

# Down to Earth

## SOS from animal world

By Khalilur Rahman



The Central Veterinary Hospital in the capital receives a distress call from a circus party in Raupura of Narshingdi district: An elephant of the mobile show has fallen seriously ill.

For the last few days the huge animal did not take food and its abdomen was tense and distended. The local upazila veterinary dispensary offered treatment but without any result.

Dr. M Fazlul Hoque, head of the Central Veterinary Hospital, diagnosed the case on the basis of symptoms narrated to him by the circus party manager over telephone. Dr. Hoque prescribed drugs on telephone and instructed about the doses and other measures to be followed. Medicines were administered and within 24 hours the elephant was almost normal.

It was a case of acute constipation, Dr. Hoque told the circus party manager when he was informed of the recovery over telephone two days later.

It was too difficult to carry the ailing elephant to Dhaka for treatment because the animal was bed-ridden and had difficulty in breathing.

On a previous occasion, another elephant was down with illness at Meherpur in Kushtia. It was also treated over telephone from the central hospital in Dhaka and got cured.

A pregnant Doberman, a high quality dog of German breed, was bleeding for a week. The owner called in a veterinary doctor from the central hospital for the treatment of the Doberman. The illness was serious. The visiting doctor suggested immediate hospitalisation. The instruction was quickly followed by the wealthy master of the Doberman.

A team of surgeons led by Dr Fazlul Huq, chief veterinary officer (CVO), conducted an emergency operation on the Doberman and saw five puppies in her womb, three already dead and two alive. Of the dead, one was decomposed. The two puppies are still alive after the operation a fortnight ago. Dr. Huq told The Daily Star. He said, if the operation was delayed the Doberman had no chance of survival.

A few days ago a cow with complicated pregnancy was brought to the hospital. The animal, after surgery, gave birth to a calf with five legs. The extra leg was fixed with the right side of the front leg. It was deformed. In a two-hour-long operation the surgeons excised the extra leg. The remaining leg of the calf was excessively tensed and immobile. It will take some more time for the calf to resume normal body activities,

the doctor stated.

Talking to The Daily Star, Dr. Fazlul Huq who also represents Bangladesh at the Commonwealth Veterinary Association as a council member, said the hospital was able to introduce a year ago the most complicated operation of repairing hipjoint fracture in an animal. The sophisticated operation is performed only in the advanced countries. Technically known as clamping or intermedullary pinning, the hipjoint surgery takes about two hours and is performed under general anaesthesia.

These are some of the cases. But hundreds of thousands of cases go unreported and the result is a colossal loss of country's livestock resources.

According to a dependable estimate, domestic animals dying of diseases every year in Bangladesh will be worth about Taka 1400 crore.

The Central Veterinary Hospital at 48, Kazi Alauddin Road in the old part of the city, is the lone of its kind in the country. Set up in 1918 on an area of 3.3 acres, donated by Nawab Sir Salmullah, the hospital was then chiefly meant for treating horses. Horse-drawn carriages were the principal means of road transporting in the city in old days and as such the necessity of treating horses was keenly felt by the Nawab of Dhaka. Therefore, the veterinary hospital was set up.

The shape of the hospital remained almost static since its inception until 1986 when an expansion programme at a cost of Taka three crore 22 lakh was undertaken. The programme is due to be completed by June next. Work on the project remained suspended for a year as huge pond full of coal was found on the site of the hospital complex. Piling has to be made at a depth of over 40 feet before the construction could begin.

When completed, the hospital complex will provide training facilities for the field veterinarians with dormitories. There has been a major fault in the construction of drainage system of the hospital. The whole complex remains virtually floating on sewage water on all sides for about a year. The job of construction was assigned to the Public Works Department (PWD).

An Engineer of the PWD told The Star that the sewerage network maintained by Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (WASA) around the veterinary hospital has collapsed. As a result, sewage disposal at far away places is rolling down towards the hospital. Separate arrangement for

disposal of waste water and sewage must be made at the hospital to overcome the crisis, he added. The situation will worsen with the onset of monsoon, a hospital source said.

The hospital suffers from acute shortage of drugs almost throughout the year. There are many costly life-saving drugs which the poor cattle owners cannot buy. So, they must get the supply free of cost to protect the livestock resources. The medicines supplied to the hospital by the government can hardly meet the requirements for a month, hospital sources said.

