under Long Term Agreement.

Deadline for the submission of RFP: **14:00hrs, 12 November 2023.**

Interested Companies can view and download the relevant RFP document from: <https://www.who.int/bangladesh/about-us/procurement-notice>.

Interested bidders are requested to submit their financial and technical proposals in two separate sealed envelopes as per the instructions provided in the RFP documents at the Reception of WHO Country Office for Bangladesh, House-SW(I)1/A, Road-8, Gulshan-1, Dhaka.