

# Doctors couldn't save Musrat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Musrat Jahan, the four-month-old girl who had suffered deep burns during a surgery at Rajshahi's Islami Bank Medical College Hospital, died early yesterday.

She died around 3:00am after being admitted there with fever and acute respiratory infection on Wednesday, said Mamunur Rashid, deputy director of the hospital.

The girl was also suffering from burn injuries, he added, but could not say the exact cause of her death.

She was buried in her family graveyard at Nawdapa around 11:00am, family members said.

"I don't know what to do now. The truth is that I have lost my baby and I could not do anything to save her," said Musrat's mother Joyrab Abedin Munni.

The girl had undergone two surgeries at the hospital since May 19, the day she was born there with imperforate anus, meaning her anus had no opening through which stools leave the body.

According to Mozammel Haq, the

physician who operated on her, the baby also had "excessive water" in one of her kidneys and her colon did not develop properly.

The day after her birth, doctors conducted a colostomy surgery on her and brought out one end of the large intestine through an opening made in the abdominal wall.

Within two months, her intestines started to come out through the opening of her abdomen. On July 11, Dr Mozammel operated on her again.

After this operation, she did not regain consciousness. To make her recover from anesthesia-induced unconsciousness, doctors tried to heat her up with "warm cloths," inflicting deep burns on her hands and buttocks in the process. She was released from the hospital later.

But following media coverage, the hospital authorities put Musrat under the care of a team of specialists.

Her parents took her home last week.



Kazi Shamsuddin Bachchu, a friend of Sheikh Kamal, hands over a sitar to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for display at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum. Kamal, Bangabandhu's eldest son, had given the musical instrument to Bachchu over 40 years ago to have it repaired from India. But on August 15, 1975, he was brutally murdered along with most of the family members. Bachchu's brother Kazi Moinuddin Raj and artist Kuhu were also present during the occasion yesterday at the Gono Bhaban.

PHOTO: PMO

# HC stays VAT on tuition fees for 6 months

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The hour-long protest was held three days after the government withdrew 7.5 percent VAT on private universities in the face of street agitation by private university students in the capital and elsewhere.

The protesters yesterday chanted the slogan "no VAT" and carried placards and posters inscribed with "we are not product", "why VAT on English medium schools only?", "why this discrimination with English medium schools?"

They said the government withdrew VAT on private universities, but kept it in force for English medium schools. This was illogical and a "dual policy".

"The cost of education in these schools is high, and imposition of the tax was like pouring salt on wounds," said Sharmin Sultana, whose child studies at European Standard School in Dhanmondi.

This VAT adds to the woes of fixed-income people who have to go to great

lengths to send their kids to these schools, she said.

"Aren't they children of this country... Why is this discrimination?" she asked.

Ahmed Jamal, whose daughter studies at Siddiqui's International School, said they paid 4.5 percent VAT on admission, tuition and other fees till June last year. But the government increased the VAT to 7.5 percent the following month.

Jamal said he had hoped the government would reduce the VAT this year, but it did the opposite.

Ayana, a standard-seven student of Siddiqui's International School, said, "There should be no tax on education because it is not a commodity."

Sirajum Munira, a teacher at European Standard School, said the scope for education would shrink if the government continued to impose such tax.

S Chowdhury Babu, a guardian,

said they would go for tougher agitation after the Eid to force the government to scrap the VAT.

In 2010, the government imposed 4.5 percent VAT on fees and services in English medium schools. In the budget for fiscal 2014-15, the VAT was raised to 7.5 percent.

However, there is no VAT on Bangla medium schools and government-approved English version schools that follow English textbooks published by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board.

In his budget speech this year, Finance Minister AMA Muhith sought to increase the VAT on English medium schools to 10 percent. The move drew huge criticism from guardians and associations of English medium schools.

The government later fixed the rate at 7.5 percent on English medium schools, private universities, and medical and engineering colleges.

On Wednesday, two guardians -- Faizul Islam and Selim Azam -- filed the petition with the HC, seeking cancellation of VAT on English medium schools.

During yesterday's hearing, petitioners' counsel Shahdeen Malik told the court that the VAT imposed on students of private English medium schools was discriminatory since students of no other institutions paid any VAT.

It is the government's duty under article-17 of the constitution to ensure education for all as well as equal opportunity under article-19. VAT on tuition and other fees of English medium students was detrimental to the principle of the two articles, he said.

