

Rafiqul Islam  
in Canadian  
hospital with  
leukaemia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Architect of International  
Mother Language Day  
Rafiqul Islam is being  
treated for leukaemia in a  
Canadian hospital.

The 60-year-old man was  
admitted to Vancouver  
General Hospital on March  
23 a day after he was diagnosed  
with leukaemia, said  
Matiul Alam, a close associate  
of Rafiqul Islam.

According to the  
Wikipedia, leukaemia is a  
type of cancer of the blood or  
bone marrow characterised  
by an abnormal increase of  
white blood cells.

Rafiqul Islam is receiving  
chemotherapy on a daily  
basis.

While the treatment has  
caused sore, nausea, poor  
appetite and short-term hair  
loss, his doctors have said  
that the treatment is  
progressing satisfactorily, said  
Matiul Alam, an educationist  
and former Brac official.

Rafiqul Islam, hailing  
from Rajbari in Comilla, is the  
president of the Vancouver-  
based NGO "Mother  
Language Lovers of the  
World".

The organisation was the  
first to propose to the UN to  
declare February 21 as the  
International Mother  
Language Day.

It later inspired the  
Bangladesh government to  
send a formal proposal for  
achieving UN recognition of  
the glorious language move-  
ment.

In response to the formal  
proposal, the Unesco finally  
declared Feb 21 as  
International Mother  
Language Day in 1999.

Rafiqul's eldest son Jyoti  
Islam, who is working as a  
professional nurse in Canada,  
has requested everyone to  
pray for his father.



## Biman to repatriate 918 Bangladeshis

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Biman Bangladesh Airlines will continue repatriation of more than 900 Bangladeshis who crossed over to Tunisia following deadly fighting in Libya.

According to the foreign ministry, Biman will operate three flights in which a total of 918 Bangladeshis will be repatriated from Tunisia.

Some 306 Bangladeshis are due to arrive today in Dhaka boarding government charter Biman flight from Djerba in Tunisia last night.

Biman will also operate flights on Saturday and Monday, and each day Biman will repatriate 306 Bangladeshis, said the foreign ministry press release.

Latest report shows 15 Bangladeshis crossed over from Libya into Tunisia, Egypt and Greece on Tuesday.

In Tunisia, about 903 Bangladeshis at Ras Jdir border point await repatriation. On Tuesday, three more escaped to Tunisia.

In Egypt, the foreign ministry said of four Bangladeshis present at the Al Salloum border checkpoint.

The ministry's consular team there arranged for repatriating the four from Cairo Airport by a commercial flight to be coordinated by International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

While in Greece, eight Bangladeshis have reached Corfu Port. Bangladesh mission in Athens will arrange to repatriate them.

Besides, one Bangladeshi, among the 49 who jumped off a ship during evacuation on March 6, still remains missing at Hania in Crete Island of Greece.

As of now, 34,240 Bangladeshis who were employed in Libya have been repatriated.

This dead frog along with rubbish fills the reflecting pool surrounding Swadhinata Stambha in Suhrawardy Udyana in the city, spoiling the sanctity and environment of the premises, due to inadequate measures to keep it clean regularly. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## WORLD HEALTH DAY TODAY

# Call for rational use of antibiotics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will observe World Health Day today as elsewhere across the globe with the theme "Antimicrobial resistance and its global spread".

On the eve of the day, Health Minister Prof AFM Ruhal Haque yesterday said antimicrobial resistance has become a concern of the world and the country as well.

While speaking at a press conference in the health ministry's conference room, the minister also admitted that pharmacies are

not selling antibiotics accordingly paying little heed to the issue, as most of pharmacists are unregistered.

He said Directorate General of Drug Administration would be strengthened with manpower soon to toughen monitoring in the market.

Patients often buy antibiotics without knowing its appropriate use, as there is no need of prescription of the doctors to buy antibiotics. But ineffective and indiscriminate use is turning microorganisms to be more resis-

tant against different drugs, he said.

The minister stressed on the need to increase awareness on rational use of antibiotics to combat drug resistance.

He also said his government is working seriously for the improvement of the health sector.

Health Secretary Mohammad Humayun Kabir and Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services Khondker Shefetullah were also present.

UNB reports: President Zillur Rahman and Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina issued separate messages on the occasion.

The president called for achieving more success and progress in the health sector by keeping population under control. He lauded the theme of this year's health day, terming it "time befitting".

"I think it is important to raise awareness and a sense of responsibility among professionals and common people through highlighting research results both in national and international levels", he said.

In her message, Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina said, "Abuse of antibiotic is rampant in treatment of various diseases in many places of the world. As a result, people's resistance power is lessening. Effectiveness of medicine in curing diseases is weakening."

She said concerted effort and applied research are needed to save human beings from this catastrophe.

The prime minister called upon all concerned to come forward to supplement the government initiative to improve public health through prevention of diseases and control.

## CU to get 2 new dorms

CU CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong University (CU) authorities will start construction of two more residential halls within this year.

It was decided at a regular syndicate meeting yesterday with acting Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Mohammad Alauddin in the chair.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall will be built for male students and Janantri Sheikh Hasina Hall for female students.

There will be 750 seats in each dormitory, said AKM Tafzil Haque, a syndicate member.

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