

Dengue to drag on if rain comes

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Dengue may continue for the next couple of weeks, if occasional rains carry through winter, experts predict.

The concern came to a head after an official weathercast said two depressions are likely to occur this month.

The experts said the latest spell of dengue, though unusual, was triggered by rains in the city and its environs, which spurred aedes mosquitoes to lay and hatch eggs.

Newborn mosquitoes may have transmitted the deadly virus to general population, triggering infection like previous years, although it is not as critical this year.

"This year, dengue didn't pose a serious threat as in the previous years when hundreds of people were infected and many died," one of the experts said.

"Depending on the life cycle of aedes mosquitoes, dengue strikes, by and large, every alternate (cycles) year, as seen in other parts of the world," said Dr Manzur Choudhury, a leading entomologist.

"Dengue becomes prevalent in the pre- and post-monsoon period, but it is unusual to see dengue at this time," Dr Choudhury said.

Another expert said, "Last year, the country experienced high incidence of dengue infection, as there was plenty of rains."

About 5,000 people were infected by dengue in 2001 and about 100 died of dengue haemorrhagic fever, a more deadly infection.

This year, about 200 people have so far been infected

with dengue and three of them died.

Most infected persons are said to have come from lowlands in the city.

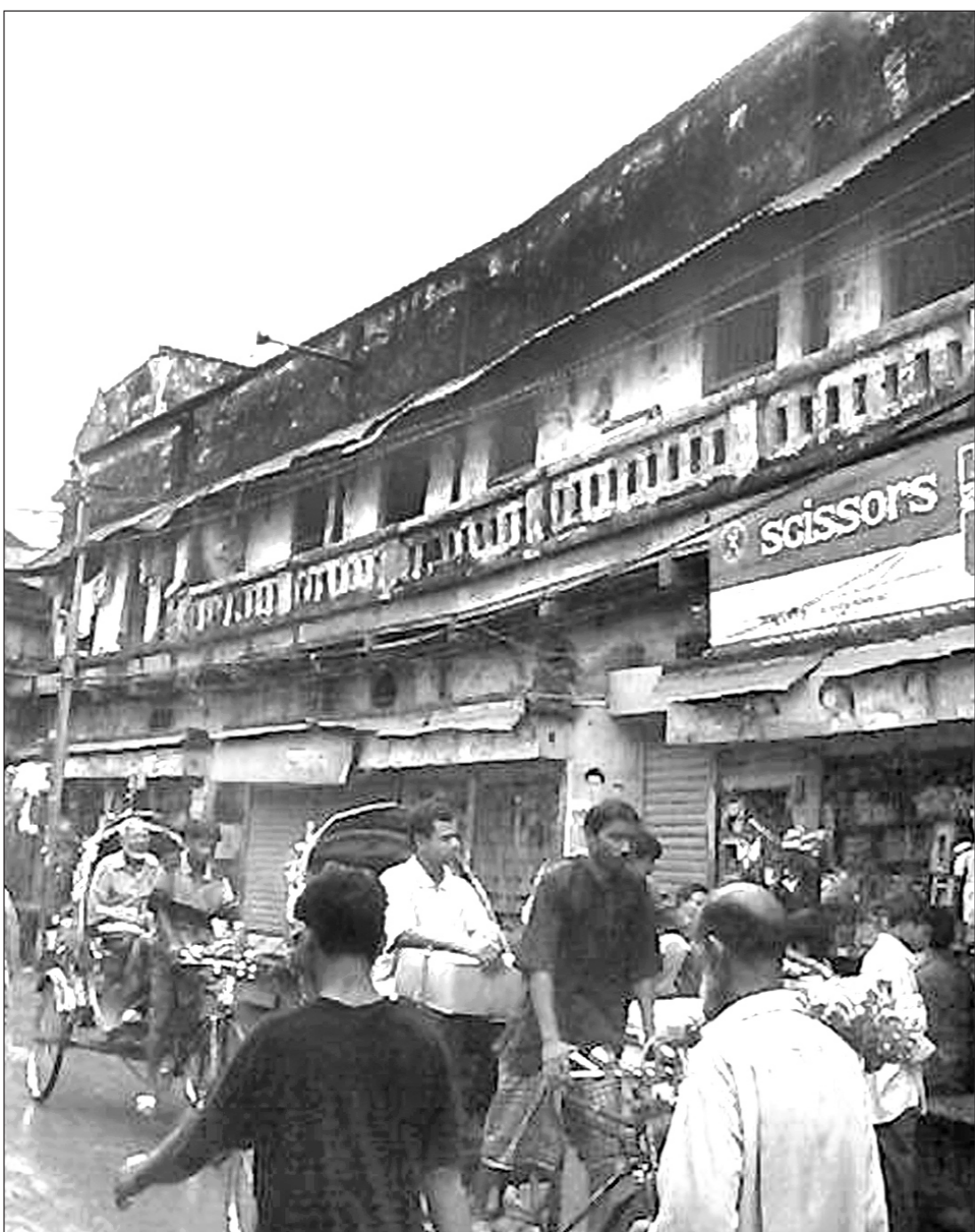
Dengue and dengue haemorrhagic fever (DHF) are caused by one of four closely related, but genetically dis-



An Aedes mosquito

tinct, viruses (DEN-1, DEN-2, DEN-3, and DEN-4).

