

Dhaka Day by Day

Patients going abroad for expensive treatment

By S.Y. Bakht

The scope of proper diagnosis and progress on basic medical research is being hampered due to the absence of collaboration and cooperation among the existing medical laboratories in the country.

"I am surprised that there is no collaboration and cooperation among the local (medical) laboratories," said Dr. Azizul Huq, a visiting immunologist from the National Scientific Research Centre (NSRC) of France. "You cannot do any meaningful work without collaboration and a sense of team-spirit, especially in a country with very limited resources like Bangladesh," he added.

Dr. Huq was recently here under the United Nations Development Programme sponsored Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) scheme to help scientists at the Institute of Post Graduate Medicine and Research establish modern immuno-diagnostic tests for common parasitic infections.

He said that because of the lack of basic research and improvement, medical technology is falling behind in Bangladesh. Even the scope of proper diagnosis of common ailments is declining and without proper diagnosis adequate treatment or even prevention of a disease is not possible. "People who can afford it, are already going abroad to Valloire and Bangkok for medical treatment," he pointed out.

He said the people who are in a position to influence and take initiatives regarding collaboration and co-operation among the medical laboratories in the country are failing to do so. He also cited the lack of incentives and the consequent absence of interest as factors hindering the pace of basic medical research. Poor infrastructure and excessive red-tape is also limiting the possibility for further advancement. "There is no sense of institutionalisation of research work here," he noted.

Even in the area of external research collaboration Bangladesh is lagging far behind, he said. "International collaboration can help us by providing our scientists with good exposure," he pointed out, adding, "but we must be careful about any collaboration from outside so that we are not used as guinea pigs by others." He said that a mechanism should be developed so that the international organisations which are already doing research work here — such as the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease and Research, Bangladesh — can also contribute in training local people.

He said that the local scientists needed to be provided with much more incentives to conduct research work, otherwise talents will not stay in the field of research. "I think there are numerous interesting fields of research here and patient cooperation is fantastic in Bangladesh," he noted. He said he is convinced that the existing problems and bottle-necks in the field of medical research can be removed provided strong political will and sustained concerted efforts are forthcoming.

Dr. Huq, 45, is a staff scientist at CNRS and head of the laboratory of "Cellular Immunology on Protozoan Parasites" at the prestigious Paster Institute in Lille. Born in Naogaon, Rajshahi, he did his initial schooling in Dhaka and completed his Bachelor of Science degree from Dhaka College in the early sixties.



Dr. Azizul Huq

He went on to finish his masters degree in parasitology from Sindh University — the only institution offering the course in the country at that time — and worked for the Zoological Survey of Pakistan for a short period.

After Liberation, he was awarded a training scholarship from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. From there he went to the Paster Institute to continue his higher studies.

Under an Anglo-French collaboration programme, he completed his PhD degree in Immunology from the National Institute for Medical Research at Millhill, England in 1979. "I acted as a bridge between these two institutions at that time," he noted.

After returning to Paster he started to work in the field of genetic engineering. But to stay in the field of modern biology, he said, he realised that he had to make better contributions with his research work. And as he was a foreigner, he had to make much more significant contribution than the local scientists, he added.

In 1984, he spent a year as a visiting professor of molecular immunology at the University of California at Berkeley in the United States. He also went to Yale University as a visiting professor in 1985 and worked on "something related to the cloning of muscles which can be associated with tumor or cancer."

Upon his return to Paster, he said, he was asked to work on the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) research programme, as there was national priority in that field. He continues to work on AIDS research since 1987. His particular area of research is the Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) and its possible role in physiotherapy of Human Immuno-Virus (HIV) infections.

Having an earlier interest on tropical diseases — he has been a faculty member of Tropical Disease Research (TDR) programme of the World Health Organisation since 1979 — he said he always wanted to do more research on this field.

Very recently he was allowed to develop another project on malaria with the aim to study cellular response and produce anti-bodies which can neutralise the viruses. Although he confessed to having no collaborative research links with scientists in his homeland due to lack of scope in earlier years, he said that he is now looking forward to setting up some sort of link with scientists here.

"I would like to develop some collaborative research links in Bangladesh in connection with the malaria project," he said, adding, "I am thinking of hiring a medical graduate in Dhaka who will work for six months here and for six months in France." Dr. Azizul Huq is happily married and his Bangladesh wife is also a scientist at CNRS. They live in Paris with their two school-aged sons.

