

**DMCH
Relatives of
patient sedated
and robbed**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three relatives of a patient were sedated and robbed at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Saturday night. The victims -- Jahura Khatun (60), her son-in-law Ameer Hossain (35), and granddaughter Sumona Akter (20) -- are receiving treatment at the hospital. A middle-aged woman, identifying herself as the patient's attendant, started talking to the victims as they were sitting on a mat in the corridor of the Gynecology ward around 10pm, said one of the victims, Ameer. The three were accompanying a patient from Brahmanbaria, Sumi Akter, who was admitted to the DMCH with gynecological complexities. "At one stage of our conversation, the woman offered us juice. What we can recall is we drank the juice," Ameer said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



Md Siraj Miah's umbrella store at Basila was flourishing before the pandemic hit. Though he tried his best to keep it going, the combined effect of low sales, rent, and operational costs eventually caught up to him. After being forced to close it, he now roams around the capital's Mohammadpur area by foot, hawking his colourful umbrellas with the hope that the same excruciating heat that takes a toll on his body convinces people to buy his sunshades. This photo was taken yesterday from Lalmatia.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

**44 oxygen cylinders
go missing from
Barishal hospital**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Forty-four oxygen cylinders have gone missing from Barishal Sher-e Bangla Medical College and Hospital's (SBMCH) Covid unit. The unit was already struggling to cope with oxygen cylinders, as highlighted by a report of The Daily Star published on August 3. With these 44 lost cylinders, hospital authorities are concerned about the unit's functioning until they are found or restocked. The incident came to light when hospital authorities started to record the number of cylinders at the Covid unit recently. According to hospital sources, the authorities found the oxygen cylinders missing after store officer Anamika Bhattacharya made a list of oxygen cylinders and flow metre and submitted it. Following this, ward master Mashiur Alam was transferred instantly, hospital Director Dr SM Saiful Islam informed this correspondent. The director said an investigation has been launched to find out the reason behind the incident. "We are worried that the number of missing oxygen cylinders may increase. A three-member probe committee has been formed with the hospital's deputy director Abdur Razzak as chief," he said. The committee will submit their report by this week and the details will be made public, he said. According to hospital sources, a total of 612 oxygen cylinders and the same number of oxygen flow metres were supposed to be at the hospital.

OPERATION KILO FLIGHT

A story of valour

Pilots who conducted air strikes during Liberation War recount memories of missions



PHOTO: COLLECTED

An aircraft used by the Bangladeshi pilots during Operation Kilo Flight.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was December 3, 1971. An aircraft took off from an abandoned Second World War era airfield in Kailashahar, Manipur of India. Its mission was to bomb Eastern Oil Refinery in Chattogram's Patenga. On the same day, a helicopter took off from Teliamura of Agartala to bomb the oil depot at Narayanjan's Godnail. This was the first bombing raid of brave Bangladeshi pilots. They aimed to cripple Pakistan army's fuel supply, as all vehicles and vessels of Pakistan occupation forces were dependent on the fuel depots. This daring mission was codenamed "Operation Kilo Flight". The operation had significantly turned the tide of Bangladesh's Liberation War, as it totally decimated Pakistan army's oil supply and made it impossible for them to continue a prolonged war. On Saturday, three of the brave pilots who participated in the mission -- Group Captain (ret'd) Shamsul Alam, Bir Uttam, Squadron Leader (ret'd) Badrul Alam, Bir Uttam, and Captain Shahabuddin Ahmed, Bir Uttam -- recounted the momentous mission at a webinar titled "Kilo Flight: Air Raid by the Freedom Fighters". The heroes remembered how they improvised the old, ramshackle flying machines for the raid.

A total of 58 freedom fighters contributed to this courageous air raid. And throughout the war, they conducted at least 50 such air raids on Pakistani forces and their supply depots.

According to Shamsul Alam, the Canadian-built otter aircraft, which was actually a civilian aeroplane, was fitted with rocket pods that could fire 14 rockets one by one. The door of the aircraft was removed and a machine gun was placed there. The main body of the aircraft was modified to be a bomb bay, which could carry 10 bombs. However, as it was not a bomber plane, the bombs could not be dropped automatically; they had to be thrown by hand. "It was kind of a suicidal mission for us. Maximum speed of the aircraft was only 80 miles per hour. We had to fly at a very low altitude along the coastline. Pakistani gun boats fitted with anti-aircraft guns used to patrol the coastline frequently.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

'Surprise visits at land offices'

