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9pc children in Chakaria attacked with rickets

By Mustak Hossain

A survey on nearly 900 children in 30 villages of Chakaria thana in south-eastern district of Cox's Bazar revealed that about nine per cent of the children in the thana have been attacked with rickets, of whom 61 per cent are under five years of age. Another 22 per cent of the children show biochemical signs of pre-clinical rickets.

This means one in every three children in that thana is affected in some way with the disease.

It is apprehended that a nationwide survey would show similar results, fears Shadiul Haque, executive director of Social Assistance and Rehabilitation for the Physically Vulnerable (SARPV), a non-governmental organisation.

The survey was conducted recently by Mother and Child Health (MCH), a non-governmental organisation (NGO), with assistance of the UNICEF.

Haque said a comprehensive study across the country was needed to find out the actual number of the patients affected with the crippling disease.

The report said the cause of rickets in Bangladesh is not clear, but insufficient calcium intake by children and probably also by their mothers, is thought to be one of the major reasons. "There may be other factors that interfere with the utilisation of calcium," he said.

"The disease in Bangladesh appears to involve deficiency of

calcium. Very few cases detected in Chakaria are over 20 years of age, indicating that the disease has emerged there within the last two decades.

This suggests changes in local food or agricultural systems — that is reduced access to dairy products, changes in infant feeding practices and increased exposures to calcium-antagonists.

According to the study, there was no symptom of rickets among the tribal people in the area.

"It was officially announced in 1992 that there was no rickets patient in Bangladesh, but now the observation has changed," said Haque.

Flood situation in 2 hill districts may worsen

On rush of waters from hill areas and incessant rain may aggravate flood situation in Rangamati and Bandarban, weathermen forecast yesterday, reports UNB.

Karnaphuli Hydro Electric Project authorities continued to pump out water through its 13 gates out of 16 floodgates yesterday.

Flood water inundated the low lying areas in Rangamati district with the incessant rain and on rush of hill waters.

The boundary of the LGED building collapsed due to heavy shower.

All the rivers flowing in Bagachhara, Longodu, Bongkola thana areas swelled further submerging adjacent areas and affecting standing paddy crop.

The district administration, CHT regional council and municipal authorities distributed relief among the affected people.

Flood water in Sunamganj and Chandanaish thana areas today came under fresh flood, they added.

71.94pc pass Dakhil exams

Results of the Dakhil examinations of 1999 held under the Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board, Dhaka, were announced yesterday, reports BSS.

A total of 1,35,974 students sat for the examinations. Of them, 97,814 came out successful. The per cent of pass is 71.94.

Among the successful examinees, 26,735 got first division, 63,714 second division and 7,365 third division.

The 79.41 per cent passed in the Science Group followed by

in the General group, 68.98 per cent in the Group and 50 per cent in the Hifzul Quran.

In the Science Group 5,599 got first division, 4,377 second division and 188 third division, in the General Group, 21,046 secured first division, 59,167 second division and 7,170 third division, in the Muzabbid Group, 87 examinees got first division, 164 second division and seven third division and the Hifzul Quran Group, three students secured first division and six second division.

Muhammad Nasir Uddin Laskar of Dhampati Islamia Kamil Madrasah topped the Group.

Frozen food

Many of the participants even did not think that the fair would produce such a good result. "We could not communicate with other buyers due to time constraints, otherwise the number of buyers would have been much higher," Kamil Ahmed of Sea Food Marketing International PLC, informed.

Around 40 foreign buyers arrived in Dhaka for the fair. Many other foreign businesspersons who were in the city during the fair also visited the exhibition.

Past-president BFFEA felt that the fair will change the poor image of the frozen food industry, abroad.

A daylong workshop was held, yesterday, side by side with the fair. It was sponsored by USAID funded agro-based industries and Technology Development Project (ATDP) at the same venue.

Ajrujan-e-Rahmania Maizbhandaria, a representative organisation of Maizbhandar Darbar Sharif, will hold a rally in front of the Institution of Engineers on the day.

The workshop placed a number of recommendation including forming a separate body

Shrimp Development Board, declaration of shrimp industry as thrust sector, and using existing organisations like EPB and Bangladesh embassies abroad for market exploration.

Wind up trade, Ctg Mayor asks liquor traders

From Our Correspondent CHITTAGONG, June 26: Chittagong City Mayor Alhaj ABD Mohiuddin Chowdhury has called upon the liquor traders to wind up their business within a week to free the city from the growing menace of drug abuse.