Although he was required to stay here for 12 weeks under the TOKTEN programme, he said this time he could only stay for about six weeks only, because of his preoccupations. He said he is extremely busy with his research works in France, where he also runs a private laboratory, but he hopes to be back soon.

Plea to release Sheikh Shahid, Zafar Imam

By Staff Correspondent

Shah Mohammed Abu Zafar and M. A. Gafur, President and General Secretary respectively of the Jatiya Samik Party have appealed for release of former ministers Sheikh Shahidul Islam and Col (ret) Zafar Imam.

In a press release on Saturday they said the two former ministers were suffering from serious illness. They urged the Acting President and the Prime Minister to release them considering their contribution to the Liberation War.

Police yet to make headway in Shariful murder case

By Staff Correspondent

Police could not find any clue to brutal killing of Shariful Islam Sharif, General Secretary of Dhaka Polytechnic Students Union.

The Polytechnic campus remained tense on Saturday. Small processions were brought out in protest against the killing.

Chhatra League (H-O) also brought out procession on Dhaka University campus. Chhatra League members were block bade on the day.

SM Hall Provost relieved

Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, former provost of Salimullah Hall, Saturday said he was relieved of his responsibilities and not removed from the post of provost, reports UNB.

In a statements, Prof Chowdhury said a news item published in a section of the press had wrongly reported he was removed from the post of provost for his failure to maintain peace and discipline in the hall.

New cultural group Abbhudooy formed

A new cultural group Abbhudooy was formed in Dhaka on Friday with a view to promoting young talents in music and to make the current cultural trend more dynamic, says a Press release.

The Abbhudooy will hold its maiden cultural function on Pabla Baishak while it will organise its first music season at the National Museum auditorium on May 10, the release issued by Shymol Chowdhury informed.

Samad Azad shocked at loss of lives in cyclonic storm

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad, Abdus Samad Azad, Saturday expressed his deep

condolence for the bereaved families of those who died in the cyclonic storm that swept through Habiganj and Maulvibazar April 10, reports BSS.

PROGRAMME

Swarabithi Theatre Swarabithi Theatre, on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr will hold a show of the drama 'Ekhone Ora' on April 20 at 6.30 pm at Mahila Samity auditorium, a Press release said. 'Ekhone Ora' has been written by Mattur Rahman Rana. President of the Swarabithi Theatre has directed it.

Weather Rain with hails likely

By Staff Correspondent Rain or thundershower with hails at places accompanied by temporary gusty/squally winds may occur at one or two places over the regions of Rajshahi, Pabna, Bogra, Dhaka, Tangail, Mymensingh, Kushtia, Jessore, Comilla and Sylhet. Weather will remain dry elsewhere over the country. Day temperature may rise by one to three degree Celsius over the country. Sun sets today (Sunday) at 6.20 pm and rises on Monday at 5.38 am. Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change, extended outlook for another five days: Weather may deteriorate. Temperature and humidity recorded on Saturday at important towns and cities were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	max	min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	34.5	23.8	59	52
Chittagong	35.2	22.7	71	53
Rajshahi	37.8	22.0	63	38
Khulna	35.2	23.0	77	59
Cox's Bazar	35.5	23.8	71	58
Sylhet	32.6	20.9	63	58
Barisal	32.5	20.8	72	59
Rangpur	34.8	21.0	88	39
Dinajpur	35.5	19.3	66	34

Maximum temperature of some regional cities were:

Delhi	35	degree	Celsius
Karachi	32	degree	Celsius
Colombo	32	degree	Celsius
Bangkok	36	degree	Celsius

Country boat on verge of extinction

By Ahsan Kabir

The country boat sector, one of the largest employers of the rural poor in Bangladesh is now on the verge of extinction due to the expansion of road transports system and large mechanised vessels. The country boats of Bangladesh comprise a prominent and colorful feature of the country's transport system. No exact statistics exist as to their numbers but it is counted that close to 300,000 country boats journey regularly over the rivers of Bangladesh, carrying jute, rice and other agricultural products including building materials and passengers to all parts of the world's largest delta.

