

Dhaka Day by Day

Medical Advance with Few Parallels

by Rashed Mahmud Titumir



Saving a million lives each year

Simple and innocuous, Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS), hailed by the prestigious British medical journal, *The Lancet*, as potentially the most important medical advance of 20th century, marked its 25th anniversary in November last with no fireworks and fanfare.

However, with the envious records of ORS, and with a goal to improve the effectiveness of the solution, ICDDR,B arranged for, although belated, a celebration in the city on February 5, 1994. According to the Director of the centre, the observance is also expected to take place in Geneva and New York on the same day which would highlight the importance of raising global awareness of the role and cost effectiveness of international health research. The observance of the day included the handing over of awards by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia to BRAC, the government of Bangladesh, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID and WHO for their contributions to the development and promotion of ORS worldwide and in the villages of Bangladesh. Meanwhile, a stamp was released by the government to commemorate this event.

ORS was a resounding success in 1971, claims ICDDR,B, when it brought down cholera death rate from 50 per cent to one per cent among thousands of refugees of the war of liberation.

Also described in the prestigious British journal as 'perhaps the most low-tech medical advance of the century', ORS appears to be living up to its promise.

The direct and immediate effect of acute diarrhoea is loss of water and electrolytes through stool, causing dehydration. Treatment of dehydration is simple. It involves the replacement of the loss with adequate amount of fluid in appropriate composition, says the physicians at the centre. The physicians inform that in the beginning this was done by intravenous fluid, the discovery of which took many years of research. Further research has made this replacement therapy simpler by discovering ORS.

Scientific merit of this simple therapy has made it important in the management of diarrhoea, claim ICDDR,B's scientists. Controversy, however, remains and research therefore continues.

Over the past 25 years, the composition of ORS has undergone a number of changes. These are based, according to the scientists,

on physiological and clinical studies demonstrating what seemed to be the 'best' concentration of the individual ingredients.

Many studies reveal that diarrhoeal diseases are a major cause of illness and death along infants and young children, particularly in developing world.

It is estimated that there are 1.5 billion diarrhoea episodes and four million deaths in children younger than five years in the developing world each year. Most of the victims are aged between six months and two years.

"Today, 25 years after its discovery, ORS forms the backbone of many countries' control of diarrhoeal diseases programmes, and is saving over one million lives and billions of dollars every year," says Demissie Habte, Director, ICDDR,B. "However, ORS has the potential to do more," adds Habte.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated that the global access rate for ORS had risen to 73 per cent, representing a five per cent increase over the 1990-91 figure at the end of 1992. Efforts to improve the therapy continue, despite its recognition as one of the great public health achievements of this century. ICDDR,B, which is credited with the development of ORT, continues to lead in this task as it looks into other ORS formulations.

"The present formulation only prevents dehydration but does reduce the severity of an attack," notes a centre's paper. "Rice-based ORS tends to reduce stool output and shortens the duration of this disease and also helps prevent nutritional deficiency caused by diarrhoea," it adds.

However, the scientists say, "rice-based ORS is more complicated to make and quickly goes stale in a hot climate. Researchers still have several technical problems to solve."

Moreover, before a new and better type of ORS is introduced, there is the need for making every family aware that with ORS, diarrhoea need not be a killer disease.

"There are still two to three million children dying of diarrhoeal diseases each year, largely due to our failure to find a way of persuading mothers to use ORS effectively and at the right time," says Demissie Habte, MD.

"The challenge for international health researchers, experts and policy-makers is to bridge these gaps and thereby realise the full potential of ORS," concludes the centre's Director.

Seminar on women in management

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahan-Ara Begum yesterday said that women could not be integrated into development process unless they were developed, reports BSS.

She said this while addressing a seminar on "women in management" at the third regional conference of Association of Management Development

Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA) being held in the city under the auspices of AMDISA-Bangladesh branch in cooperation with Institution of Business Administration of Dhaka University.

Prof Jahan-Ara Begum said, research work or formulation and implementation of urban based women's programme in

city areas would not be helpful to solve the vast problem currently faced by South Asian women because eighty per cent of them live in rural areas.

Speakers at the function opined that many women of the South Asian countries do not want to involve themselves in the management but the management itself desired so.