The hospital also badly needs mobile clinics to attend emergency cases at distant places. Several years ago, sanction was given by the concerned ministry to procure three mobile units. But in the absence of funds those could not be bought.

Under the existing system there is one veterinary dispensary in each of the 460 upazilas. Most of the dispensaries are run without a doctor. At least three doctors, in addition to four compounders and four field assistants, are required for proper functioning of a dispensary. But no dispensary has the requisite number of staff and medicines are rarely available. The total number of veterinary doctors in the country is now 1500.

With regard to the attendance of patients, a Central Veterinary Hospital source said, on an average the hospital treats 150 cows, 50 goats, 20 dogs, one cat and a sheep daily. Besides, three horses are brought to the hospital in a week. Horses used in shooting feature films require prolonged treatment at least for 10 days as these are highly abused by the film makers, hospital sources said. The hospital has 40 beds for indoor patients. Cats cannot be admitted in the absence of cages. Provision for cages is being made. Besides, the hospital also provides regular treatment to the Dhaka Zoo animals including three zebras, two pandas, a large number of monkeys and several crocodiles.

According to a statistics, the total number of quality cows in Dhaka city is 25,000, goats - 10,000, sheep - 2,500, domestic cats - 5,000 and domestic dogs - 5,000. The number of horses are 60 including 32 used by the metropolitan mount police, three at Dhaka Zoo, Nazir Mia's four and Mohammad Hanif's two. The rest are reared privately for pulling carriages. Nazir Mia, a resident of old Dhaka city lends horses most of the time for shooting feature films.

### China's example

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tance, China has assured Bangladesh that Chinese economic assistance will increase. Last year, Chinese aid to Bangladesh amounted to 13 million US dollar.

A 250-bed general hospital will be constructed with Chinese technical assistance at Badda, Dhaka. Feasibility study of the project has been completed and the design and construction of the project now await implementation.

Both sides have finalised construction of a third bridge over river Mahananda. The second bridge at Shambhuganj with Chinese economic assistance is nearing completion and will be opened to vehicular traffic by the year end.

It was further agreed that China would undertake the construction of a fourth friendship bridge after the construction of the bridge over the Mahananda.

China will undertake the Balancing, Modernisation, Renovation (BMR) of the sericulture and silk industry in Rajshahi at a later stage.

A letter of intent has also been signed to construct a bicycle-chain factory in Bangladesh.

China showed keen interest in setting up two more factories, one for manufacturing T-shirts and the other for plastic dools, but the Bangladesh side requested the Chinese delegation for alternative projects as these projects are no longer viable.

A source said that in May last year, Sino-Bangladesh Investment Forum was launched in Dhaka with 83 representatives from China taking part in the forum.

Over 200 Bangladeshi entrepreneurs attended the forum.

Fifty-three letters of intent and eight Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were signed.

The implementation and follow-up of this forum however slowed down for many reasons.

Both sides agreed to find ways and means to implement the decisions and the MOUs.

China has agreed to work on a detailed information regarding the projects to be implemented. The local entrepreneurs will also identify the problems facing the implementation process of the agreed projects.

The JEC meeting also discussed and reviewed all joint venture projects and laid emphasis for optimum and effective utilisation of machinery and equipment.

The source told The Daily Star that quite a number of Chinese companies are working in Bangladesh.

The Chinese are working at 210 megawatt power station in Chittagong, Jamuna Fertiliser Factory at Jamalpur, BMRE of Fenchuganj Fertiliser Factory, construction of Road Improvement Project (RIP) under RHD and some electricity transmission projects in Bangladesh.

Nearly 1200 Chinese technicians and engineers are engaged in different projects in the country.

In loan assistance and commercial interactions in Bangladesh, China is one of the most involved nations and is playing a vital role in socio-economic development of the country.

On future projects, Bangladesh has shown considerable interest in coal-mining exploration in the country with Chinese assistance. A Bangladesh team has already visited China while a Chinese team is expected in Dhaka shortly.

Chinese assistance has already been sought in the BMR of four more textile mills in the public sector.

Bangladesh has requested China to fulfil the shipping agreement. Both sides agreed to work out a formula on the issue and a delegation from China is likely to visit Bangladesh soon.

