

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Changes in Social Standards
— the Key to Better Health

by Aasha Mehreen Amin



Dedicated to the world's underprivileged Bennish, with his patients at ICDDR,B.

In a clean airy room at ICDDR,B (International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh) an American doctor in his thirties, quietly speaks to his patients in perfect Bangla, asking about how they are doing. The patients, though look cheerful enough are emaciated, pale and all suffering from cholera, a disease that has in the past killed millions of people in Bangladesh. Although cholera is no longer rampant enough to cause epidemics in Bangladesh, incidents of the disease are recurring due to over-crowding and lack of sanitation. The doctor, Michael Bennish, is a specialist in infectious diseases in tropical countries and has come to Bangladesh to continue his research on the subject.

Yet what Bennish, a professor of pediatrics and medicine at Tufts University, is really known for in the medical circles of both Bangladesh and the US is his contributions to the research on dysentery conducted at ICDDR,B in the early 80s. With him were other eminent doctors such as Lincoln Cher, John Rhode, Richard Cash, Robert Hershorn and Majid Mowla.

At that time ICDDR,B centre was known for its research on cholera (which is a severe form of diarrhoea) providing oral and IV (intravenous) solutions for the disease. In 1983, however, when Bennish came on his second visit, he and his colleagues discovered that it was an infectious form of dysentery known as *Shigella Bacfillei* (relatively ignored until then by researchers), that was killing many children. Oral rehydration was just not sufficient to treat these children. A number of studies in Dinaipur and Rangpur were made to assess how many deaths were caused by dysentery and why it caused fatality. Bennish and the rest of the team found that it was the germ *Shigella* that was the main culprit, being resistant to the antibiotics commonly used to treat the disease. The finger now pointed to drug policy. "So the point of issue", says Bennish, "because how can you limit bad drugs." Bennish adds that even if drugs are 'good', people use them in a bad way. The germ's resistance to antibiotics was due to inappropriate use of these drugs — an evil that has become widespread in Bangladesh, according to Bennish. In '83 the drug used for the disease was a cheap, safe antibiotic called co-trimoxazole which was 100 per cent effective. By 1984, says Bennish, effectiveness of the drug had dropped to only 50 per cent.

The next step was to look for alternative treatments for the victims of the disease. A

number of studies conducted by UNICEF and other organisations found that there were two reasons why children died from dysentery: (a) inability to get treatment in time and (b) acute malnutrition.

Twenty-five per cent of the deaths was caused by low blood sugar levels. "One thing that is very important to remember," says Bennish, "is that when a child has dysentery or diarrhoea, he must be fed immediately with something with calorie value, otherwise there is the danger of low blood sugar which can cause death." Bennish admits that although such preventive methods are important, ultimately the answer lies with better hygienic and social standards. In this respect, observes Bennish, the government has to be responsible for certain services such as sanitation and education of communities. Bennish gives the example of an education programme for children conducted by DANIDA in which the children teach their mothers what they have learnt about health and hygiene.

The key to better health, Bennish reiterates, is changes in social standards. "We must address the concept of what constitutes cleanliness; in this country, it is not considered unclean for example, to defecate in the field and there is no perception that indiscriminate defecation is unhealthy and causes disease."

Dealing with the problem, however, is easier said than done. "What we (researchers) do," adds the pediatrician-cum-scientist, "is address a relatively minor part of the problem. The major contribution to its solution must be through socio-economic change."

In a society where health standards are so low, the role of education says Bennish, is immense. Meanwhile, the easiest way to reduce infant mortality due to diarrhoea, dysentery and other infectious diseases, is to keep children well-nourished so that they are strong enough to fight the disease and stay alive.

With an innate sense of responsibility to underprivileged people, Bennish from Detroit, USA, has been involved in research of infectious diseases in many other developing countries such as India, Pakistan, Ecuador and Thailand. He has written many text-books, conducted training courses and given innumerable lectures on the subject. After the '91 cyclone, Bennish came to Bangladesh as part of a UNICEF evaluation team to assess the health impact on survivors of the disaster. For the underprivileged of the Third World, it is the dedication of doctors like Bennish, that makes a difference.

USIS closed
on Sept 5

The American embassy, the United States Information Service (USIS) and the American Cultural Centre library and student counselling service will be closed on September 5 in observance of Labour Day, an American national holiday, reports BSS.

Labour Day is observed annually in the United States on the first Monday of September in recognition of labour's contribution to the nation.

