

## RU medical centre brings no benefit to students

NURAHSAN MRIDUL

Habiba Akter, a third-year student of Rajshahi University, one day found herself struggling to breathe. Seeking help, she went to the university's medical centre. However, even after waiting for around 30 minutes, no doctor or nurse came to her aid.

While the medical centre has a nebuliser machine, there is no one to help patients use it in the case of an emergency.

As such, Habiba had to leave the centre without receiving any treatment.

This has largely been the scenario of RU's medical centre for the past several months. Established in 1958 with a view to ensure healthcare to students and staffers of the university, it is yet to serve its purpose properly.

At present, the centre is running amid an acute lack of doctors and nurses, while other medical officials there are hardly performing their duties.

Worse still, on November 24, the medical centre put up a notice halting treatments in the afternoon citing "insufficient manpower".

As per documents, the centre has a total of 36 posts for doctors, but 22 of these have been vacant for a long time. It is also supposed to have six nurses, including two male nurses, but at present only two female nurses are working at the centre.

The handful of doctors available at the centre have been struggling to serve a large number of students.

Similarly, there are only three emergency medical officers against the total six posts.

According to university sources, it was announced on October 24, 2020 that 13 doctors would be recruited against 18 vacant posts. However, the recruitment process eventually got postponed. Meanwhile, after the Awami League government's ouster on August 5, four doctors resigned from their duties at the centre.

**RU students face significant deprivation in medical care, marked by a lack of quality medicines, inadequate operational facilities, and an acute shortage of doctors and nurses. Despite repeated assurances, the recruitment process for additional medical staff has remained stalled since 2020.**

While the centre has some advanced equipment, there is not enough manpower to operate those. The ECG machine has no operator, while the digital X-ray machine has no full-time technologist. The number of beds for patients is inadequate, while the oxygen channels are insufficient.

At present, the services at the medical

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A youth climbs over the iron fence of Ramna Park, as the Hare Road gate of the park remains closed from 10:00am to 4:00pm. Instead of taking the ordeal to find another entrance that is open, he chose a risky shortcut to get inside. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## AL leader held over attempted murder

STAR REPORT

Police have arrested Nasir Uddin Ahmed Ferdous, president of the central executive body of Bangabandhu Matsyajibi Parishad, an associate body of Awami League, in a case filed over an attempted murder of a protester in Dhaka on July 19.

He was arrested around 8:00pm on Thursday from the capital's Dhanmondi area, said Talebur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of DMP.

Nasir was among the 180 accused in the case filed with Khilgaon Police Station for shooting at the protester, Ahadul Islam, 25.

Ahadul's father, Mohammad Baker, filed the case on October 17.

According to the case statement, Ahadul and others were protesting near Meradia Bazar on July 19 when "many of the named accused along with other unnamed members of Border Guard Bangladesh, police personnel and Awami League leaders and activists opened fire as per the instructions of some other accused."

Ahadul suffered bullet wounds in his left leg and was also beaten up as he fell on the ground. He later received treatment at multiple hospitals, Baker said in the case statement.

PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 7					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 5:15	12:45	3:45	5:19	7:00	
JAMAAAT 5:50	1:15	4:00	5:22	7:30	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

## STUDENT MOVEMENT JU committee formed

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University chapter of the Anti-Discrimination Students' Movement announced a 20-member convening committee last night.

Arif Sohel, member secretary of the central committee, made the announcement during a press conference held at 10:00pm on the JU campus.

Arifuzzaman Uzzal was announced as the convener, Touhid Siam as the member secretary, Nakib Al Mahmud Arnob as the chief organiser, and Maliha Namlah as the spokesperson. Additionally, Arif Sohel and Mehrab Sifat were named as advisers to the committee.

Mentioning that this committee will operate for the next six months, Arif Sohel said a full committee will be formed soon.

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# Khulna's papor village thriving

DIPANKAR ROY, *Khulna*

A small village in the Phultala upazila, around 35 kilometres from Khulna city, is home to an age old tradition of making raw papor.

The village is Dakshindihi, sometimes locally referred to as "papor gram" (papor village), where this tradition has continued for seven decades now.

Papor, also known as papadam, is a popular crunchy snack that originated in the Indian subcontinent. Made from dough using various types of flours that is either deep fried or cooked with dry heat, papor usually serves as a side dish in Bengali cuisine.

