

Surgery on conjoined twins in Jan

PM to bear all expenses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Doctors at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) plan to conduct surgery on Nuha and Nuba, eight-month-old conjoined twins who share a spine, in mid-January to separate them.

Prof Mohammad Hossain, head of the 19-member surgery team and dean of the surgery faculty at BSMMU, confirmed the matter to The Daily Star yesterday.

"We will have to collect some medical equipment for the surgery. The babies have multiple complex issues in addition to the joint spine. We have to conduct multiple surgeries in phases," said Hossain.

Surgeons from several other departments of the hospital will also assist in the surgery.



The twins from Kurigram's Kathalbari were admitted to BSMMU's neurosurgery department around six months ago.

Md Alamgir Rana, father of the twins, is a transport worker and is unable to bear the expenses for the medical procedure.

However, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will bear all expenses, Prof Sharfuddin Ahmed, vice chancellor of BSMMU, said in a press conference yesterday.

The twins from Kurigram's Kathalbari were admitted to the hospital's neurosurgery department around six months ago, according to Hossain.

Since then, they have been examining the babies to determine whether they can be separated through surgery.

On March 21 this year, doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) separated two-year-old conjoined twins Labiba and Lamisa through a surgery.



The driver of an auto-rickshaw pushes a loaded van up the incline of Buriganga-1 bridge, which is connected to Dhaka-Mawa Expressway, to get across. This activity is a good source of income for drivers of these three-wheeler. They wait near the mouth of the bridge to get human-pulled vans across. However, both parties are breaking the law, as vans are banned from plying the bridge. This photo was taken in Postogola area recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

50pc fresh produce lost every year

Speakers at dialogue blame lack of preservation facility

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is losing 50 percent of its fresh produce every year due to the lack of a preservation mechanism and food processing facility -- bottlenecks which stands in the way of the country's food security.

The data were revealed in a regional dialogue that highlighted the need for broader regional cooperation and knowledge-sharing to reduce post-harvest loss. The event urged governments across South Asia to initiate an awareness campaign to avoid the loss.

Post-harvest mechanism is not often available in South Asian countries. The storage in Bangladesh is mostly full of rice and potatoes. We are struggling to preserve the perishable produce, including fish, meat and vegetables.

NASREEN SULTANA  
Senior programme specialist (horticulture), Saarc Agricultural Centre

The day-long dialogue, titled "Improved Nutrition and Food System", was organised by The Sapling Initiative, in collaboration with Brac and IPE Global Limited at a city hotel yesterday.

The Sapling Initiative is a coalition of decision-makers from major national and regional organisations in South Asia, with the common goal of developing integrated, local and national action for food systems to combat malnutrition in all its forms.

Nasreen Sultana, senior programme specialist (horticulture) of Saarc Agricultural Centre, said the post-

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Country not at risk of major earthquake

Expert tells seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is not at risk of a massive 9.0 magnitude earthquake, said speakers at a seminar yesterday, contradicting the anticipation of a massive earthquake made in a 2016 study.

"The earthquake risk of the basin is not rationally anticipated due to the absence of



The earthquake risk of the basin is not rationally anticipated due to the absence of adequate seismic and geodetic data...

MIR FAZLUL KARIM  
Engineering geologist, Geo Eastern Inc, USA

adequate seismic and geodetic data, sub-surface geological maps, insufficient representation and instrumental data acquisition system," said Mir Fazlul Karim, engineering geologist, Geo Eastern Inc, USA.

He also suggested a collaboration between scientists and researchers to find out the location

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Concerned over lack of foreign tourists

Says state minister for civil aviation and tourism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M Mahbub Ali yesterday said they are concerned about why foreign tourists are not coming to Bangladesh.

"We are concerned. We will take effective measures in this regard. We will have to create an environment for foreign tourists to come and be more open-minded in this regard," he said while inaugurating a three-day international tourism fair in the capital.

Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh

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During a break from their tiring routine, three rickshaw pullers huddle together and watch a film on the small screen of a feature phone. They buy these films from mobile-recharge shops for Tk 40 to 50, and the shopkeepers there put the content in their phones. This photo was taken near Buét campus yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Executed before trial even began!

African media incorrectly state woman held with narcotics in Bangladesh faces execution

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

Trial of the narcotics case filed against Lesedi Molapisi, a woman from Botswana, is yet to begin at a Dhaka court. But several African media outlets have reported that Molapisi is set to be executed or has been executed for smuggling 3 kilos of heroin into Bangladesh.

The Zimbabwe Mail reported that the 30-year-old was set to be executed on November 25. Another outlet, IOL, published the same information citing The Zimbabwe Mail.

Some outlets, including the two, later ran news stating that the woman is still alive, after her family came forward and clarified the matter.

The source from which the outlets got the incorrect information could not be ascertained.



Chamon Afroza, a defence lawyer for Molapisi, told The Daily Star, "The news on Molapisi's execution in the narcotics case is totally false."

"The trial has not even started. My client was produced before the court on November 14," she said. "After investigating, police pressed charges against Molapisi and another man last August."

On January 23, Molapisi was arrested at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport with 3.145 kg of heroin, worth around Tk 20 crore. She arrived at the airport on a Qatar Airways flight from South Africa via Doha.

Customs officials in association with National Security Intelligence intercepted her when she was crossing the green channel, the passage for arriving passengers with no goods to

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Police launch 15-day drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Police Headquarters have directed the field-level officials to carry out a 15-day special drive across the country from yesterday to ward off any untoward incident ahead of Victory Day.

Contacted, Manjur Rahman, assistant inspector general of the PHQ media wing, said the directives were issued so that no untoward incident takes place on Martyred Intellectuals' Day, Victory Day or other special occasions.

In reply to a query, he said, "There is no specific threat... This is part of our routine operation."

Chiefs of all police units and superintendents of police in all districts have been asked to conduct the drive between December 1 and 15, according to an order sent by the operations wing of the

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