So persons living in a dengue-endemic area can have four dengue infections during their lifetimes. Dengue is primarily a disease of the tropics, and the viruses that cause it are maintained in a cycle that involves humans and *Aedes Aegypti*, a domestic, day-biting mosquito that prefers to feed on human blood.



Moderate tremor may reduce old buildings to rubble in Old Dhaka.

Slight tremor, huge havoc

CITY CORRESPONDENT

It was a one-shot effort to build awareness of Old Dhaka's vulnerability to tremor shocks and a distressing reminder of severity of earthquakes in our neighbouring country.

Students of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) endeavoured to highlight earthquakes and their destructive power through a five-day exhibition of photographs and newspaper cuttings at the Buet cafeteria, which ended Thursday.

The exhibition, *Earthquake: Slight tremor, huge havoc*, was based on the aftermath of the earthquakes around the world, especially in neighbouring countries. The photographs of Gujarat earthquakes attracted visitors the most, as they reminded the severity of a disaster.

Photographs of narrow lanes, low-quality construction and narrow, rundown staircases threatening to the residents of Old Dhaka made the fear of a disaster palpable.

The United Nations Earthquake Disaster Risk Index (EDRI) has rated

Dhaka as the most vulnerable among the 20 earthquake-risk cities around the world. Bangladesh is located in an earthquake-prone area of the world, and experiences earthquakes because of collision of tectonic plates.

Bangladesh is located between the most sensitive earthquake-prone Indian and Myanmar sub-plates.

"Even an earthquake measuring six degrees on the Richter scale may destroy 40 percent of the buildings in the city," Professor Mehedi Ahmed Ansari of Buet writes in his research paper on Dhaka's earthquake vulnerability.

A survey paper was also on exhibition by the BUET students on more than 300 Ward 64 buildings in Old Dhaka to identify their vulnerability from structural and rescue viewpoints.

According to the survey about 30 percent of Old Dhaka buildings are in a run-down condition because of age and 40 percent of them are vulnerable for poor construction, too weak to withstand even the slightest shocks.

Some buildings have developed

cracks and more than 55 percent of the population live in rickety buildings, highly likely to collapse creating hazards during fear-triggered rushes of people for escape.

The survey also says about 30 percent of the people are living in the buildings with stairs less than 2.5 feet wide -- a barrier in the way of safe exit.

The survey identified about 60 percent of the buildings as lining 37 dead-end roads that will certainly prevent quick escape and rescue.

According to a survey by Billham, earthquakes struck Bangladesh more than 201 times in the last eight years.

The July 23 tremor at Barkol in Rangamati added a new urgency to preparedness for major earthquakes that threaten to leave a trail of destruction.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia asked the armed forces to lay out a plan for disaster management measures for earthquakes in the wake of Barkol tremor. The armed forces zoned Dhaka into eight sectors in the plan submitted to the Prime Minister's Office for approval.

Ramadan dampens movie mood

"I don't watch films in Ramadan. I feel guilty, if I do" said Sukur Mia, a rickshawpuller at Moghbazar slum, who used to watch movies at least twice a week.

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

Cinemas in the city are experiencing a slump in revenues as fewer people turn up to watch movies during Ramadan.

Some of the 38 cinema halls in the city have temporarily stopped showing films during the month, while most of them are running old movies.

Balaka and Binaka halls have stopped screening movie to mark the holiness of the month, said hall managers.

"People do not feel like coming to halls even after breaking fast," said Syed Razatur, manager of Balaka Cinema Hall.

"I don't watch films in Ramadan. I feel guilty, if I do" said Sukur Mia, a rickshawpuller at Moghbazar slum, who used to watch movies at least twice a week.

Sony cinema hall at Section One of Mirpur will resume its regular shows from the day of Eid-ul-Fitr. They are renovating the hall during Ramadan. "It is not possible to refurbish the interior of the hall, repair seats or toilets during other times of the year since it hampers regular shows," said Shankar Das an official of Sony cinema.