5 robbers held
in city

By Staff Correspondent

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police arrested a group of five robbers, recovered a revolver and six rounds of bullets at Maniknagar in the city at 1:30 am in the morning yesterday.

Police sources said that the group of six persons were preparing for a robbery.

They also seized a microbus from their possession.

The arrested five persons were identified as Rashiduddin, Harun-ur-Rashid, Mustafa, Hossain and Noor Islam.

Munna, who also belongs to the group managed to escape, sources said.

A case has been filed in this connection with the Shabuagh police station.

85 held
in city

Police rounded up 85 people from different parts of the city on various charges in the 24 hours, a DMP press release said yesterday, reports UNB.

The arrested include 12 wanted criminals, three charged with robbery, two with kidnapping, three stealing and one held for burglary.

Jahanara reiterates
demand for trial
of Golam Azam

Jahanara Imam yesterday reiterated her demand for trial of "war criminal" Golam Azam and said the freedom fighters would not go home before implementing the verdict of the Gano Adalat, reports UNB.

"I strongly believe that the freedom fighters will once again unite the people to try Golam Azam and build a communal-free country the same way as they had carved Bangladesh by defeating the Pakistani forces in 1971," she told a gathering organised by the Mukti-Juddha Central Command Council (Ahad) in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

Terminating the freedom fighters the best sons of this soil, the Convenor of the Ghatak Dalai Nirmul Samannaya Committee said it was time for them again to carry out their responsibility and prove their superiority.

Addressing the rally, Principal Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, Chairman of the Council, announced a grand rally of the freedom fighters in Dhaka on October 10.

"Freedom fighters and killers of 1971 cannot live together," he said.

He warned against any repression on the freedom fighters and criticised the obstructions to the functioning of elected representatives of the Mukti-Juddha Sangsads by ignoring court verdict.

The rally was also addressed, among others, by Monirul Huq Moni, Bappi Hasan and Mostafa Quayum.

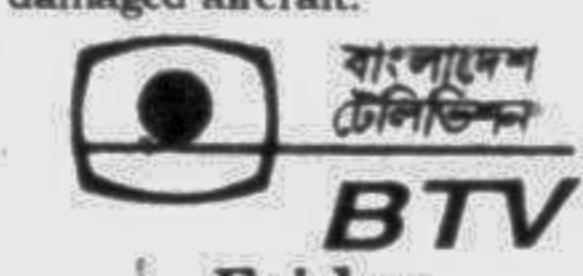
The rally was followed by a protest procession which paraded different streets of the city.

Biman leases
two DC 10-30s

Biman has leased two wide-bodied DC 10-30 aircraft and restored normalcy in its international flight schedule, said a press release yesterday, reports UNB.

With the operation of the leased aircraft, Biman has also introduced an additional weekly flight to London raising the total number of flights to London to five every week.

The airlines' flight schedule was hampered by the accident of one aircraft in last May. A team from DC 10-30 manufacturing company is working round the clock to repair the damaged aircraft.



BTV

Friday

Morning Session

8:00 Opening announcement
Al-Quran
Programme summary
News in Bangla
8:15 Alor Dishari
8:40 Natun Kuri
10:00 News in English
10:15 Moner Mukure
11:30 Film : Tarzan
11:50 Education programme
12:05 Film : Border Town
12:30 Closing

Afternoon Session

3:00 Opening announcement
Al-Quran
Programme summary
Recitation from the Tripitak
3:15 Cartoon : Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle
National Film Awards '92
5:10 News in Bangla
5:25 Sports programme: Wrestling
6:30 Documentary
7:00 Open University
7:25 Malancha
8:00 News in Bangla
8:30 Comedy series : Perfect Strangers
9:00 Magazine : Ittyadi
10:00 News in English
10:30 Drama series : L A Law
11:30 Khabar / The News
11:45 Closing

Weather

Moderate rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

Sky will remain mainly cloudy during the next 24 hours commencing 8 am today (Friday) while, occasional moderate rain or showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind may occur at most places over Chittagong, Barisal divisions, and at many places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Khulna divisions.

The Met office forecasts, day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The country's highest temperature of 31.0 degree Celsius was recorded in Dinaipur and the lowest 22.4 degree Celsius was recorded in Faridpur.

Major amounts of rainfall recorded during the daytime yesterday were : Dhaka 55mm, Chandpur 47mm, Sitakundu and Chittagong 39mm each, Comilla 28, Feni 27, Teknaf and Barisal 23 each, Cox's Bazar 20, Rajshahi and Kutubdia 19, Rangamati 15 and Dinaipur 14mm.