The chairman of the National Board of Revenue and secretaries to the education ministry and to the internal resources division of the finance ministry were made respondents to the court rule.

# Khaleda faces trial

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graft cases against Khaleda. The trial courts concerned have already started hearing the charitable trust and the orphanage trust cases.

Yesterday, the HC gave the verdict after rejecting a writ petition filed by the BNP chief in 2008 challenging the legality of trial proceedings in the case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) earlier that year.

The ACC accuses the former prime minister and 15 others of causing a loss of Tk 159 crores to the state exchequer by awarding a contract for operation of Barapukuria coalmine to a Chinese company between June 2003 and June 2005, abusing power.

Following Khaleda's petition, the HC stayed the trial proceedings in the case.

ACC lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan yesterday told The Daily Star that the judges rejected the petition saying the lower court would examine whether or not the corruption allegations against Khaleda were true and so there was no need to keep the stay order in place any more.

Khaleda's counsel Raghieb Rauf Chowdhury said his client would move the Supreme Court against the HC verdict after receiving the verdict's full text.

## 2 MORE TESTIFY IN ZIA TRUST CASE

A Dhaka court yesterday recorded statements of two more prosecution witnesses -- Md Aminuddin and Md Nazrul Islam, former officials of

Sonali Bank's Prime Minister Office branch -- in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case in absence of the BNP chief.

With them, 10 prosecution witnesses have so far testified before the makeshift court at Bakshibazar in the capital.

After recording the statements, Judge Abu Ahmed Jomadar of the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka set aside October 15 for Khaleda's lawyer Masud Ahmed Talukder to cross-examine the witnesses.

Before that, Masud filed two petitions, saying the BNP chief would return from London after Eid-ul-Azha and they wanted to cross-examine the witnesses on the next scheduled date in presence of Khaleda Zia.

He filed two more petitions over Khaleda's non-appearance before the court.

On September 10, the former premier appeared before the court to attend the hearing in the charitable trust and the orphanage trust graft cases. Before that, she didn't appear before the court for three consecutive days, citing health issues.

According to the charge sheet in the charitable trust case, Khaleda and three others abused power to collect Tk 6.19 crore for the trust during the BNP-led government's tenure between 1991 and 1996.

In the orphanage trust case, the BNP chief, her son Tarique Rahman and four others are accused of embezzling Tk 2.1 crore by forming the charity that exists only on paper.



A migrant in a wheelchair moves towards the Croatian village of Tovarnik, close to the official Serbia-Croatia border yesterday. Migrants began to cross from Serbia into Croatia on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

# Migrants inundate Croatia

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its Balkan neighbour's frontier. Hungary's closure of its southern EU border with Serbia has shifted pressure onto Croatia, Slovenia and Romania.

At the eastern border town of Tovarnik, Croatian riot police struggled to keep crowds of men, women and children back from rail tracks after long queues formed in baking heat for buses bound for reception centres elsewhere in Croatia.

Scuffles broke out as police tried to get women and children to board the buses bound for reception centres near Zagreb. Women screamed and children cried in desperate scenes.

An Iraqi from Baghdad who gave his name as Riad said he had been separated from his wife and child. "Only women and children are now allowed onto buses. My wife and child are gone and they [police] do not allow me to join them. My phone does not work."

Croatia's president met the army chief of staff and asked the military to be ready, if necessary, to protect national borders from illegal migration, state news agency Hina reported. DEEP DIVISIONS European Council President Donald

Tusk summoned EU leaders to a summit next Wednesday to discuss how to better manage external EU borders and help Turkey, through which many of the migrants are passing, as well as other states in the region that are housing Syrian refugees.

He had been urged to do so by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, leader of the EU's most powerful member state and the desired destination for many of the refugees.

The bloc's interior ministers failed to agree on Monday on a mandatory quota system designed to spread the burden of this year's huge influx. MORE MIGRANTS COMING

Undeterred by the problems faces by migrants at the gates of Europe, more have been arriving at the Greek port of Piraeus from Lesbos island, a short boat ride from Turkey.

Others are waiting outside Europe to attempt the hazardous journey that has cost thousands of refugees their lives.

