

# Banya set to go back home

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Banya, the surviving conjoined twin who was separated from her sister in August, is finally going to her home in Gaibandha within a day or two after spending nearly six months in hospitals in the capital.

Since their birth on March 24, Banya and her twin sister Barsha had been under treatment in hospitals. But Barsha died on August 6 hours after a marathon surgery to separate her from her twin sister at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital (BSMMUH).

Banya, who had to fight for her life after the surgery, is now doing well and will finally be released from the hospital within a day or two. But she would require follow-up treatment for a long time, doctors at the BSMMUH said.

Temperature and other complications of the baby have already been controlled and her condition is now quite good, although she is still taking some medicines," said Prof Shaiful Haque, chairman of the Department of Paediatric Surgery who conducted the complicated surgery.

Six teams comprising 68 doctors, nurses and technicians were involved in the seven-hour-long



Banya with her mother.

operation.

Banya is the second baby in the country separated through a surgical operation and she survived well. Prior to this, Dr Ruhul Amin, associate professor of paediatric surgery at BSMMUH, successfully separated a pair of conjoined twins at the Islami Bank Hospital in 2003.

"Banya will step into six months on September 24 and she is doing well," her mother Shahnaz Begum said, adding that she laughs and

plays, and whenever she is brought out of the ICU, she looks happier.

The mother expressed her deep gratitude to the well-wishers and to those who extended financial support for the treatment of Banya.

With the feeling of happiness tinged with concern for her well-being, father Golam Kibria Sarkar, a schoolteacher, is taking the girl back to his home. The baby still needs financial assistance for her follow-up treatment. Her father

urges generous people to send contributions to the following account: Golam Kibria Sarkar, A/C No. 105.101.106574, Dutch-Bangla Bank Limited, Foreign exchange branch, Motijheel, Dhaka.

Bonya and Barsha, the conjoined twins were born at Rampura village in Gaibandha on March 24. After receiving treatment for 10 days at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the twins who were joined at livers, intestines, gall-bladders, chest bones and abdomen were shifted to the BSMMUH on April 4. Finally, the doctors at the BSMMUH were able to set a 'milestone in the medical history of Bangladesh' by successfully separating the twins on August 6.

Survival of conjoined twins is very rare in Bangladesh. A total of three pairs of conjoined twins were admitted to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital in the last three and a half years, but none of them survived.

Statistics show that only a few hundred pairs of conjoined twins are born across the globe each year -- appearing about once in every 100,000 births.

When an embryo begins to split into identical twins but stops midway leaving the partially separated egg to mature, it results in conjoined twins, experts said.

# Media can play 'third party' role to resolve political conflicts

Experts tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Media experts and journalists at a seminar yesterday said mass media can play a 'third party' role to resolve the present political conflicts, leading to make a culture of peace and tolerance in the country.

Journalists should be more professional in career journalism. They should not publish any news items that goes against the interests of the nation, but should highlight news that helps establish peace in the society, they added.

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) in collaboration with Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (Sri Lanka) and Global Partnership for the Prevention of

Armed Conflict (Netherlands) organised the seminar on 'Role of media in culture of peace and tolerance' at BISS auditorium in the city to mark the International Day of Peace and Ceasefire-2008.

While presenting a keynote paper on 'Multi-dimensional approaches to conflict resolution: Role of media,' Editor of Bhorer Kagoj Shyamal Dutta said media have to play role in favour of peace.

"Media can play 'third party' role to resolve the conflicts among political parties," he added.

Mahbubul Alam, former adviser to a caretaker government, said journalists should be trained up to enable them to be more effective towards professionalism.

Speaking as the chief guest, he said, "A news must have its truth,

objectivity and non-partiality. Sourcing is very important in the news writing. No news should be printed or telecast which has the possibility to break the peaceful environment in the society."

Brig Gen (ret'd) Shahedul Anam Khan, editor of defence and strategic affairs of The Daily Star, said media can reduce the conflicts among the political parties through presenting accurate information, ideas and comments.

While presenting a keynote paper on 'Conflict-sensitive journalism: An overview,' he said, "Our political parties do not have strong communications each other which create conflicts and violence in the country. Media can play a vital role as communicator to make the culture of peace

and tolerance."

Pranab Saha, city editor of the Prothom Alo, presented his keynote paper on 'Role of media in culture of peace and tolerance' where he said media can play the role of building the culture of peace and tolerance if journalists and their media are non-biased.

Prof Syed Anwar Hussain of Dhaka University said Bangladesh media is not playing an effective role in establishing peace in politics and other sectors due to lack of professionalism.

BISS Board of Governors Chairman Mufleh R Osmani, also former ambassador, moderated the seminar where Chief Editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury also spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia speaks at a meeting of the party leaders from greater Chittagong at the residence of former Jai Jai Din editor Shafiq Rehman in the city yesterday.

## US envoy meets LGRD adviser

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador James F Moriarty has lauded the steps taken by the government to strengthen the local government bodies.

He met with LGRD and Cooperatives Adviser M Anwarul Iqbal at his office yesterday viewed that the local government bodies could play effective role in the overall development of the country when then they are freed from the control of centre.

The adviser told the US Ambassador about the recent ordinance on the Local Government Commission aiming to free the local government institutions from the grip of the centre.

US Embassy Director on Good Governance and Political Affairs Todd Sorenson was present.

# Hajj pilgrims asked to have check-up by Oct 30

UNB, Dhaka

The pilgrims, who intend to perform hajj this year both under government and private managements, have been asked to complete their health check-ups and vaccinations by October 30.

A PID handout said medical boards have been formed for carrying out health check ups and vaccinations of the pilgrims by the deadline.

Pilgrims from Dhaka district and metropolitan city have been asked to contact Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Mitford Hospital, Shaheed Suhrawrdi Hospital and Government Employee Hospital.

The intending hajj pilgrims from divisional cities were asked to contact government medical college hospitals while in other districts the pilgrims were advised to report to respective civil surgeon offices.

Besides, under special arrangements, medical board would be set up at Askona hajj camp in the capital in October.

Pilgrims, who will fail to have their check ups and vaccinations at their respective medical board or lose their health and vaccination certificate or those who had vaccinated in last hajj ritual but lost vaccination certificate can take health service in these centres, said the handout.

Ministry of Religious Affairs requested all intending hajj pilgrims to collect certificate after undergoing check ups and vaccination at medical board by the stipulated time as the Saudi authorities would not allow anyone to enter Saudi Arabia without such health certificates.

Workers of already closed Honourway Textile and Apparels Ltd yesterday submitted a memorandum to the LGRD adviser demanding payment of their wages and arrears, including Eid bonus by September 22.

They threatened to observe a hunger strike in front of the factory if their arrears are not paid within the deadline, says a press release.

The readymade garment (RMG) workers also demanded immediate re-opening of the factory.

Others demands include taking action against concerned officials of Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) as they remain silent in making any headway to their problems and stopping police attack on the workers.

They also submitted the same memorandum to the BEPZA chairman on the same day.

Bangladesh Garments and Shilpa Sramik Federation President Raiqul Islam Sujan and Honourway workers were present during the submission of the memorandum.



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