Sale of Ocean Going Vessel by International Public Auction

It is hereby notified that in pursuance to the order dated 10th January, 1994 passed by the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh in Admiralty Suit No 30 of 1993, MV "TONY BEST" now lying under arrest at Char Elahi, PS Companyganj, District Noakhali, shall be sold on "as is where it is" basis by public auction by the Marshal of the Court or his Substitute at his office in the High Court Division on Saturday, the 19th February, 1994 at 10.00 am. Information regarding the ship may be available from the office of the Marshal. Intending bidders shall attend the auction personally or through authorised agents at the aforesaid office of the Marshal on the date and time mentioned above for the auction. Foreign bidders or their authorised agent may also participate in the auction subject to fulfilment of the requirement of the Foreign Exchange Control Regulations of Bangladesh. On acceptance of highest bid by the Marshal (subject to confirmation by the Hon'ble Court), the successful bidder shall be required to pay 25% of the bid price on the spot as earnest money by Pay Order or Draft from a scheduled bank in the name of the 'Registrar, Supreme Court of Bangladesh' and the balance 75% of the bid price shall be paid by Pay Order or Bank Draft from a scheduled bank within 14 (fourteen) days of confirmation of the sale by the High Court Division.

In case of failure to deposit 75% of the bid price within the stipulated period, the 25% earnest money deposited earlier shall be forfeited.

All Govt dues including Custom, Port etc shall be borne by the auction purchaser.

The Marshal reserves all rights to cancel the auction bid and to hold re-auction without showing any reason.

DESCRIPTION OF THE VESSEL

Liberian Flag: LDT-3,877, Built-1971, GRT-8,991.59.

Marshal & Registrar
Supreme Court of Bangladesh

S-74

SOUTH ASIA AT THE CROSSROADS:
CONFLICT AND COOPERATION

BISS C-8 FEBRUARY 1994



Major General (rtd) M. Akbar (2nd from right) speaking at an international seminar on South Asia at the Crossroads: Conflicts and Cooperation at the BISS auditorium yesterday. Also seen (From right to left): Prof Syed Anwar Hossain of Dhaka University, Air Commodore (rtd) Jasjit Singh of Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi and Professor Lawrence Ziring of Western Michigan University, USA. — Star photo

English language instts likely in 64 dist HQ

Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar said the government is actively contemplating to set up English Language Institutions in each of 64 district headquarters for imparting education on English to the schools and college students, reports UNB.

The minister informed this when Stephen Young, Director of UK-based Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) in Bangladesh called on him at his office yesterday.

The minister said English has been made compulsory

subject from class one to degree level to improve the system of English teaching and make the students sound in English.

The VSO director showed keen interest in teaching of English language in Bangladesh and assured the minister to find out a device to provide cooperation in this field in the days ahead.

The VSO has been working in the field of education, health, fisheries and livestock since 1963.

Institute of kidney diseases to be set up

Deputy Leader of the Jatiya Sangsad Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said the government was considering to set up an Institute of kidney diseases to strengthen preventive and curative, measures against the ailments, reports BSS.

Prof Chowdhury was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session of third national convention and scientific seminar on "nephrology, urology dialysis and transplantation" held in the city.

Around 10 million people in Bangladesh are suffering from different kidney diseases and about 30,000 of them die every year with acute and chronic kidney failures, the seminar was told.

Dr Badruddoza said most of the kidney related diseases could be prevented if the knowledge about this prevention could be spread to people and make them aware of it.

Jointly organised by the Bangladesh Renal Association, Bangladesh Association of Urological Surgeons, Bangladesh Kidney Trust and Bangladesh Kidney Foundation, the inaugural session was presided over by Prof. Matur Rahman, Head of the Department of Nephrology, IPGMR, Dhaka. It was also addressed by president of the seminar organising committee Major General (rtd) KM Siraj

Jinnat, secretary general Dr Harun-ur-Rashid and general secretary of Bangladesh Kidney Trust Dr Imran Bin Eunus.

Dr Harun-ur-Rashid said only two per cent kidney patients could be treated with the facilities available in the country. He said there were 85 hospital beds available to treat kidney patients.

There are 35 dialysis machines in the country including 19 in the private centres and could treat only 200 to 250 patients a year, he said.

Dr Rashid said IPGMR had the infrastructure to treat many more kidney patients with dialysis and transplantation if executed with proper planning.

Referring to the high cost of treatment of kidney ailments Prof Matur Rahman said unless the economic condition of the country is improved, the standard of medicine might fall by the turn of the century compelling the patients to seek treatment abroad and at the same time foreign experts would be required to provide high-tech medicine in the country.

'Bhasha Sainik -1440' award to be given

"Bhasha Sainik-1400," an award in honour of the participants of the great Language Movement of 1952, will be given by the Bhasha Sainik and Rajbandi Parishad, and association led by Advocate Gazul Huq and Mostafa Sarwar, reports BSS.