The Mayor made this call at a press conference at the local press club on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse here today.

He said those who would give up the business would get compensation for their financial losses.

The mayor also said licences of the liquor traders would be cancelled if they don't comply with the request within the stipulated time.

Meanwhile, in an instant reaction on the suspension order issued against him, Akhteruzzaman, MP said: I have replied to the show cause notice served against me. I made it very clear in my reply that as per the party constitution, break party discipline and was not against the greater interest of the party.

He said that he made the statement on the *hartaal* before his parliamentary constituency people who elected him MP that appeared in different newspapers.

"I cannot take the responsibility of the newspapers and my statement made before the people of Katiadi cannot be regarded as a crime. So the allegation that I have violated party discipline is not correct," he added.

The dissident MP said a vested interest quarter and anti-liberation war group within the BNP are influencing and forcing the party to take undemocratic decisions. They are even trying to mislead the party chairperson in different ways.

He said that the main motive of the vested quarters is to defeat the peace-loving, reasonable and pro-liberation force in the party and bring party chairperson in their grip as well as to dissolve the party in the politics of Jamaat and Jatiya Party.

Major Akhter categorically said that his statement did not at all violate the party constitution, break party discipline and was not against the greater interest of the party.

Meanwhile, in an instant reaction on the suspension order issued against him, Akhteruzzaman, MP said: I have replied to the show cause notice served against me. I made it very clear in my reply that as per the party constitution I didn't oppose any decision of BNP. I didn't commit any mistake and I stand by my statement.

"I am happy for one reason that I would not have any responsibility for my party and I will not be blamed for any mistake of BNP. From now I will devote myself for the people of

Suja, SP Ataul Gani Badsha, Additional SP Majharul Islam and Rupsa thana OC were present at the ceremony, chaired by Sreepalata UP Chairman Abul Hossain Howlader.

On the same day, 14 extremists from six unions surrendered to Batiaghata thana police at 4 pm with 15 firearms and 14 ammunition. Six outlaws from Pustimari area of the thana also surrendered to the police on the day.

Police said seven members of the outlawed party surrendered to Terokhada police on Thursday with one revolver, one pipegun and four bullets.

In Dumuria thana, five members of the party's Milon faction laid down three guns, one pipegun and four bullets also on Thursday.

Water resources secretary Dr ATM Shamsul Huda said that under the new water policy, any water projects are now being conceptualised on a participatory basis taking all stakeholders into cognisance. Besides, dynamism is being infused in the Water Development



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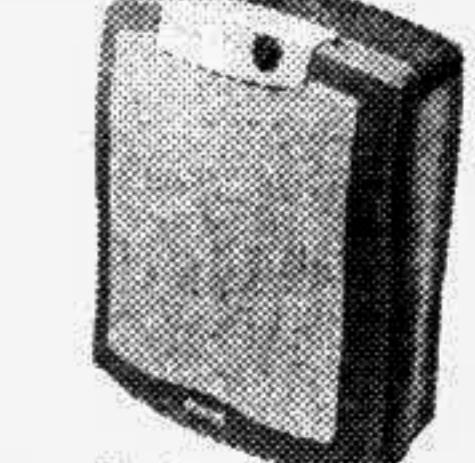
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Flood situation turns critical in Assam

GUWAHATI, June 26: The flood situation in Assam turned critical today with the rising Brahmaputra inundating large areas in at least six districts of the state, reports PTI.

Official sources here said that in the worst-affected Dhemaji district in upper Assam, railway link beyond Gugamukh was cut off as flood waters submerged the tracks suspending train services in the sector.

The rising water has also submerged the national highway in several areas of the district.

The first death was reported in Dhemaji district when a person drowned in the river last week, the sources said.

The situation was also critical in the districts of Dibrugarh, Jorhat, Goalpara, Dhubri and Nalbari where the Brahmaputra was flowing above warning level.

Fresh areas in Hathazari and Chandanaish thana areas today came under fresh flood, they added.

JS tidbits

From Page 1

Given the floor to discuss on the proposed budget, Awami League MP Dr. Mizanul Haq said, "I was well-prepared for my deliberation. But I forgot to mention all my points about the budget, after some BNP lawmakers led by Sadek Hossain Khoka assaulted their party MP Major (retd) Akhteruzzaman in the lobby a little while back."