"It would be very dangerous, but if you make it, the reward is great, the whole world will open up for you," Yousef Hariri, a refugee from Deraa in Syria, said at a refugee camp in Jordan.

Police said the number of refugees arriving in Germany more than doubled on Wednesday to 7,266. The head of the German Office for Migration and Refugees quit for personal reasons after being criticised for slow processing of applications from a record number of asylum seekers.

In Istanbul, hundreds of Syrians and other migrants thronged a small park in the city centre hoping for a last chance to reach Europe before poor weather makes their favoured Aegean Sea route to Greek islands too dangerous to undertake.

Greece said large groups of refugees from Syria may be about to try to cross its far northeastern land border with Turkey, a relatively new entry point. Much of the frontier is fenced.

A record 300,000 people have fled to Europe via Greece this year, according to the International Organisation of Migration. More than 116,000 more have arrived in Italy.

The UN human rights chief, Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein, denounced "callous, xenophobic and anti-Muslim views that appear to lie at the heart of current Hungarian government policy". "Europe was created to knock

down walls, not to build them," Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said. CRITICISM OF 'XENOPHOBIC' HUNGARY

Hungary came under mounting criticism yesterday over its treatment of migrants and refugees, with the UN's rights chief saying its policies appeared to be shaped by anti-Muslim sentiment and "xenophobia".

A statement from Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein's office said he "deplored the xenophobic and anti-Muslim views that appear to lie at the heart of current Hungarian government policy".

Regional neighbours joined the UN in blasting Hungary's use of water cannon and tear gas against migrants as "unacceptable" and "unbecoming".

Clashes erupted at the flashpoint Roszke crossing on the Hungary-Serbia border on Wednesday, with police trying to block dozens of migrants massed on the Serbian side of the border from breaching a razor-wire fence.

Hours after the clashes, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said he was personally "shocked" to see how the refugees and migrants were being treated. "It's not acceptable," he said.

# DCCs fix 595 spots

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(DSCC) area will have 324 spots and Dhaka North City Corporation area will have 271 spots, said officials of the two city corporations.

It is customary for people to sacrifice animals in any open area in front of their houses or on the roads and alleys, leaving smelly piles of animal parts lying around on the roads. In addition to risk of diseases it also lowers the quality of life.

Chief Estate Officer of DNCC Aminul Islam said people would have to butcher animals at the selected places.

Though there are 271 spots so far, he said, the number might go up before Eid if necessary.

Aminul said people would have to keep the waste and leftovers in particular bags and the DNCC garbage management workers would collect those from the spots.

Imams and other relevant persons would be on hand to help with the slaughters, but people would have to bring their own butchers and necessary meat processing tools, he said.

Aminul said they had already taken different measures to create public awareness including advertisements in print and electronic media and involving imams.

DNCC Superintendent Engineer (garbage management department) Mesbahul Karim said 3,500 garbage management workers would work during Eid days and 350 additional labourers would clean all the makeshift cattle markets in the areas.

He said 22 dump trucks, eight pay-loaders, three tire loaders, seven water tankers, three excavators and four bulldozers would be used to clean cattle markets and slaughtering grounds.

They would distribute free biodegradable polythene bags for garbage, he said.

In Dhaka South, a total of 70,000 free sacks and 30,000 free polythene shopping bags would be distributed among the city dwellers, informed Capt Raquib Uddin, chief waste management officer of DSCC.

Capt Raquib Uddin said they would set up four sheds in each of its 57 wards so that people could take shelter there if there is rain.

Different awareness campaigns, including announcement through loudspeakers two days before Eid, would be taken up, he said, adding that 57,000 leaflets would be distributed.

He said they had sent letters to imams of every mosque in a bid to making people aware.

A central coordination committee and ward-based committees involving ward councillors would be formed for better waste management, he said.

For garbage management in Dhaka South during Eid, 5,200 garbage management workers, 3,000 primary collection service providers, 135 open trucks, 73 container carriers, 17 compactors and 325 containers would be used. Besides, 1,200 additional labourers would also work on a daily basis to keep the part of the city clean, Raquib said.

Ten pay-loaders, seven tire dozers, 35 dumpers and four trailers would be used to clean the makeshift cattle markets in his area.

He said they would also provide 341 drums of bleaching powder at the slaughter grounds and the cattle markets to reduce and remove mal-odour.

They would also spray water with antiseptic on narrow lanes and by-