All have been requested to send names and addresses of the participants of the Great Language Movement to Room-22 of the Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar building.

The association, in a meeting, also decided to include Abdul Momin, Khandaker Mahbub Hussain, Dr Mazharul Islam, Zillur Rahman and Nurul Anam as its advisers. They also decided to hold a conference of the language fighters and to commemorate the day when Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had begun hunger strike in the Dhaka Central Jail in support of the Language Movement.

Weather

Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent

Dry weather will prevail over Bangladesh with partly cloudy sky over the coastal regions.

The Met Office forecasts, night temperature may fall by one to two degrees Celsius over Rajshahi division and may remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country.

Country's highest temperature of 31.5 degrees Celsius was recorded in Teknaf and lowest of 10.4 degrees Celsius was recorded in Srimongol yesterday.

The maximum and the minimum temperatures and relative humidity recorded in some major cities towns of the country yesterday are:

Cities/Towns	Temperatures in degrees Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	28.4	13.0	65	56
Chittagong	28.0	14.9	71	58
Rajshahi	28.4	12.5	86	71
Khulna	28.6	12.4	80	57
Barisal	28.6	12.4	92	68
Sylhet	29.0	14.5	58	62

Gujral calls on Shahabuddin

I K Gujral, former foreign minister of India, who is now in the city in connection with a seminar, called on the Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed,

at his office yesterday, reports BSS. They exchanged views on matters of common interest between the two countries.

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BPDB's Local Tender Notice
Corrigendum No 1 (One)

বিদ্যুৎ বিল নিয়মিত পরিশোধ করুন

The local tender enquiry No Pur-202/94 dated : 4-1-94 published in Bangladesh Observer dated : 22-1-94 and Daily Star dt : 29-1-94 is amended as International tender with Provision of local & Foreign bidders participation.

The tender will be received up to 11-00 AM dated : 23-3-94 and will be opened at 11-30 AM on the same date in presence of the bidders or their representatives if any.

All other terms and conditions of the tender notice will remain unchanged.

Biddut/Jana-918(3) 93-94

DFP(BA) 916-3/2

G-213

Director of Purchase

PDB, Dhaka.

Bangladesh Gas Fields Co. Ltd.
(A Subsidiary Company of Petrobangla)

Court Road

Brahmanbaria-3400

Corrigendum

The date for receiving bids against tender No. BGFL/PL(SV)/005 (R) dated 2-1-94 for procurement & supply of materials and construction & commissioning of Habiganj-6 gas gathering pipeline has been extended upto 1100 hrs of 20th February 1994, following request by prospective bidders. All other terms and conditions of the tender will remain unchanged.

D-111

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PWD Tender Notice

Tender Notice No. 82/1993-94

Sealed tenders are hereby invited Bangladesh form No. 2911 from enlisted approved Special Class-I (One), Class-II (One), Class-III (Three) Building contractor/firms of PWD accordance to financial limit for the undermentioned work. Tender will be received by the undersigned & the Executive Engineer PWD Division, Rangpur/Kurigram/Gaibandha/Lalmohirhat/Nilphaman/Panchagarh & Thakurgaon in their office on 14-02-94 Eng at 12-00 Noon & will be opened on the same day at 12-15 PM in presence of the tenderers (who may like to remain present).

Name of work	Estimated Cost	Earnest money	Time for completion	Eligibility of contractors for submission of tender.
1. Improvement of site of General Hospital at Dinajpur under the Scheme 'Re-Construction & Modernisation of General Hospital at Dinajpur, under PWD Division, Dinajpur, during the year 1993-94. (Block E)	Tk. 4.61 376/-	Tk. 9.228/-	2 (Two) months.	Special Class-I (One), Class-II (One) Bldg. Contractor/Firms of PWD Class-II of PWD Zone, Rajshahi, Class-III (Three) PWD Circle, Rangpur Contactor/Firms.
Tender form, schedule of works, add. terms & conditions etc can be seen & obtained from the office of the undersigned & the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Rangpur/Kurigram/Gaibandha/Lalmohirhat/Nilphaman/Panchagarh & Thakurgaon and the Sub-Divisional Engineer, PWD Sub-Division I/II/E/M, Dinajpur & Philbari on any working day during office hours up to 5:00 PM on 13-02-94 Eng. on payment of usual cost (non refundable).				
DFP(G) 2151-1/2 G-211				Shamsul Kabir Executive Engineer, PWD, Division, Dinajpur