

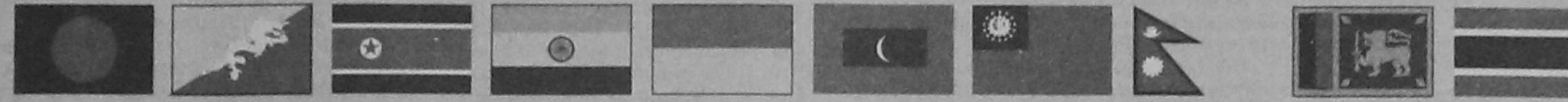


MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria on Poverty

27-29 NOVEMBER 2000

DHAKA-BANGLADESH



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

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SPEAKER
BANGLADESH PARLIAMENT



MESSAGE

PRESIDENT
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
DHAKA

MESSAGE

I am extremely delighted to know that the Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria on Poverty is being held in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The central theme of this conference carries significant importance in the context of the burden of Tuberculosis and Malaria and their impact on health and poverty in the South East Asian countries. I believe, the parliamentarians as people's elected representatives, can play a pivotal role in controlling these diseases through raising community awareness, mobilizing local resources and enhancing partnerships with various stakeholders.

I wish this very important conference a grand success.

Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed



PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

MESSAGE

It is indeed a pleasure that the Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria on Poverty is being held in Dhaka from 27-29 November 2000. This noble venture of the World Health Organization's South East Asia Regional Office has significant importance to apprise the Parliamentarians on strategies of Health and Poverty Reduction in the region. I hope, this conference would generate awareness of the parliamentarians about the impact of Malaria and Tuberculosis on health of the poor and initiate massive efforts to fight against these poverty related diseases.

I am glad to convey my thanks to the World Health Organization and to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for organizing this conference and welcome the parliamentarians from the regional countries in Bangladesh.

I wish the conference a grand success.

Joi Bangla, Joi Bangabandhu
May Bangladesh Live Forever

Sheikh Hasina



SPEAKER
BANGLADESH PARLIAMENT



MESSAGE

Bangladesh is honoured to host the Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria on Poverty in Dhaka during the period from 27-29 November 2000.

In the context of the regional health situation and the consequences of these two major communicable diseases, this conference is certainly an important event in which the Parliamentarians can play an active role to reduce the burden of disease and poverty.

I am confident that this conference would give an opportunity to the Parliamentarians to exchange ideas, share experiences and provide guidance to the on-going control programs of these diseases and help mobilizing the community support with a view to strengthen government efforts to eradicate Tuberculosis and Malaria from the South East Asia Region.

I wish the conference all success.

Humayun Rasheed Choudhury



STATE MINISTER
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH



MESSAGE

I am delighted to know that the Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria on Poverty is being held in Dhaka from 27-29 November 2000. These two diseases have major impact on the health of the poor and poverty. I expect that the Parliamentarians would be able to act in their respective countries and in the region to reduce the burden of disease and poverty due to Malaria and Tuberculosis.

We can perhaps do a lot for the suffering humanity through our concerted efforts. I am looking forward to the "Parliamentarian's Call for Action" from the Dhaka meeting and wish this conference a success.

Prof. Dr. M. Amanullah, MP

MESSAGE

CHANGING POLICY DIRECTION OF WHO COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMME IN BANGLADESH

Mir Shahabuddin Mohammad

Joint Secretary (Public Health and WHO)
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

WHO Country Collaborative Programmes in Bangladesh

Bangladesh joined the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1972 within its South-East Asia Region. Since Bangladesh became a member of WHO, the organization has been providing technical assistance to the government. Presently, the approximate biennial budget of the organization for Bangladesh is US\$ 10-11 million.

The main objectives of WHO Country Collaborative Programme in Bangladesh is to develop (i) the health sector's capacity for health policies and management, (ii) develop appropriate human resource for health, (iii) promotion and protection of health and (iv) provide technical assistance for integrated control of diseases.

2. National health situations, including major health problems and key issues and challenges for health development

2.1 Current health situation in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is undergoing through a process of transition. Issues like economic reforms, increased industrialization, rapid urbanization, rising income levels, improved health care as well as political, social and cultural changes in the country have significantly changed the health scenario in the country.

