

Large number of adult patients suffering from severe diarrhoea

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases and Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) has been treating a huge number of adult people suffering from severe diarrhoea in this period of the year.

Generally, children make up around 60 percent of the patients in the hospital, but this time the centre has seen a large number of adult patients coming from Mirpur, Jatrabari, Bashabo, Demra, Kamrangirchar and Mohammadpur areas in the city. Most of them belong to low-income group.

Dr Md Shahadat Hossain, a senior scientist of ICDDR,B, said that most patients are suffering from cholera-like diarrhoea, which dehydrates them severely within a very short time.

"We have also found that most patients are coming from the areas where drinking water became contaminated because of floods or other reasons," he said and suggested that the government immediately supply pure drinking water to flood-affected areas to tackle the outbreak of diarrhoea.

The inflow of patient to the hospital has increased in the wake of floods during this period every year. Some 609 patients were admitted on Saturday and the figure went up to 662 on Monday but came down to 622 yesterday.

A total of 356 patients were admitted to the hospital from 12:00am to 3:00pm yesterday. Mahbubur Rahman, 28, and his uncle Shukuruddin, 35, came to the hospital with severe diarrhoea yesterday morning.

Mahbub, a rickshawpuller and resident of Basabo area in the city, told this correspondent that dirty water comes through the tubewell in their area as it is now under flood water.

"We have to drink stinky water, as we do not have other alternative sources of drinking water," he added.

Rajuk public hearing on DAP from Oct 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) is going to arrange a public hearing on detailed area plan (DAP) before finalising it from October 1, which will continue until November 30.

Anybody will be able to give his or her comments and suggestions during the hearing, said Rajuk Chairman Md Shafiqul Islam at the technical management committee meeting at Rajuk auditorium yesterday.

The DAP will be completed by December 31 and the people will be able to get the copy by March 2009, he added.

DAP Project Director Tapan Kumar Nath said suggestions and recommendations can reach through phone calls, emails or fax messages during a deadline of two months.

Four groups who were appointed to do the job presented their draft final reports to the technical committee meeting.

Rajuk gave the work order to prepare the DAP to four firms -- SHELTECH, DDC, EPC and Gani Bangla -- in August 2004 with two years' timeframe to complete the

job.

Experts said drafted in 1995, the 20-year Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP) was approved by the government in 1997 with retrospective effect, but it could not be materialised for want of the DAP.

Due to delay of preparing DAP, many locations of retention ponds and flood flow zones, which were marked in the DMDP, have already been encroached by the land developers, said urban experts.

3 shops fined in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two mobile courts of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in different raids in business establishments in the city yesterday realised Tk 3.3 lakh for unauthorised production of goods.

In separate drives at 'Abar Khabo' and 'Bikrampur Sweets and Food Plaza' in Mirpur Tk 2.5 lakh was realised as fine.

Another court in its drives at Jatrabari, Shyampur and Demra realised Tk 80,000 as fine.