The sun sets today (Friday) at 6.15 pm and rises tomorrow (Saturday) at 5.41 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some of the major cities and towns of the country yesterday were :

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius	Humidity in percentage	
Dhaka	Max 26.6 Chittagong	9 am 24.5 27.8 24.0	6 pm 94 98 95
Rajshahi	30.7	100	93
Khulna	28.8	100	89
Barisal	28.0	98	93
Cox's Bazar	28.5	92	93
Sylhet	27.8	97	93
Dinaipur	31.0	85	95



Party workers of the BNP eagerly waiting for their councillors outside the Sugandha office despite the inclement weather yesterday.

— Star photo

Heroin seized
at Dohazari

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Sept 2: BDR personnel recovered one kg of heroin from a Chittagong-bound passenger bus from Cox's Bazar on Wednesday evening.

During a search in the bus at Dohazari check-post the packet containing the drug was seized from under a seat, official sources said.

But none was arrested in this connection.

The recovered heroin was later handed over to the Narcotics authority here.

It is believed that the drug was being carried from the golden triangle for despatching through Chittagong, known as a transit point.

Happy Marriage Day

To

Shaheen
& Ponir

From

Choton

Happy Birthday

to

Keiku

From

Dada, Didu
and
MashyatBiswas, Khaleda
greet Amir
of Qatar

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has felicitated Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar on the occasion of the National Day of his country, reports BSS.

In a message to the Amir, President Biswas expressed his firm conviction that the existing fraternal relations between Bangladesh and Qatar would be further developed for the mutual benefit of the people of the two countries.

In a separate message Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has also greeted Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani on the same occasion.

In a message to the Amir, Begum Zia expressed admiration that under his wise leadership the people of Qatar had made a very perceptible progress in all walks of life and for his valuable contribution towards strengthening the solidarity of the Islamic Ummah.

Begum Zia expressed the hope that the existing fraternal relations between the two countries would be further strengthened in the years ahead.

BCIC
Tender Notice

বিসিআইসিক প্রয়োগান্বয় জাতীয় অগ্রগতি প্রতীক

Managing Director, Polash Urea Fertilizer Factory Ltd, Polash, Narsingdi, invites sealed quotations for supply of (a) Different kinds of Gasket & (b) MS Rod, Angle etc. Both the Tender will be received up to 11.30 AM on 13.09.93 and will be opened immediately thereafter in presence of the tenderers (if any). Tender documents will be available on payment of Tk 25.00 only each per set (Non-refundable) from the office of (i) Controller of Accounts, BCIC, 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka (ii) BCIC Branch Office, 6, Agrabad, Chittagong & (iii) Polash Urea Fertilizer Factory Ltd, Polash, Narsingdi. No tender documents will be sold on the opening date of tender.

BCIC — 819-28/8

DFP(BA) 7761-29/8

G-139

Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited

(A Subsidiary Company of Petrobangla)

International Tender Notice

Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited (RPGCL) has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) in various currencies towards the cost of execution of CNG Project. Under the credit Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited invites sealed bids for the following :

Sl. No	Item with description	Qty.	Tender No
01.	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Compact modular skid mounted CNG Refuelling station with cascade storage and dispensing units on turn-key-basis.	04 sets	RP-02/05
02.	Natural Gas Vehicle Cylinders	2000 nos	RP-02/06

Procurement of the above goods and services shall be made on the basis of International Competitive Bidding.

1. Tender Documents will be available for sale from 11 September, 1993 during office hours from Accounts Department, Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited, BSEC Bhaban (8th Floor), 102, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka. Phone : 329331, 329954 & 326357. Tender documents will not be sold on the Bid opening date.
 - a) For Tender No. RP-02/05
US\$ 75.00 or Tk. 3000.00
 - b) For Tender No. RP-02/06
US\$ 50.00 or Tk. 2000.00
2. Bids will be received up to 1200 hours (BST) on 25 October, 1993 and will be opened on the same day at 1230 hours (BST) at the address given at serial No. 01 in presence of the Bidders or their representatives (if any).
3. Suppliers, from IDA member countries, who are capable to supply materials strictly in accordance with the prescribed International Standards and Practices are only eligible to submit Bids.

RPGCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reason whatsoever.

DFP (G) 13694-2/9

G-1186