Despite very low per capita GNP (of approximately US\$ 370 at current factor cost) the traditional macro-indicators of health status in Bangladesh demonstrate indisputable evidence of public health progress and achievements which has taken place in the health sector of the country over the last 25 years. Some of these achievements are-

- Child immunization coverage has increased from 10% in 1984 to 66% in 1998 and the mortality of children under 5 has dropped considerably from 150/1000 live births in 1970 to about 77 per 1000 in 1999.
- Life expectancy at birth has also increased from 45 (in 1970) to 60.8 years (in 1999), mainly due to lower child mortality.
- Population growth rate declined from over 3% in 1971 to 1.5% in 1999.
- Infant mortality per thousand live births dropped from around 150 in 1971 to around 57 per 1000 live births in 1999.
- The maternal mortality ratio has also declined to about 3.00 per 1000 live births.

2.2 Current challenges in the health sector

Bangladesh is likely to face the following challenges which will determine the health trends in Bangladesh.

- (i) the challenge of reducing the high burden of maternal and infant mortality rates from the countries of our Region.
- (ii) high population growth;
- (iii) the unfolding of the HIV epidemics in the South-east Asia Region;
- (iv) the looming threats from emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases like Dengue, Kala-azar, Filariasis, Drug Resistant Tuberculosis, etc.
- (v) Arsenic contamination of ground water which has already become a major public health problem in Bangladesh and parts of India.
- (vi) Alleviation of poverty through reduction of burden of diseases and malnutrition.
- (vii) Growing inequality and inequity (between poor and rich and gender inequity) in health and the social context that influence health disparities.

Bangladesh would require to face these health challenges in future, with assistance from WHO and many of its other development partners.

3. National Health Policy, Strategy and Programmes of Bangladesh

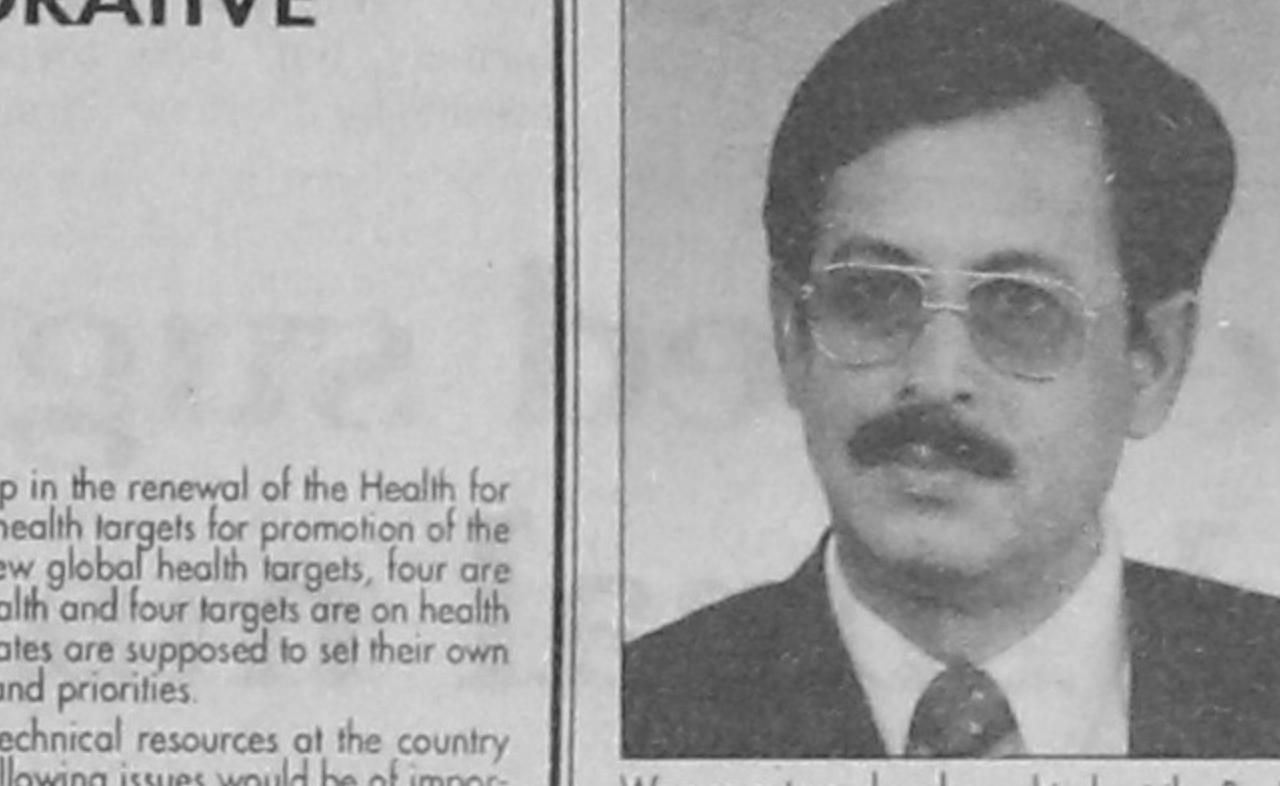
There are few internationally agreed goals which have been set for attainment by the government of Bangladesh under the recently formulated National Health Policy :