In another area, China has carried out a technical study on flood control of the Brahmaputra River basin.

The implementation of this flood control component may be incorporated under the loan agreement with China.

The issue of technical co-operation was discussed earlier and exchanges of information took place several times.

Bangladesh government sent a team to China to study the concept of rural industries which had achieved tremendous success. Government must provide proper incentives and facilities of their growth in rural areas, the source said.

The seventh session of the JEC would be fixed at a date to be mutually agreed upon through diplomatic channels, the source said.

The Bangladesh Ambassador to China Farooq Sobhan and the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Chen Songlu were present at the meeting.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited Sripur Sadar Hospital Thursday to see the persons injured roof-collapse at Mita Textile Mills Wednesday. —PID photo

## Roof collapse

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could not be identified. All the 13 bodies were sent to the Sripur Health Complex for post-mortem.

Three of the seven critically injured persons were shifted Thursday from Sripur Health Complex to the hospital for disabed in the city. Eight other badly injured labourers were being treated at different hospitals at Gazipur and Dhaka.

Women were seen waiting at the scene of the disaster for their relatives were missing since Wednesday.

A construction worker who managed to escape the accident said most of his colleagues were from Barisal, Comilla, Noakhali and other far way districts. Many of their relatives probably as do not know of the mishap, he said.

None of the mills authorities were found at the spot of occurrence even on Thursday. An official of the mills' owner Mostafizur Rahman's city office expressed total ignorance about the case of accident and of the number of workers at the mill. The official denied any fault in construction. The mills owner Mostafizur Rahman was at Ajmeer Sharif, he

said.

Faisal Mahbub, son of Mahbubur Rahman, a minister of ousted Ershad regime was the architect as well the contractor for the construction of the mills but he was not available at his city residence.

BSS adds from Gazipur: A rescue team from the Savar Area of the Bangladesh Army has been engaged for removing the debris of the under-construction roof of the Mita Textile Mills.

The army rescue team comprising Infantry, Engineers and EME personnel has been working in cooperation with the local administration and other agencies since 5 am today.

"Granes, dozers, electric welding plants from the base workshop EME, Dhaka Cantonment later joined them in the rescue operation.

Construction workers and engineers of Spie-Cepag, a Titas Gas contractor who volunteered with their cranes and gas welding plants from their nearby construction site are also assisting the Army personnel in removing the rubble.

concerned authorities to keep the certificate cases pending to stop harassment of farmers. The government is aware of the problems of the farmers and it will do everything for their betterment, he added.

Saifur Rahman said, it is not possible for the government to exempt interest on agricultural loans upto Taka 10 thousand at this stage. The economy is in a battered state and long nine years of corruption and mismanagement under an autocratic government have sapped its vitality, he told the House.

He said nobody should expect the Government to "print notes" to extend financial assistance or provide relief to all sectors. The losses in nationalised jute, textiles and railway sectors alone stood at a staggering level, he added.

The Finance Minister said restoration of economic and financial discipline in the country would require "a sound overall economic policy framework". The ruling party is determined to fulfil its election pledges in accordance with sound economic principles, he added. "Writing off all loans or debts in a blanket way is not certainly the answer to the prevailing economic situation", he stated.

On the private members' day - the first one for the fifth Jatiya Sangsad - four other resolutions were tabled. They include: (1) Resolution moved by Workers Party member Rashed Khan Menon for converting Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television into autonomous organisations, free from government control, (2) Resolution by independent member Nurul Islam Mont on setting up a hospital for kidney transplantation, (3) Resolution by Awami League member Rahmat Ali for nationalisation of Sreepur Degree College, and (4) Resolution, also by independent member Nurul Islam Mont, for nationalisation of all registered primary schools in the country.

The participants from the Opposition Bench in day's discussions expressed their total support to the resolution tabled by Mont for exempting interest on agricultural loans upto Taka 10 thousand.

Taking the floor earlier Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina strongly endorsed the resolution. "It has the full backing of the Opposition because it will provide relief to the poor farmers whose condition has steadily been deteriorating over the years", she told the House.

She was critical of successive government, after the killing of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, for neglecting agriculture and worsening condition of the poor farmers.

