

Going the extra mile for CHILDREN WITH CANCER

|| BISHAKHA DEVNATH ||



In the last two weeks, Rohan went home in Mirpur twice only to be brought back within days to ASHC's palliative unit. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Rohan let out frequent shrieks of pain, his eyes fixed on the ceiling with teardrops rolling down on the pillow. Curtains were drawn, lights switched off. The ceiling fan was on full speed and his mother was rubbing his arms and legs, waiting for the morphine to kick in.

This was the third time since June 11 that the teenager was brought to the palliative care unit of ASHC, a non-profit focusing on childhood cancer since 1994, in the capital's Dhanmondi.

Doctors at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University had referred the 14-year-old to this facility, having seen no response to chemotherapy and other curative treatment.

ASHC sent its ambulance to the hospital to bring the child to its palliative care facility, a service provided under a recently launched scheme -- "Mobile Palliative Care Clinic". In short, ASHC calls it Mobile PCC.

A cure is not possible in the case of Rohan but it is necessary for his parents to understand that the time he has left can be more peaceful than if he were left uncared for, said Salma Choudhury, founder chairperson of ASHC (A Shelter for Helpless Ill Children).

The organisation has been using a grant of \$50,000 from a US technology company for instilling the philosophy of palliative care in parents, doctors and others who may play a significant role in the treatment of terminally-ill

children.

With the fund from NVIDIA Foundation, ASHC bought the ambulance to provide transportation services to patients inside the capital for free.

In the last two weeks, Rohan went home in Mirpur twice only to be brought back within

The service is available round the clock.

Awareness campaigns are, however, organised outside the city -- at upazila-level with support from upazila health complexes, private hospitals and district-level hospitals. The scheme, launched in May, is also aimed at training doctors

ASHC wants to communicate the message that all children, including those who may have a short life ahead, deserve love and care.



days to ASHC's palliative unit. Like him, other children are shuttled between home and the facility considering their health condition and at the same time accommodating their wishes. They are also transported from hospitals.

and nurses in palliative care for children suffering from cancer.

ASHC takes along specialised doctors, even bereaved parents, from Dhaka to hold workshops and campaigns at the local level to communicate the message

that all children, including those who may have a short life ahead, deserve love and care.

And when a child passes away during his/her journey with ASHC, it takes them to the last rites -- to where the family would bury them.

ASHC wants to expand the services, going beyond the city to reach every child with cancer so that they have access to a quality life, no matter how short. The fund is estimated to support 600 children for the next two years.

The organisation requests affluent people of the country to come forward and help continue and broaden the coverage of the services.

One day, mothers from remotest corners of the country may be able to avail the support from ASHC as Rohan's mother does.

She wants to spend time with her only son away from home, away from all distractions, said Kamrunnaher Lovely on July 4. The mother was still rubbing Rohan's hands in the sunlight sneaking into the room.

Do you have a Dhaka Vibe story to share? Email your feature or idea to dhakavibeds@gmail.com.

20 Indian locomotives likely to arrive in 2 months

Advance Eid tickets from July 29, says railways minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujon yesterday said they were hopeful of completing all necessary procedures within two months to bring 20 locomotives from India to meet railway's immediate needs.

"They [India] will give us those [the locomotives] for free," he told reporters at his Rail Bhaban office.

With 72 percent of Bangladesh Railway's (BR) locomotives already crossing their economic lives, the government is considering renting locomotives from India for the first time to help BR overcome the crisis.

BR sent a proposal to the railways ministry in April to "rent" or "secure as courtesy" 20 railway engines from India until the first batch of 70 locomotives -- 30 metre gauge (MG) and 40 broad gauge (BG) -- that Bangladesh bought from the US and South Korea starts arriving late next year.

"We want to bring those locomotives from India for the interim period," the

minister added.

According to BR, it has 178 MG locomotives, of which 139 have crossed their 20-year economic life. And of its 90 BG locomotives, 55 have crossed economic life.

DHAKA-BENAPOLE TRAIN

Meanwhile, railway will launch a new train service with only three stoppages on the Dhaka-Benapole route tomorrow.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the "Benapole Express" through videoconference from her Gono Bhaban residence, the minister said.

He also said service of Rajshahi-bound Banalata Express would be extended to Chapainawabganj from tomorrow.

With an aim to boost rail connectivity with the northern district, the nonstop intercity train service began on Dhaka-Rajshahi route in April.