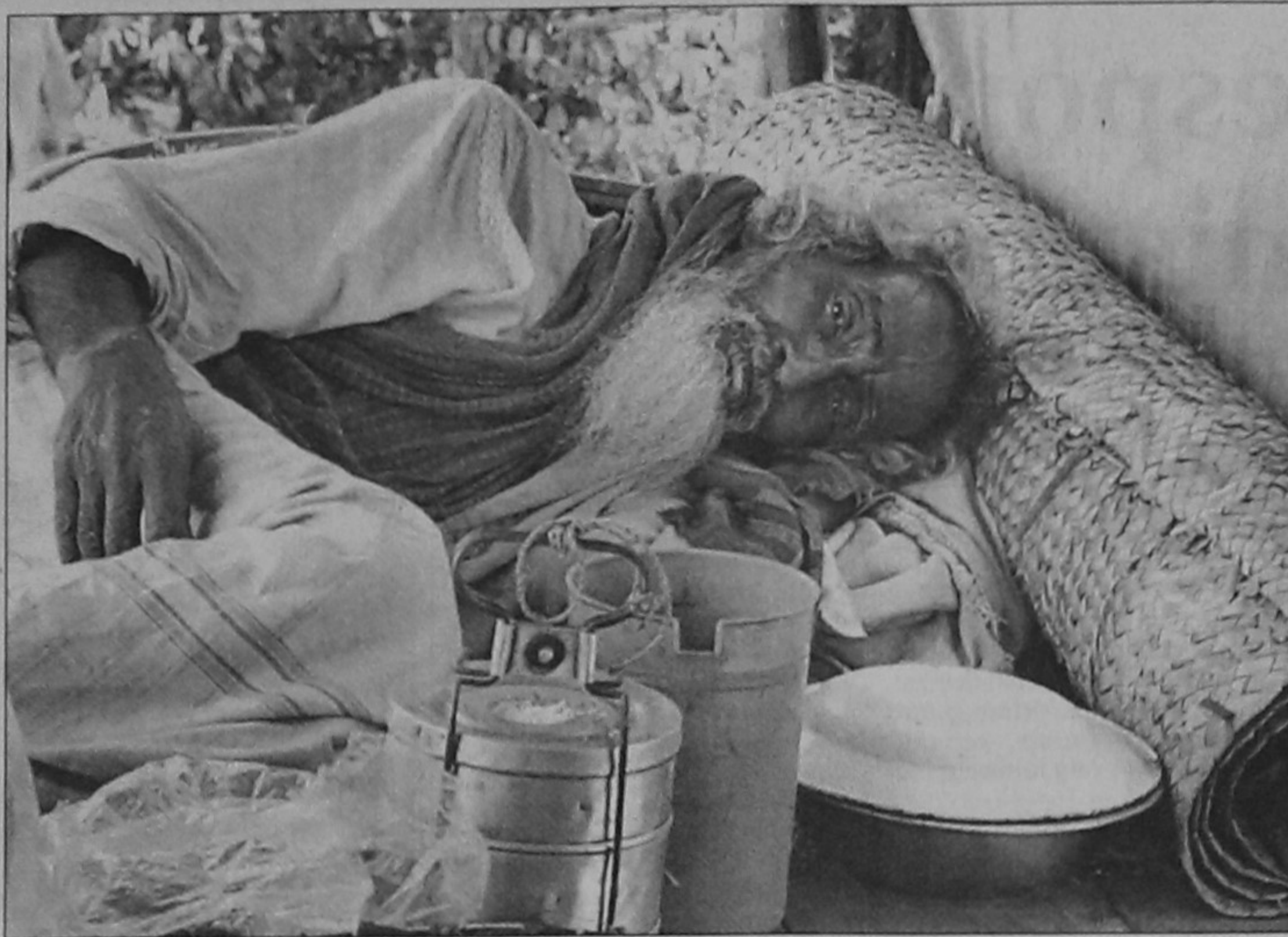


PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Lying on a wooden bed under the open sky, this 70-year-old man gives a blank look as he has lost everything to the ongoing erosion by river Padma. Arshad, a vegetables vendor, has now taken shelter on the town protection embankment at Sadipur in Faridpur. This photo was taken yesterday.

India to extend telemedicine system to all Saarc states

Says Pranab Mukherjee

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

After introducing telemedicine system in Sri Lanka and Bhutan, India will extend this facility to other Saarc countries soon.

In keeping with its commitment at the 14th Saarc Summit held in New Delhi in April last year, India is implementing a telemedicine project in the region under which super-specialty hospitals in India will provide telemedicine services to designated hospitals in member countries, Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee said.

The project is already being implemented in Bhutan and Sri Lanka and will be extended to other Saarc countries, he said while inaugurating a meeting of Southeast Asian Health Ministers in New Delhi on Monday.

He also said that India's

programme on telemedicine under Saarc can be replicated by adaptation to the Southeast Asian region under WHO.

Mukherjee also called for cooperation among Saarc and Asean countries under the aegis of World Health Organisation in the health sector. South East Asia is home to more than a quarter of the world's population with almost 30 percent of the global disease burden, he added.

"The countries of this region, many of them being economies in transition, bear the irony that on one hand we have strong economic growth leading to prosperity of the people as never before; on the other, sustenance of growth momentum is threatened by weak social sector indicators led by poverty, illiteracy, disease and ill-health," he said.

