

## Cat scare

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bites on the left side of her body and she was bleeding from her left ear, apparently caused by the fall from the three-feet-high bed. Doctors said she is recovering well.

Lamia was admitted to the hospital on December 5 with multiple issues related to her respiration, nervous system and she had neonatal jaundice too. She was placed on a portable phototherapy machine on her bed for treatment of jaundice.

Around 3:00am on December 6, the cat attacked.

"Oh my God! The cat is taking away the baby," screamed relatives of other patients in the ward as they saw the cat trying to drag Lamia towards the exit of Ward-2.

Champa, maternal grandmother of Lamia, was staying in with her that night. Champa had gone to sleep moments before.

"I could not believe it. But I saw the cat... white in colour... running away following the hue and cry. The baby was already dragged several feet towards the exit," said Champa.

She believes that the fall from the bed has perhaps damaged Lamia's head.

Champa chose not to let her daughter know about her child as it has been only a few days since had to undergo a C-section in Pabna. Champa also fears insult from her daughter's in-laws since she "failed to protect Lamia".

Doctor Mashru Rahman, on duty at the ICU yesterday afternoon, told The Daily Star, "The baby has recovered from the injuries she sustained from the cat attack. Her condition is improving."

The incident induced fear among other patients in the hospital. Relatives and parents of babies were seen keeping an eye on the doors of their wards since cats are seen in and around the hospitals in groups.

Cats appeared to have liked the hospital as left-over from meals of patients, their relatives and hospital staff are littered around it. The Daily Star correspondent, even yesterday, saw several cats roaming the hallways of the hospital.

The mother of a one-and-a-half-year-old child patient preferring anonymity told The Daily Star, "It reveals the extent of negligence the hospital is being run with..."

The Daily Star tried to reach the hospital director several times for his comments and for information on what has been done to put an end to the cat problem in the hospital. But the director on every occasion did not pick up the calls on his mobile phone or respond to the text sent by the paper.

## Dhaka renews

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adverse impacts as well as benefits to be accrued from the project, the statement added.

It then mentioned repeated assurances from New Delhi that nothing harmful to Bangladesh would be done in implementing the project.

The foreign ministry release came a week after New Delhi issued a statement after two advisers to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina went to the Indian capital to convey Dhaka's concern over the project.

A foreign office spokesman said the statement was issued to remove confusion in the public mind and to negate impacts of "misleading campaigns".

The statement noted that the past BNP-led government took no step to raise Dhaka's concern to India.

It read: "(The) Leader of the Opposition may like to explain why she did not use the opportunity of her visit to India (as prime minister) and her discussions with the Indian leadership to raise this issue and obtain some binding according to her commitment that India would not construct the Tipaimukh dam since it would have such adverse impact on Bangladesh."

The law will take its own course. Those responsible for

## Khaleda elections

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a private organisation. The government has no link with it. But the prime minister had ordered to file a case against Khaleda Zia accusing her of buying land for the charity. This is nothing but a conspiracy to declare her disqualified for the next elections," he told a rally at the city's Tejgaon truckstand.

The rally was organised to protest the splitting of Dhaka City Corporation into two and attack on former DCC mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka during a long hartal in the capital on Sunday.

Even the government has accused Tarique Rahman in a case which was filed at least eight years ago, mentioned Fakhrul. "People are not fool. They can understand everything. No conspiracy will be allowed to be implemented."

The ruling party knows that its candidates will lose the deposit money if a free and fair poll is held and that is why the 15th amendment to the constitution has been adopted to hold the next elections under the incumbent government, the BNP leader maintained.

He further complained that though some ministers are involved in corruption, the prime minister is trying to save them. "World Bank has suspended fund release for Padma Bridge due to a minister's corruption. Even

Canada is also conducting a probe into this."

Citing that former DCC mayor Khoka was stabbed under police custody during the hartal, he said there is no security of people's lives and property in the country.

The livelihood of around

three crore Bangladeshis will be affected if India builds the Tipaimukh dam, pointed out Fakhrul adding, the government is not lodging strong protests to force India cancel the project.

Sahabuddin, joint convenor of Dhaka city BNP, presided over the meeting.

On August 8, the Anti-Corruption Commission filed a case with Tejgaon Police Station against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and three others for abusing power in setting up Shaheed Zia Charitable Trust.

A High Court bench on Thursday granted Khaleda BNP for eight weeks in the case.

Meanwhile, BNP's Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday alleged that the government opted for repressing the opposition to stop the movement against splitting DCC.

Addressing a press conference at the party's central office at Nayapaltan, he said police foiled BNP's rally at M o h a m m a d p u r o n Thursday which indicates that the government wants to stop the movement by repression.

so many deaths will be dealt with seriously," she said.

The state's public health engineering minister, Subrata Mukherjee, said senior members of the hospital staff appeared to have fled as soon as the fire broke out, leaving their patients.