Says minister on preventing graft

Bss, Dhaka

Surprise visits to land offices across the country will be intensified to prevent corruption, said Land Minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury yesterday. He was addressing a coordination meeting of the divisional commissioners of the land ministry as the chief guest at the secretariat in Dhaka, said a press release. Land Secretary Mustafizur Rahman presided over the meeting. Saifuzzaman said, "We will be more strict to assure corruption-free land services." Despite taking action at the ministry level, complaints are often coming from the service seekers, which is really unfortunate, he further said. "Therefore, more stringent measures will be taken to ensure corruption-free land services for ensuring national interest," the minister said, adding that regular counseling and training of field level officers will be conducted, if needed. Saifuzzaman emphasised the importance of having a representative of the divisional commissioner concerned with the representative of the ministry during the surprise visits to land offices. Besides, a request letter will be sent to the cabinet division to give the responsibility of inspecting field-level survey offices to the deputy commissioner (collector) and divisional commissioners, he said.

UPGRADING ELENGA-RANGPUR HIGHWAY

RHD inks deal with two companies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Roads and Highways Department (RHD) yesterday signed contracts with two companies for upgrading a part of the 190-kilometre Elega-Rangpur highway to four lanes and an interchange, aiming to improve road communication between the capital and northern districts. Under the contract, Abdul Monem Ltd will upgrade 13.6km of the highway (package-5), from Alenga to the east side of Bangabandhu Bridge, in the next three years at a cost of Tk 601.11 crore. China Railway Construction Bridge Engineering Bureau Group Co Ltd will develop Hatikamrul, a major transport hub, into a modified cloverleaf interchange (package-13) at a cost of Tk 743.28 crore. Under the contracts, both companies will complete their respective works within three years and provide performance-based maintenance services for six years. The two work packages are among 11

ELENGA-RANGPUR HIGHWAY

- 13.6km to be upgraded in 3 yrs (Cost Tk 601.11cr)
- Road interchange to be developed in 3 yrs (Cost Tk 743.28cr)
- Works part of project to turn 190km highway into 4 lanes
- Project to improve road communication between capital, northern districts

being implemented under SASEC Road Connectivity Project-2 at a total cost of Tk 16,662.4 crore, jointly funded by the government and Asian Development Bank (ADB). RHD Chief Engineer Abdus Sabur and representatives from the contractors signed the contracts at a programme at RHD headquarters in the capital.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

A DAY IN COURT

Pori Moni seeks bail in drug case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Film actress Pori Moni filed a bail petition yesterday with a Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court challenging the lower court's rejection in a case filed under the Narcotics Control Act. Judge KM Emrul Kayesh fixed September 13 for hearing on the bail petition, said her lawyer Mojibur Rahman. On Saturday, Metropolitan Magistrate Md Ashek Imam sent her to Women's Jail in Gazipur after Criminal Investigation Department Inspector Kazi Golam Mostafa, who is also the case's investigation officer, produced her on completion of her one-day remand. The IO appealed to the court to confine her to jail until the investigation is complete. She was previously placed on a six-day remand in two phases for the same case.



Papia indicted in fake currency case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against expelled Jubo Mohila League leader Shamima Nur Papia, her husband Mofizur Rahman Sumon, and their aides Sabbir Khondaker and Sheikh Taiyaba Nur in a fake currency case. The accused, now behind bars, pleaded not guilty and demanded justice after Dhaka's Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Hasibul Haque read out the charges to them, court sources said. The magistrate also fixed October 13 for starting the trial of the case. On February 22 last year, Rab arrested Papia, former Chhatra League leader Sumon and two of their accomplices from Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport while they were trying to leave the country. Rab also seized fake notes of various countries, arms and ammunition from their possessions. Later, three cases were filed -- two with Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station under the Arms and the Special Powers acts on February 24, while another with Biman



SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Eka gets bail, no bar on release

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to film actress Semon Hasan Eka yesterday in a case filed against her with Hatirjheel Police Station for torturing her house help. Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mamunur Rashid passed the order upon a bond of Tk 10,000 with two guarantors, after Eka's lawyer moved a petition seeking bail in the case. With this bail order, there is no legal bar for her release as she was granted bail in another case filed under the Narcotics Control Act on August 10, an official of General Recording Office at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court told The Daily Star. She was sent to jail on August 2. Police arrested Eka from her residence on July 31 on charge of torturing her house help.



After the lockdown's lifting, the capital has returned to its chaotic best. Heart-in-hand road-crossing, long-tailbacks, wrong-side travel and all its chaos, all of these familiar events were seen across the capital's main streets on a day of severe heat and workday time-crunch. These photos were taken yesterday from Matuail, Azimpur, Palashi, and Jatrabari areas.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS, AMRAN HOSSAIN, RASHED SHUMON