"I'm also scared of the BNP threats, especially those by Faruk, who has said that AL government's time is running out and of Salahuddin Quader Choudhury (BNP), who had earlier indicated an imminent fall of the government."

Dr. Haq then ridiculed Col. (retd) Oli Ahmed of BNP for his comment "it be no rain or too much rain -- it all takes place during Awami League rule."

"But Mr. Oli has probably forgotten that the worst cyclone ever, occurred soon after Khaleda Zia assumed office (in 1991) and she was baptised Tufan Begum."

Another AL legislator Tajul Islam also came down heavily on Oli Ahmed for his remark about the proclamation of independence. "Col Oli's only task during the liberation war was to rub (falcum) powder on the armpit and neck of (General Zia)."

Agriculture Minister Matia Choudhury became angry at her own party as it agreed to extend her term by two minutes only against her request was for 10 minutes for discussing the proposed budget.

Her original 15 minutes over, the minister drew the House Chief Whip's attention for extension of time. The Chair following a treasury bench indication, disengaged the minister.

"If it is only two minutes, I won't speak (any more)," the minister angrily said while explaining the growth in agriculture during the out-going fiscal year.

Her anger prompted the ruling party to go for an extension of three minutes. A single minute, apparently, left her garrulous.

Matia Choudhury, earlier, blasted BNP MP Fazlur Rahman Patal for ridiculing the AL government's scheme of allowance for widows. "I'm sure it's coming as a great success to some 2.5 lac hapless widows. All widows are not as lucky as Khaleda Zia. (After all) They can't get a house in the Cantonment for a taka only."

"Others present in lobby did not like Akhteruzzaman's attitude, while Khoka and Patal angrily charged him with serving the interest of the government," said a BNP lawmaker.

"Some senior leaders pacified them. Otherwise Akhteruzzaman would have been assaulted."

Recently, Akhteruzzaman issued a public statement opposing his party's *hartaal* against the proposed budget.

Heard by Kenji Maruka, the seven-member team visited some spots specified for the bridge in the afternoon.

The team went to Mongla today to discuss matters relating to economic aspect of the bridge.

JICA conducted first phase of survey in May last year and submitted a report which was approved by the Prime Minister on February 3 this year.

No US proposal for 'exit corridor' for intruders: Delhi

From Pallab Bhattacharya

NEW DELHI, June 26: India said it had not received any proposal from the United States on providing an "exit corridor" for Pakistan-backed armed intruders in Kargil to go back.

An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said in a meeting between US Deputy Secretary of State Gibson Lamphier and Indian officials here on the Kashmir issue, Pakistani Army Chief Pervez Musharraf to New Delhi.

AFP says, diplomatic contacts are underway for a meeting between Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and US President Bill Clinton on the Kashmir issue, Pakistani Army Chief Pervez Musharraf said today.

Lots of contacts have been going on to schedule the meeting, Musharraf told reporters in Karachi.

The general said he would not say when the meeting was likely to take place but added: I hope soon.

See also page 9

India starts removing pillars from Panbari border

LAJMONIRHAT, June 26: In a bid to defuse tension, Indian authorities started removing pillars from Panbari border at Patgram thana here from Friday, reports UNB.

India took the decision after a flag meeting between BSF and BDR on Thursday.

On June 4, some Indian citizens, aided by BSF, wanted to install pillars and fence an area for a tea garden in the no man's land. BDR resisted the move. But this resulted in an uneasy situation that lasted for 20 days.

However, normally returned to the area after India started removing the fencing materials.

17 of a family killed in Lucknow road accident

LUCKNOW, June 26: Seven members of a family were killed and two injured when their jeep collided with a tourist bus on Delhi-Garh road in Ghaziabad district of Uttar Pradesh early this morning, police said.

The family of an assistant bank manager posted in Ajmer district of Rajasthan was heading to a village in Jyoti Phule Nagar when the collision occurred.

The injured, including bank manager Sarker Haider and his nephew, were admitted to a hospital at Meerut, police said.

Lead-free fuel

From Page 1 Some portion of the octane produced in ERL would be blended with the imported fuel while its produce from the imported crude, with high lead content, might be exported to discourage their use locally, the sources said.

The authorities are now considering a 100 million dollar project to modernise the lead separation unit in ERL. But funds for the project are still to be arranged.

Recent studies by Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission showed that at least 50 tonnes of lead are deposited annually in the air in Dhaka city. At certain points with traffic congestion, the air contains 463 nanograms of lead, higher than in Mexico city.