The participants in the lengthy discussion on the issue included Begum Matia Chowdhury, Mosharraf Hossain, SM Firoz and Shah Haduzzaman of Awami League, Shahjahan Siraj of JSD, Abdur Razzak of Baksal, Shamsuddoha and Najir Hossain of CPB, Suranjit Sengupta of Ganatantri Party and Rashed Khan Menon of Workers Party. Jamaat members Shahjahan Chowdhury, Maulana Abdus Sobhan, Enamul Haque and Latifur Rahman supported Nurul Islam Mont's proposal.

Winding up discussion, Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman said the Government had directed the

## Loan exemption

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State Minister for Information Nurul Huda said on Thursday that the government would consider taking measures against anybody in newspaper industry who causes distress to journalists and other employees by violating laws.

Making a statement in the Jatiya Sangsad he said that the government wanted a cordial relationship between the owners and the employees.

He hoped that newspaper owners would abide by the existing laws in paying salaries and allowances, and ensuring security of service.

Recalling the glorious role played by journalists in the movement to oust the autocratic regime, he said this would be remembered in the history of the democratic movement of Bangladesh.

He said that the government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was sympathetic to both the newspapers and the journalists keeping in view their importance.

He informed the House that journalists observed a 3-hour

## Govt warns against harassing newsmen

By Staff Correspondent

strike from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday at the call of the Dhaka Union of Journalists.

They demanded solution of problems arising out of retrenchment of journalists in the Dainik Desh, the Bangladesh Observer and the Azad, closure of Dainik Dinkal, Naba Abhijan, Dainik Patrika; and the situation in The Bangladesh Times.

He said earlier on Tuesday the DUJ held a rally at the Jatiya Press Club and brought out a procession.

He said considering the crisis in the newspapers and the problems of the journalists, the Ministry of Finance has already arranged payment of Taka 1.5 crore on account of advertisement bills to newspapers at the directive of the Prime Minister, by May next.

In addition a step has been taken to give Taka ten lakh under a special arrangement for overcoming the financial crisis in The Bangladesh Times he said.

He hoped that the financial problems in the concerned newspapers would be solved and owners would be able to pay salary and bonus to journalists following payment of the bills and the special payment.

### Dainik Desh

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the Motijheel head office of the daily to discuss problems of unpaid salary and bonus before Eid.

But the owner of the daily kept the journalists in waiting for about three hours. After iftar, AKM Maveedul Islam, the owner of Dainik Desh, Editor Anwarul Islam and Adviser Taheruddin Thakur alongwith some 40 armed goons attacked the journalists, DUJ alleged.

BFUJ Secretary General Amanullah Kabir, DUJ General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi and Joint Secretary MA Aziz and former BFUJ Secretary General Syed Zafar were among those injured.

The journalists left the place immediately after the attack as the goondas also threatened their lives, the release said.

Later, BFUJ President Reazuddin Ahmed and DUJ President Zahirul Haque in a joint statement condemned the heinous attack on the journalists.

The Dainik Desh authorities set a "barbaric example" by retrenching 14 journalists of the daily without paying salary and bonus and eventually launching attack on them with an ulterior motive, the statement said.

### Press Note

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search was conducted in view of the continuous deteriorating situation inside the jail where some unruly prisoners made the life of the jail inmates miserable through resorting to unlawful activities and mutual fighting.

The day to day functioning of the jail administration was being hampered due to the armed threat of those unruly prisoners. They took possession of ration materials and also created a scope to move about freely inside the jail by breaking lockups several times.

The authority, under such situation, conducted the search Thursday from 6 AM to 10 A.M. to bring the situation under control.

The search operation took place peacefully and there was no report of any casualty.

The Press Note said that the atmosphere inside the jail is quite calm and the situation is under complete control of the authorities.

## The Midnight File

### ROK sets terms for unification

TOKYO, Apr 11: North Korea has set terms for resuming unification talks with South Korea including adopting of a peace pact and consultation on United Nations membership, the north's official news agency said today, reports AFP.

### Saudi Arabia to set up 'Shura'

SHARJAH, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, Apr 11: Saudi Arabia will set up a 60-member consultative body, a Gulf newspaper reported today but did not specify when the measure would be implemented, reports AFP.