Country boats are wooden built in the countryside by rural carpenters. They have traditionally been powered by large sails, and by rowing, sculling, or towing. They are of shallow draft, and can go where larger mechanised vessels can not approach. With the present increasing siltation and clogging up of the rivers, the country boats represent a viable and flexible mode of transport. Apart from intra and inter-regional flows as well as collection and distribution of commerce in the hinterland areas, country boats carry most of the regional flows between the major ports. Analysing regional production and consumption of commodities, which showed country boat annual traffic well above 10 million tonnes, and freight flows at ports, a river network consisting of 25 river sections having all season adequate water depth and 20 ports having considerable annual fleet traffic intercepting most of the regional flows has been modelled keeping in view the growth of economic centres in future. The network is 1155 miles in total length and covers most of the regions in our country. On the core network of 1155 miles, the



Country boats, which reflect riverine Bangladesh's tradition are facing extinction with the onset of modernisation. — Star photo

countryboat traffic between 20 ports is 3.2 million tonnes and in terms of tonne-mile it is 298 million the transportation task being performed including empty hauls is 487 million tonne-miles with an average haul of 93 miles however boat not moving on main routes for a considerable haul for example boats of less than 5 tonne capacity have been excluded from statistical consideration despite of this the boats which perform the task of ordinary transport comprise of 13,000 boats and has a capacity of 200,000 tonnes, provides employment for about 40,000 unskilled labours.

The people working on the country boat sector are the most part landless people from the countryside. Million of people largely depend on the boats for transport, employment and income. Country boats in the rural areas can easily be attributed as the fundamental source of employment according to a recent governmental statistics the country boat sector capture 60 per cent of the employment that covers the entire transport system and 90 per cent of the employment covering the inland water transport system.

But the situation of the country boat people has steadily worsened with the introduction of other modes of transport, which have enjoyed large subsidies while the country boat sector has been mostly neglected. This resulted a loss of income and employment in the rural areas of the country. A recent statistics on countryboat sector shows that the return on investment in country boat sector was 52 per cent and 18 per cent on an average in 1963 and 1973 respectively which has fallen to 12 per cent now, less than the prevailing commercial interest rate, a country boat crew member was earning 100 per cent and 50% more than agri-labourer in 1963 and 1973 respectively but is earning only marginally now.

Khaleda visits slums, grants Tk 2 lakh

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Saturday announced Taka two lakh cash relief for the fire affected dwellers of the slums at Paribag, a portion of which was gutted Friday night, reports BSS. Begum Zia made the announcement while she was visiting the spot Saturday morning. More than 50 families were affected when 25 houses were gutted in the fire which originated from a candle light and engulfed a portion of the slums inhabited mostly by employees of P.G. Hospital and their families. As the fire broke out Friday night at 9.30 pm the fire brigade personnel rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control in about an hour with the help of local people. Police have been posted there immediately for ensuring the security of the affected people of the slums who are now living under open sky. During the visit Begum Zia talked to the inmates of the burnt houses and enquired about their condition. Meanwhile, P.G Hospital employees union has distributed chira and molasses to the affected people. The Ramna Branch of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) served food to 300 inmates of the slums.

Bhutanese FM leaves for Bangkok

Bhutanese Foreign Minister Lynpo Dawa Tsering left Dhaka Saturday for Bangkok on way to South Korea, concluding four day visit, reports UNB. Foreign Minister ASM Mustafizur Rahman saw him off at the Zia International Airport. Bhutanese Ambassador Karma Dorjee and Additional Foreign Secretary A H Mahmud Ali were also present. During stay here, Tsering called on Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed. He also called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and conveyed his country's greetings on the victory of BNP in parliamentary election. The Bhutanese Foreign Minister discussed with his Bangladesh counterpart matters of bilateral interest, besides meeting with other ministers.

SC Bar's plea to appoint more judges

Supreme Court Correspondent Dr. Rafiqur Rahman, President of the Supreme Court Bar Association has hailed the address of the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed to the Jatiya Sangsad on April 5. The Acting President in his address to the Parliament highlighted various national issues of great public importance including the dependence of the Judiciary on the executives. Dr. Rafiqur Rahman, while talking to this correspondent, has called upon the legislature to take steps in the light of the speech to ensure separation of judiciary from the executive. He also called upon the Government to increase the number of judges for speedy disposal of cases. Dr. Rahman was elected as President of the Supreme Court Bar on March 28 for the



Dr. Rafiqur Rahman year 1991-92. He was President of the Association in 1980-81. He was also a judge of the High Court Division in 1979. Subsequently he resigned to return to the Bar. In 1954 he was an attorney-at-law of the Federal Court of Pakistan.