Over the years, the papor-makers of this village have transformed this traditional practice into a thriving cottage industry — providing livelihood, economic independence and resilience for the entire community.

Dakshindihi is also famous for being the home of the in-laws of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Hundreds of visitors, from home and abroad, visit this village all year around.

Nearly 1,000 residents — including men, women and children — of the village are engaged in making, drying and packing raw papor for at least eight months of the year. They work almost every day from dawn to dusk.

The tradition of papor-making in Dakshindihi traces back to the late British era when a few Hindu families in the villages began preparing these crispy treats for their own consumption.

Over time, the distinctive crispiness and flavour of Dakshindihi's papors gained popularity across different regions, paving the way for it to become its own cottage industry.

Now, villagers are making

papors for some 30 small and large local factories or on their own in their homes.

The demand for Dakshindihi's papor is so high that distributors often struggle to keep up with sending shipments to major districts across Dhaka, Chattogram, and Khulna divisions. The demand usually surges between the Bengali months of Kartik and Chaitra (November to April), as well as during different festivals.

The papor-making process, however, is highly dependent on

the unique flavour and quality that are much sought after by customers," he added.

### RISE OF LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS

Around 60-70 years back, Satish Chandra Datta started the first papor-making business in this village, and later passed it down to his son Sushil Datta.

As Sushil grew older, the responsibility of the family business was then handed over to his son Ananda Datta.

Ananda now oversees the daily operations of a sizeable factory,



the weather, as it requires ample sunshine to dry properly.

"First, rice flour is mixed with powdered lentils, including moong [mung beans], khesari [green peas], and mashkalai [black gram], with water, salt, and baking soda, to make a dough. The dough is then rolled into small, thin, round shapes which are then laid out in the sun to dry before being packaged for sale," said Mukul Hossain, a local resident.

"A dough weighing one kilogramme will produce around 90-100 papors. The preparation has remained consistent over the decades, thereby preserving

where some 20-25 workers are employed. The papors from this factory are sent to different wholesale shops after packaging.

"We produce 200-250 kg of dried papors daily, and ship those to wholesalers in districts across Dhaka, Chattogram, and Khulna, for Tk 135-160 per kg," Ananda said.

Another success story similar to that of the Datta family is the one of Mahtab Sheikh.

Once a day-labourer who was struggling to make ends meet, Mahtab, 66, went on to become an exemplary entrepreneur from the village by making papors.

"Around 20 years back, my father-in-law advised me to try something different. I began making papors using rice and pulse purchased from Phultala Bazar, and selling those to traders. Over time, I managed to expand into a factory of my own, which now employs around 40 workers and produces around 600 kg of papors daily. Our annual turnover is now around Tk 15 lakh," he said.

### EMPLOYING WOMEN, EMPOWERING WOMEN

The papor industry in Dakshindihi employs many local women, thereby providing them with financial solvency and empowerment.

Beauty Begum works with her daughter after school hours, making papor on the veranda of their home. "I receive Tk 70 for every 1,000 papors that I make, which takes around two and half hours," she said.

Like her, women from nearly every household participate in the process, utilising their spare time to make extra income for their families.

Golam Saklain, deputy general manager (in charge) of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation's Khulna office, lauded the papor-making industry in Dakshindihi.

"We aim to promote the development of such small-scale initiatives in remote areas, as they not only generate employment at the grassroots level but also empower local women to become self-reliant," he said.

"We have the opportunity to extend loan assistance for such projects. Also, we have a plan to visit the village involved in papor-making, provide them with the necessary financial support, and organise different training programmes to enhance their skills and productivity," he added.

## Deputy secy, 6 others killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Md Farhad Hossain, deputy secretary of the Secondary and Higher Education Department of Ministry of Education, was killed in a road accident in Barishal yesterday.

Meanwhile, at least six more people were killed in separate road accidents across three districts of the country yesterday.

The accident, in which Farhad was killed and eight others were injured, occurred around 5:00pm in Muladi upazila, said Zahirul Alam, officer-in-charge of Muladi Police Station.

He said Farhad was going to Muladi Sadar on a three-wheeler from Mirganj Ferry Ghat.