Many halls like Obhishar, Neptune, Jonaki, Modhumita are running old mov-

ies. Traditionally, new movies are never released during Ramadan. Modhumita Cinema is showing "Moner Majhe Tumi" for weeks because of thin attendance. Only 15 per cent of viewers are visiting halls during Ramadan.

"Usually we show English movie in Ramadan since only a select group of people turns up," said Sheikh Abdus Sattar of Modhumita Cinema. He said the hall authorities did not stop showing 'Moner Majhe Tumi' just to keep the hall alive during Ramadan.

However, most hall owners as well as others related to the film industry said although Ramadan is always a lean time in the business, it is running low at all times.

The number of movie-goers is falling everyday. Low quality of films and availability of cable channels and lack of security are preventing people from coming to cinema halls, they observed.

"Even the government recognised the decline in business and reduced value added tax from 113 per cent to 55 per cent," said Saiful Islam Choudhury, president of Hall Owners Association.



Modhumita Cinema undergoes renovation taking advantage of Ramadan

healthouting, taxicab & train timing

HEALTH

Hospitals

Heart
National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD),
- 9130800, 9122560-59

Burn
Dhaka Medical College Hospital
Burn Unit-8626812-6

Cancer
National Cancer Institute-8014914,
8826561-65
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib
Medical University-8612550-4,
861455-9

Diabetes
Diabetic Research Hospital
(BIRDEM)- 9661551-5,
8616641-50

Mother & Child Care
Shishu Hospital- 9119119,
8116061-62
Azimpur Mother & Child Health

Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980

Eye
Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794,
9119315
National Eye Hospital- 8117202,
8114807

Dental
Dental College -9002035

Orthopaedics
National Orthopaedics (Pangu)
Hospital- 9114075, 9112150

General
Dhaka Medical College Hospital-
8626812-6
Rushmono General Hospital-
8317819
Holy Family Hospital-
8311731-25
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib
Medical University Hospital-
8612550-4, 8614545-9
Bangladesh Medical College &
Hospital- 8115443, 9118202,

Shamarita Hospital- 9131901
Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800,
9122560-69
Salimullah Medical Collage
Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6
Cholera Research Hospital
(ICDDR)- 8811751-60
Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135

Blood Bank
Red Crescent Centre- 9116563
Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040
Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061,
7310061, 7319022
Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital-
8626812-9

Eye Bank
Sandhani International Eye Bank-
8614040

**Ambulances For
Dead Body**
Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail)
9336611, Gandaria 7319808,
7318166,
Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

MARKET CLOSED

Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday
Elephant Road-Friday
Bishal Center-Friday
Baitul Mukarram Market-Friday
Polwell Market-Friday
BCS Computer City-Friday
Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.
Rajaxmi Market-Friday
Stadium Market-Friday
Bangabazar Market-Friday
National Museum-Thursday
Ahsan Manzil-Thursday.
New Market-Tuesday
Gausia Market-Tuesday
Mouchak Market-Sunday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Eastern Plaza-Sunday
Farmview Super Market-Sunday
Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday
Shishu Jadughar-Sunday

TAXI CAB

Yellow Cab

Navana 9558065
Salida 9344477, 0171620881
Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191
Cab One 7113282-3
Nihon 8624741-2
Orion 9347277
Anudip 8125285 and 8127611
Capital 9352847

TRAIN TIMING

Subarna Express
Mahanagar Prabhati
Mahanagar Godhuli
Turna
Parabati Express
Joyantika Express
Upaban Express
Tista Express
Ekata Express
Upakul Express
Padma Express

Leaves Dhaka at 4:00 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 7-30 am
Leaves Dhaka at 3-05 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 6-30 am
Leaves Dhaka at 12-30 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 9-30 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am
Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 6-00 am
Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm

Union 8130485

Kool 0171826731

Black Cab

Cab Ex 9358401
Cabline 8321162
JBS Cab 019364575
Sajan 018126036
Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611

Cab One 7113282-3

Palki 0171052500
Cab I 7113282
Jatri 0171540074
Nipun 9572277
R-Cab 8914782
Star Cab 9571919
Shihab 018202477 & 018228675
KGN 8620011

LIBRARY & INFO-

Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

Central Public Library- 8626001-4,
Shishu Academy- 9564128
Shilpakala Academy- 8614673
Bangla Academy- 8619550
Islamic Foundation- 9550280,
9556407
Nazrul Institute- 9114602
Ford Foundation- 8116133
Alliance Francaise- 8611557
British Council- 8618867-8,
8618905-7
Community Development Library-
8113769, 8113604
Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka-
9126525-6
Indian Information Centre &
Cultural Library- 8615096
The Russian Cultural Centre-
9116314, 9118531, 9118314
Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125,
8112954, 8123412