JCD disowns role in killing of polytechnic student

Convener of Bangladesh Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal Amanullah Khan, MP has condemned the killing of Dhaka Polytechnic Institute Student Mohammad Sharif Hossain and demanded arrest and exemplary punishment to the persons responsible, reports BSS. In a statement Aman said the JCD wanted to say in an unequivocal term that its leaders and workers were in no way involved with this murder. Aman expressed his surprise to see the statement of the Leader of Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina and the Chhatra League published in a section of newspapers on April 12 accusing JCD for the killing of Dhaka Polytechnic Student. He termed it as false, motivated and misleading. He said JCD had already condemned this murder and demanded exemplary punishment of the persons responsible. Opposition leader Sheikh Hasina's statement about the killing was really an unfortunate one, he added. The JCD leader said the statement which stated that terrorism was increasing in Dhaka Polytechnic after Begum Khaleda Zia took over the charge of the Ministry of Home Affairs was totally false and motivated. In fact, Dhaka Polytechnic Institute remained closed for a long time, he said adding that we are against all sorts of killings and chaos.

Pak daily's remarks termed as conspiracy

By Staff Correspondent Col (Rtd) Showkat Ali, MP, belonging to Awami League drew the attention of the House Thursday about an article published in a Pakistani daily which contains some objectionable remarks against the sovereignty of Bangladesh.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Soaks up
9 "— of Love"
12 Exact
13 Unit of
14 Chinese currency
15 "All My Children" character
16 Sing like a
17 Kind of duck
19 Sage
21 Spanish pot
22 Cronies
24 —, K., —, M
25 Native metal
26 Rubber tree
27 Large, heavy hammer
29 Early morn
31 — Vegas
32 Hebrew letter
33 Faroe Islands

DOWN

1 Pigeon
2 Gold Sp.
3 Bodies of water
4 Prophets
5 That thing
6 Specimen
7 Meadows
8 Cloth
9 Vapid
10 James — Jones
11 Egyptian lizard
16 Behold!
18 Learning
20 Lubricated
22 Hail
23 Hat
25 S-shaped molding
27 Fireplace part
28 "Valley of the —"
29 Sandalac tree
30 Speck
34 Hold chair of authority
35 Simple
36 Sandy waste
39 Sat for
40 portrait
41 Indifferent one
42 Spoken
43 Erase
44 printing
45 Declare
46 Printer's message
47 Greek letter
49 Unit of Japanese currency
50 Dine
53 Equally

International Tender Notice for Supply of Aviation Turbine Fuel (JP-1) & High Speed Diesel (HSD) Oil in June, 1991.

I) (a) Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC) hereby invites offers for supply of following grades and quantities of petroleum products on C&F Chittagong basis in accordance with the terms and conditions set out hereinafter:

Aviation Turbine Fuel (JP-1) - 50,000 Barrels
High Speed Diesel Oil (HSD) - 100,000 Barrels, 150,000 Barrels

(b) Volume mentioned at (a) will be subject to an operational tolerance of 5 (five) percent for each grade.
(c) Barrel means 42 United States standard Gallon each of two hundred thirty one (231) Cubic inches of sixty degrees (60°) Fahrenheit.

II) Entire quantity as mentioned above must be delivered at Chittagong between 11-15 June, 1991 in one shipment.

III) Tender will be received upto 12-00 hours (BST) on 14 May, 1991 and opened at 12-05 hours (BST) on 14 May, 1991 at Buyer's Head Office, HBFC Building 1/D, Agrabad Commercial Area, Chittagong in presence of the bidders or their authorised agents who would wish to be present.

IV) Tender document will be available on all working days during office hours from (a) the Commercial & Operations Division of the Corporation at its Head Office, HBFC Building, 1/D Agrabad Commercial Area, Chittagong (b) Jamuna Oil Company Limited, Dhaka Office at 28, New Eskaton Road, Dhaka and (c) Bangladesh Mission in Singapore.

V) Offers must be valid upto 18-00 hours (BST) 21 May, 1991.

VI) Other terms and conditions will be as per BPC's General Terms and Conditions of Supply of Petroleum Products (Ref: 22.16 dated March 27, 1991).

VII) No rights of any kind shall be created in favour of any person by virtue of having obtained the tender documents, nor shall any right be created in favour of any persons by virtue of submitting a tender. The Corporation reserves right to accept or reject any or all offers in part or in full, without assigning any reason.

Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation
1/D Agrabad CIA, P.O. Box No. 2052, Chittagong-4100.

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