Quoting injured passengers, the OC said when the three-wheeler crossed the Pyadarhat area and approached the Howladar Bridge, suddenly a dog appeared in front of it. To save it, the driver pressed the brakes, and the three-wheeler lost control and overturned.

"As a result, Farhad sustained serious head injuries. He was taken to a local hospital, where the doctor on duty declared him dead," the OC added.

Muladi Upazila Health Officer Dr Saidur Rahman said Farhad died on the way to the hospital.

Meanwhile, in Dinajpur, three people, including the driver of a bus, were killed in a head-on collision between a bus and a truck in the Birganj upazila yesterday morning.

The accident took place at Jadur intersection on the Birganj-Thakurgaon highway, in the Dashmile area, around 8:30am.

Dashmile Highway Police Station Officer-in-charge (OC) Omar Faruk said the driver of the paddy-laden truck and two passengers of the bus died on the spot after the collision.

Several passengers of the bus were also injured in the accident.

In Jashore, a man was killed and two others injured as a truck hit a private car in Barinagar Bazar of the Sadar upazila yesterday morning.

The deceased was identified as Iqbal Hossain, 35, of the Bagbaganj village in Cumilla.

According to the victim's relatives, the incident took place at Barinagar Bazar, when the sand-laden truck hit the car while it was heading towards Cumilla from Jashore around 9:00am.

Iqbal Hossain died on the spot, said Fazlur Rahman, sub-inspector of Barobazar Highway Police.

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PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

The Chattogram Development Authority is re-excavating, expanding, and renovating the city's canals to address waterlogging issues. However, the absence of safety barriers poses a serious risk. Over the past few years, at least 11 people have died after falling into canals and drains in Chattogram. The photo of Jamalkhan canal was taken at Jamalkhan recently.

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**সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি কর্তৃক রহনপুর ৪০০/১৩২ কেভি গ্রিড উপকেন্দ্র হতে রহনপুর ১৩২/৩৩ কেভি গ্রিড উপকেন্দ্র পর্যন্ত ৯.১৫ কি.মি. দীর্ঘ ১৩২ কেভি (১,৩২,০০০ ভোল্টেজ) সঞ্চালন লাইন নির্মাণ করা হয়েছে। লাইনটি আগামী ০৮ ডিসেম্বর, ২০২৪, রবিবার, বেলা ১১:০০ ঘটিকায় পরীক্ষামূলকভাবে চালু করা হবে এবং উক্ত সময় হতে নবনির্মিত লাইনটি সার্বক্ষণিক চালু থাকবে। লাইনটি চাঁপাইনবাবগঞ্জ জেলার গোমস্তাপুর উপজেলায় প্রসাদপুর, গোপাল নগর, খয়রাবাদ, নসিবন্দি নগর, দরবারপুর, ডাইংপাড়া, গৌরীপুর, কাওয়াডাসা, নন্দলালপুর, জাহিদনগর, বসনীটোলা, পিরাসন, মরিচা ডাঙা, চৌডালা প্রভৃতি এলাকার উপর দিয়ে অতিক্রম করেছে।

এমতাবস্থায় উক্ত নবনির্মিত ১৩২ কেভি লাইনের টাওয়ারে আরোহন, গবাদিপশু বাধা, টাওয়ারে রশি বেঁধে কাপড় শুকানো, লাইনের নিচে ও পাশে বীশবাড়ি ও বড় বৃক্ষাদি রোপন প্রভৃতি ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ কাজ হতে বিরত থাকার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে এবং সকলকে ১৩২ কেভি লাইন হতে নিরাপদ দূরত্বে (উভয়পাশে ১৪ মিটার) থাকতে অনুরোধ করা হচ্ছে। উচ্চ ভোল্টেজে বিদ্যুতায়িত বর্ণিত সঞ্চালন লাইন/টাওয়ারের সংস্পর্শে এসে কেউ দুর্ঘটনার শিকার হলে সেজন্য পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি কর্তৃপক্ষ দায়ী থাকবে না।

মোঃ আলমগীর হোসেন  
প্রকল্প পরিচালক (প্রধান প্রকৌশলী) অঃদাঃ  
পাওয়ার গ্রিড নেটওয়ার্ক স্ট্রেন্গথেনিং প্রজেক্ট আন্ডার পাওয়ার গ্রিড