"It was horrifying that the hospital authorities did not make any effort to rescue trapped patients," Subrata told reporters.

Several hundred angry and distraught relatives alleged "this was all due to the negligence of the hospital authorities".

"The hospital authorities did not inform about the fire. It was the local police station which informed the fire department at 4:10am," Javed Ahmed Khan, minister of fire and emergency services, told The Hindu.

Patients with rope tied around them were brought down by the firemen as their relatives watched in horror the tragedy unfolding before their eyes.

By 9:00am, the blaze had largely been brought under control but the smoke continued to billow from shattered windows for hours, as firemen struggled to reach those still trapped inside.

A number of immobile patients were evacuated down the side of the building through narrow roads leading to the hospital.

The premises of the hospital presented a ghastly sight with bodies strewn around and anxious relatives milling hoping their near and dear ones are not among the dead.

Majority of the dead patients were from critical care and orthopaedic wards and were not in a position to move, said D Biswas, additional director general of Fire Services.

Rescued patients and those who managed to escape said they had woken up to rooms full of choking, thick smoke.

"I was terrified, I kept shouting for help," said Jyoti Choudhury who was admitted to the hospital a week before.

"Finally, a nurse dragged me out of the ward and got me down to the ground floor," said Choudhury, who was then taken to the adjacent hospital wing.

Ananya Das, 34, bearing stiches on her stomach from minor surgery carried out the day before, said she was in post-operative recovery when the fire broke out.

"I managed to walk towards an exit and then climb out of a window. I saw a lot of bodies," she said.

Paschimbanga Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who visited the hospital, said six board members of the hospital had been arrested and charged with culpable homicide and negligence. Leading industrialist SK Modi is among the detained.

The law will take its own

course. Those responsible for

## Bangladeshi

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India with a hope to get back a healthy life. His family admitted him to a hospital, having little inkling that he would perish in a fire.

Gauranga, 75, was killed in the fire that broke out in AMRI Hospital in Kolkata yesterday, just three days after he was taken there.

He was the lone Bangladeshi among the 90 killed in the devastating flames.

He felt better after the first dose of medicine on Thursday, his grandson Rakkhit Roy told the Daily Star from Kolkata.

"Dadu [grandpa] said he fell much better yesterday and spoke to me last night [Thursday night]," Rakkhit said, adding that Gauranga's test results were to be available yesterday.

"Who knew my dad would meet this fate?" a sobbing Rakkhit said.

Gauranga's son Vidya Sagar was so shocked that he could hardly speak.

Rakkhit and Sagar had

accompanied Gauranga to Kolkata.

Rakkhit said the body

would be brought home

today by a Biman flight.

Paschimbanga Chief

Minister Mamata Banerjee

consoled him, Sagar and

relatives of other fire victims, he added.

Gauranga, a farmer of

Sirajdikhan upazila in

Munshiganj, had been suf-

fering from Hydrocephalus,

which causes the brain to

swell, for the last few

months. He took treatment

in a hospital in the capital,

but his condition did not

improve, reports our

Munshiganj correspondent.

Sagar and Rakkhit took

him to Kolkata on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a pall of gloom descended on

Gauranga's house as the

news reached his home. His

wife was wailing on hearing

the news.

"He was admitted to the hospital so that he is cured. But today, he is no more," said his nephew Jotish Mondol, with tears rolling down his cheeks.

As per the building law,

Rajuk must ensure that

developers comply with

those mandatory prerequi-

sites.

Completed last year, Doreen Tower is set to open for commercial use soon, company officials have said.

All through the decade in

which the building came up,

Rajuk inexplicably looked

the other way as such gross

violations of construction

rules occurred.

Rajuk Chairman Nurul

Huda told The Daily Star last

month that he would initiate

an investigation into how

the approval of the tower

plan went through.

Asked why Rajuk had not

addressed these concerns

while the construction was

going on, he said, "I cannot

say that without going

through the files." He then

left for Hajj.

Doreen Tower has park-

ing arrangements for some

## Rising high

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Under the terms of the Building Construction Rules of 1996, any building 10 storeys or higher must keep open space as follows: 10 feet at the back, 8.4 feet on

the two sides and five feet in the front.

But, as this correspond-

ent found during a recent

visit to the site, the owner of

the Doreen Tower has left no

open space. As per records,

the total land area of the plot

is 6,051 square feet while the

built-up floor area is 6,052

square feet.

ASM Ismail, the chief

government architect, said

under the 1996 rules such a tall building could in no way

be approved in Gulshan area.

"Leaving no setback

[open space] is a gross viola-

tion of rules," said Ismail,

who previously served at

Rajuk as an authorised offi-

cer for building approval.

Survey of Bangladesh, the

national surveying and

mapping agency, in a report

two years ago listed Doreen

Tower as one of the "highly

risky" buildings for air op-

erations. Its height is more

than double the permissible

150 feet.

The taller a building is,