- Eradication of polio by the year 2000
- Elimination of leprosy by the year 2000 and eradication by the year 2005;
- Elimination of neonatal tetanus by the year 2010
- Reduction of measles by the year 2010
- Reduction of maternal deaths from 3/1000 live births to 2.0 per 1000 live births with the year 2012 and to 1.0 per 1000 live births within 2020
- Increase of Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course (DOTS) coverage for TB patients to almost 100% within 2005 from the current level of 82%

4. Future of WHO Collaborative Programmes in Bangladesh

In view of the changing health needs of Bangladesh, it is important to re-organize WHO's resources to better suit the re-structuring of the health system in the country in order to respond to the spreading of new health threats in Bangladesh.

Rationalization of WHO Country Budget : In compliance with various WHO's Resolutions taken in the past by the WHO member states, it may be important to determine the size and composition of the WHO Country Office in Bangladesh. This will help the government to reallocate necessary resources from WHO Country Budget to other technical areas of greatest need and priority. In this connection, Bangladesh would also like to stress that WHO Director General's new corporate budget policy for 2002-2003 should have appropriate flexibility to accommodate the changes that have been suggested by Bangladesh for better rationalization of WHO's technical resources in the country.



MINISTER
MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY
WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

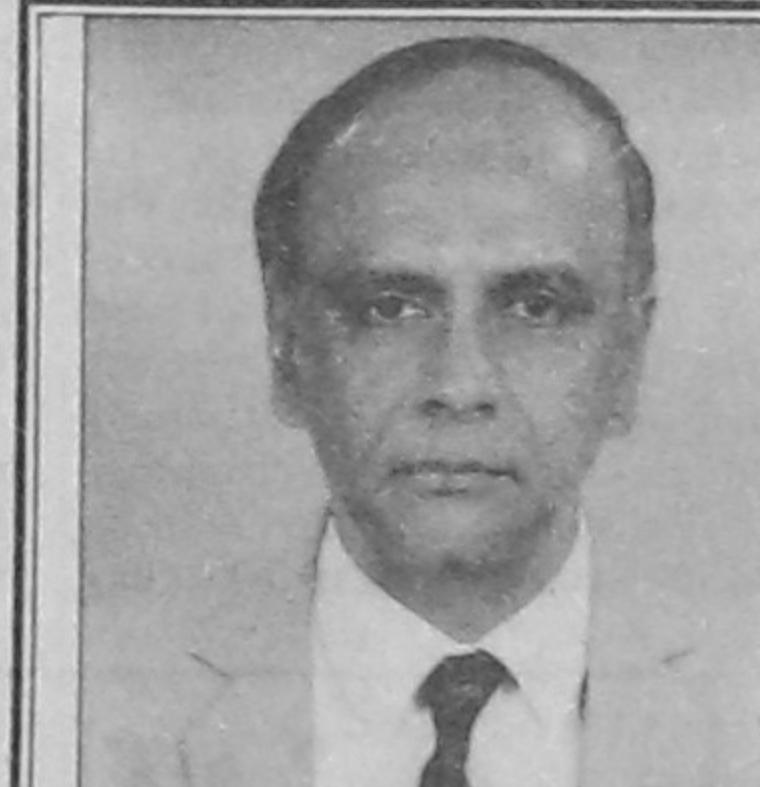
MESSAGE

We are extremely pleased to host the Regional Conference of parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria on Poverty in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 27-29 November 2000. Such regional conferences offer us a unique opportunity to secure political commitment and mobilize public opinion for reducing the burden of diseases like tuberculosis and malaria which have very high impact on poverty in the countries of our Region. Stop TB Initiative and Roll Back Malaria the two very important health interventions of the South-East Asia Region have mainstreamed the health development activities in our Region. This Regional Conference has offered us to share our experiences and important lessons which we have learnt for the control of tuberculosis and malaria in our Region.

I am sure the outcome of this important meeting will make us more committed in order to carry forward and translate the success of our partnership in Stop TB Initiative and Roll Back Malaria for achieving a better health for all.

I look forward to the successful conclusion of this important meeting.

Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim, MP



SECRETARY
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
DHAKA

MESSAGE

It is a great pleasure that Bangladesh is hosting the Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria on Poverty in Dhaka from 27-29 November 2000. The theme of this conference : Impact of Tuberculosis and malaria on poverty, has been chosen as one of the pragmatic issues related to the current situation of health and development of the South East Asian Region. The burden of these two diseases is a scourge in our countries and have far reaching impact on individuals and families. Poverty is an outcome of Malaria and Tuberculosis and sometimes impedes the process of development.

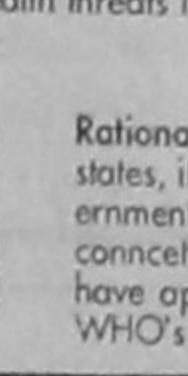
I am hopeful that the parliamentarians would provide a strong support for the successful implementation of disease control programs and help reducing the burden of poverty in the region.

I wish this conference a success.

Sayed Alamgir Farrouk Chowdhury

Bangladesh Centre for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (BCEPER) : Bangladesh's repeated exposure to natural and man-made disasters, have made it imperative for the Government of Bangladesh to strengthen the operation response capacity of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MOH&FW) for preventing and mitigating the adverse health consequences of emergencies and disasters. WHO should play its due role in providing necessary institution support to the MOH&FW for establishing a National Centre for Health Emergency Preparedness and Response in the Country which will have a long term perspective goal for designation as a Regional Centre. Excellence in the areas of health emergency preparedness and response.

WHO Regional Director for South-East Asia



MESSAGE

I am glad that this Regional Conference of Parliamentarians on Impact of Tuberculosis and Malaria and Poverty is being held in Dhaka. These two diseases, among others, create havoc for developing country populations. The resultant high levels of morbidity and mortality place a heavy burden on the already impoverished, particularly women. Most governments, international funding agencies and multilateral agencies today acknowledge the vital link between health and development and ill-health and poverty. Parliamentarians play an important role in giving shape to national policies and are best placed to advocate for health to be given priority within their own governments.

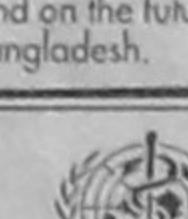
This is the sixth meeting of Parliamentarians being held since 1996 on tropical health issues in the perspective of sustainable development. This meeting of minds will help to further strengthen WHO's partnership for health development with parliamentarians and to accord higher priority to the health of the poor in national political and development agendas.

I thank the Government of Bangladesh for hosting this important meeting, and congratulate the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for the elaborate arrangements made by them towards its success.

Dr. Uton Muchtar Rafei



Director-General
World Health Organization



MESSAGE

I congratulate the Government of Bangladesh for joining with the World Health Organization in convening this important meeting. As elected representatives of the people, parliamentarians have a particularly critical role in the massive effort which is now required to protect and improve the health of poor and vulnerable populations. It is key to overcoming poverty and setting your countries firmly on the road to sustainable human development.

When breadwinners die or suffer prolonged ill health or disability, entire households may be tipped into extreme poverty. Income is drastically reduced. Finding the money to pay for treatment and medicines may mean borrowing at crippling interest rates.

Children, especially girls may be kept from school. Families eat less.

During the 1990s, the world began to accept that there is a close knit relationship between health and poverty. It runs both ways.

Poverty is bad for health, but ill health is also a cause of impoverishment.

Infectious diseases undermine societal structures, health systems and national economies. Calculations remain imprecise, but it is certain that the full economic costs of infectious diseases have been under-estimated. Recent studies suggest that those countries where 10% of the population are infected by HIV/AIDS stand to lose up to one percentage point of GDP per year. Malaria too continues to undermine economic performance, diminishing potential growth by up to 1% per year. The economic costs of TB could amount to more than US\$ 12 billion per year. Taken together, the costs in terms of human, security and economic development are staggering. The case for more rapid, sustained and concerted action is overwhelming.

It should not be like this. A number of proven health interventions can dramatically reduce mortality from the main killers. You will be discussing them during your meeting. But the challenge is to take these interventions to scale throughout the entire South East Asian Region and indeed, globally.

We need a popular movement to achieve this ambitious but essential goal.

● A movement that keeps decision makers fully involved. ● A movement that stimulates people in all countries to find their own best ways forward.

● A movement that is focused on clear outcomes but which is inclusive and pluralistic.

I wish you a successful outcome to your meeting. Our common goal of overcoming poverty depends on it.

Gro Harlem Brundtland

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