Now, the train will be operated on Dhaka-Chapainawabganj route with a stoppage in Rajshahi, the minister said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Currency counterfeiting ring busted in Rampura

Fake notes of 21 lakh rupees recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday busted an Indian currency counterfeiting gang in the capital's Rampura, arresting three people and recovering fake notes of Rs 21 lakh.

The arrestees were identified as Rafiqul Islam Khashru, Md Abdur Rahim and Jony D'Costa.

The DB team also recovered a computer, a colour machine, a lamination machine, a huge stash of fake currency-making paper, security seal and screen board.

"We have come to know that there are three forgery rings in the country now who only make fake Indian rupees," Mashiur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DB (north) police, told The Daily Star yesterday.

In primary interrogation, the arrestees admitted that demand of fake Indian rupees is high ahead of Eid-ul-Azha, as a large amount of spices, cattle and clothes would be imported from India surrounding the festival.

Fake currency sellers in bordering districts of Rajshahi, Jashore and Chapainawabganj used to place demands, and the gang members supplied the rupees, said DC Mashiur.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

DENGUE, CHIKUNGUNYA DSCC starts health service

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday started a 15-day special primary healthcare service for those affected by dengue and chikungunya.

DSCC Mayor Sayeed Khokon inaugurated the service at Nagar Bhaban which will continue till July 30.

Addressing the programme as chief guest, Khokon said they are ready to ensure primary treatment for the patients and prevention of the diseases.

He said they formed 67 medical teams which will provide the service at 476 educational, social and cultural institutes.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Ershad's second janaza held



President Abdul Hamid pays his last respect to Ershad. PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAR REPORT

President M Abdul Hamid yesterday attended the second namaz-e-janaza of Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad, at South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad complex.

The head of the state also paid tribute to Ershad, former president and several-time elected member of parliament, by placing wreath on his coffin before the janaza, reports BSS.

On behalf of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, her military secretary Maj Gen Mia Mohammad Zainul Abedin paid tribute to the opposition leader by placing wreath on his coffin.

Later, Deputy Speaker M Fazley Rabbi

Mia and Chief Whip Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury, on behalf of Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, placed wreath at the coffin of Ershad.

Deputy Opposition Leader and JP Co-chairman Rowshan Ershad also paid her last homage to the founder party chief.

Later, Bangladesh Awami League also placed a wreath at the coffin of the JP chairman.

The second namaz-e-janaza was held at the South Plaza at 10:50am.

Deputy Speaker M Fazley Rabbi Mia, Chief Whip Noor-e-Alam Chowdhury, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud, Agriculture Minister Abdur Razzak took part in the janaza.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

DHAKA TODAY

LECTURE

On Interpol: Multifaceted Organisation for International Cooperation

Venue: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Ramna
Time: 4:30pm

AWARD CEREMONY

For debate on violent extremism
Organiser: Debate for Democracy
Venue: Lalmatia Mohila College
Time: 11am

CELEBRATION

50th Anniversary of Apollo-11 Lunar Landing Week
Different programmes including talk & exhibition will be held throughout the week
Venue: EMK Center
Time: 1pm

TRAINING

Income Tax Management & Focusing on Budget

Venue: IPDP Training, Road-17, Banani
Time: 6pm

CELEBRATION

Cancer Survivors Day
Venue: Midas Center, Dhanmondi-27
Time: 10am

LAUNCHING CEREMONY

E-learning course -- SDGs for Youth: My Goal, My Responsibility
Venue: EMK Center
Time: 11am

WORKSHOP

Graphics Design
Venue: Softnetbd, Road-11, Uttara
Time: 4pm

SEMINAR

On Networking Career
Venue: Karim Tower (8th floor), Panthapath
Time: 7pm

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka welcomes Professor Dr. Md. Atahar Ali
Sr. Consultant-- Cardiac Electrophysiology, Heart Failure & Interventional Cardiology, Electrophysiologist & Interventional Cardiologist

Expert in Arrhythmia Management, Heart Failure Management, Device Implantation and Interventional Cardiology.

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka is happy to have Prof. Dr. Md. Atahar Ali on board. Why go abroad? Get our experts' opinion now.

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WE MOURN

It is with heavy hearts that we mourn our beloved

Mrs Suraiya Ahsan

We shall always remember and treasure her invaluable contribution to Sunbeams.

Students and Staff of Sunbeams.