### New KUJ executives

KHULNA, Apr 11: Election to the Executive Committee of Khulna Union of Journalists was held here today at the Khulna Press Club premises, Ayub Hossain of 'Dainik Ittefaq' was earlier declared President of KUJ unopposed while AK Hiru of local daily newspaper 'Dainik Bangaban' was elected Secretary along with twelve other executive committee members, reports BSS.

## Seen from the Gallery

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League MP Mohiuddin Ahmed gossiping with a friend in the Treasury Bench during the session, drew the attention of the Speaker saying that the honourable AL MP had crossed the floor.

He invited Mohiuddin Ahmed to come back to the Opposition Bench saying "Wild animals are beautiful in the forests, children in their mother's laps and Mujib-coat-wallas in the Opposition Bench".

Suranjit Sengupta had annoyed the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina once before on the very first day of the current session when he refrained from voting for the opposition's Speaker candidate.

He had abstained.

On yet another occasion he was criticised by the 8-party partners when he said that the former Speaker Shamsul Huda Chowdhury had no moral right to preside over the inaugural session.

Suranjit Sengupta had however come to the rescue of the Treasury Bench on many other occasions.

After their bahas (exchange) on Wednesday both the Leader of the House Khaleda Zia and the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina remained calm on Thursday.

Sheikh Hasina spoke only on two occasions while Khaleda Zia did not rise on the day.

She devoted much of her time inside the House reading the Rules of Procedure. The atmosphere in the House was unexpectedly sombre.

'Agni Kannya' (fiery girl) Matia Chowdhury, an Awami League MP proved a dema-

gogue beyond any doubt.

Speaking on the Private Member's resolution Matia Chowdhury said 'Bhatsab' (brothers) which is an unparliamentary word. She quickly regretted it as the whole House burst into laughter.

A wami League MP Mohammed Nasim was embarrassed in the House. It was a same-side between two Awami Leaguers. While Mohammad Nasim was speaking on a point of order he was disturbed by his party colleague Mohammad Shamsul Huq who has the loudest voice.

In an apparently unguarded moment Nasim shouted, at Shamsul Huq "Chup Kar" (Shut Up) which enraged his party comrade.

Nasim apologised saying, 'I am sorry, I am sorry'.

Party colleagues had to tackle Shamsul Huq who shouted at Nasim at the top of his voice being encouraged by the Treasury Bench members.

### Scimitar

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final report of findings to the government on Thursday.

The commission handed over the report to the State Minister for Energy who himself was the member of the commission but did not sign the final report. Dr Kamal Hossain said the State Minister had given them assurance that the report of the commission would be given due preference immediately.

The public enquiry commission was formed at a public meeting held in Sylhet on October 4, 1989 to protest against the petroleum agreement between the than government and Scimitar.

## Crackdown

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Former Deputy Mayor of Chittagong and Joint Secretary of Chittagong Metropolitan Unit of Jatiya Party Alhaj Dastagir Chowdhury, General Secretary Chittagong South Unit of Jatiya Party Shamsul Alam Master and Nazrul Islam, Union Parishad Chairman of Sukradandi Union under Patia Upazila, an alleged accused in a murder case were among the eighteen. They would be shifted to other jails tonight or tomorrow.

Moinuddin (24), an under-trial prisoner of Chittagong Jail succumbed to injuries at Chit-

tagong Medical College Hospital Wednesday night, medical sources said, Thursday.

Moinuddin was sent to hospital from the jail yesterday when he fell from a tree inside the jail compound, jail authority sources said. The victim, son of one Strajul Hoq of Boalkhali was arrested on charges of keeping illegal arms in October last.

Jail authority sources said it was not clear why the prisoner climbed up the tree at night and how he fell down at a time when the jail premises had been virtually under the control of the prisoners since March 23.

## Student

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a group of armed miscreants at the Institute canteen on Thursday at 2.45 pm.

Immediately after Sharif had entered the canteen for snacks seven armed men with cut rifle followed and pumped several bullets into him. Sharif was hit on the head and died instantly.

After the incident, the killers had managed to escape by car.

Sharif was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Sheikh Hasina visited DMCH to see the body. Later, the body was handed over to deceased's relatives.

When contacted, the OC, Tejgaon confirmed the death but could not give details.

### Hasina condemns killing

Awami League Chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament in a statement condemned the killing of Shariful Islam Sharif.

Editor: S. M. Ali