Pointing out that the region faces prevalence of communicable diseases and non-communicable diseases and "unprecedented threats from emerging infectious diseases and the growing burden of chronic diseases", Mukherjee said, "Negotiating such diverse needs and challenges requires different thinking hats".

WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director for South-East Asia, and other WHO experts are attending the four-day meeting.

Margaret Chan said health ministers in the region are concerned about climate change and "all the experts tell us: robust health systems that reach the poor are the best protection against the health shocks of extreme weather events."

Pliabangchang also reiterated that climate change poses a formidable challenge to human health in the region.

Netherlands dependable dev partner

Foreign adviser tells Dutch FM

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury held separate meetings with Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen and Development Cooperation Minister Bert Koenders of the Netherlands in the Dutch capital yesterday.

Iftekhar told the Dutch foreign minister that Bangladesh saw the Netherlands as a "dependable development partner".

Verhagen praised Bangladesh's role as a "constructive international actor" and also for its contribution to UN reforms and peace-keeping.

He assured support to Bangladesh's on-going electoral process and preparations leading to the elections.

Iftekhar stressed the need for the presence of a European Union Observer Mission during the forthcoming elections in Bangladesh.

He thanked the Netherlands for the "market-access benefits" and urged that the import-basket from Bangladesh be widened beyond ready-made garments to include newer items like small and medium-sized ships, a new manufacturing industry in Bangladesh.

They agreed to work together on issues of common interest such as climate change, which was critical to both countries.

In his talks with Verhagen, it was agreed that the European Union in general and the Netherlands in particular considered bilateral relations with Bangladesh as "strategic", and based on "shared values".

While meeting with the Bert, Iftekhar underscored the importance of channeling Dutch assistance through government.

In recent times, this has been done largely through multilateral agencies and NGOs.

They identified new areas of possible cooperation including modernisation of Bangladesh's irrigation system, development of potato varieties with improved seed production and marketing, livestock and dairy industry, food processing and agro-business development, and intensified cooperation in higher studies in

agriculture and rural development.

Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands Mizanur Rahman, Foreign Ministry Director General M Zulfikur Rahman and the Dutch envoy to Bangladesh Bea Ten Tusscher were present at the meetings.

Earlier, Iftekhar held talks with the Aga Khan during a brief visit to Paris.

Speaking to media later, he said, "We discussed some follow-up

action regarding his recent visit to Bangladesh including the programmes and initiatives that were begun there, and a permanent presence of the Aga Khan Development Network in Bangladesh."

He added, "I also raised the subject of possible micro-credit support to minimise the cost of contractual labour migration, which was a new subject and in which he showed keen interest."

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PHOTO: STAR

Patkal Sramik Sangram Parishad stages a demonstration at Demra yesterday demanding payment of arrears to workers of Bawani and Karim Jute Mills.

PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES Group-based admission test system soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday decided to introduce group-based admission test to reduce sufferings of the students seeking admission to the country's public universities.

Group-based admission test means single admission test will be held for each category universities like general universities, agriculture universities, medical colleges and science and technology-based universities.

The decision was made at a meeting at the education ministry with Education Adviser Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman in the chair.

Several decisions were taken including introduction of group-based admission test like existing medical admission test, evaluation

of SSC and HSC results and keeping admission test fee between Tk 200 and Tk 300, said a ministry handout.

Besides, the meeting also asked the UGC to formulate an identical code of conduct following the allegations of sexual harassment at different universities.

University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam, Education Secretary M Momtazul Islam and vice chancellors of 29 public universities, including Dhaka University, Buet and Bangladesh Agricultural University, took part in the meeting.

Oxford Int'l School delegates attend IAEA confce

METRO DESK

A delegation from Oxford International School (OIS) is participating in the 34th annual conference of International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA), says a press release.

The six-day conference began on September 7 in Cambridge, England.

Shakawat Hossain, the president of the school, GM Nizam Uddin, the principal, and Academic Council members are attending at the conference.

The events have brought together leading assessment and education experts and providers of examinations across the globe and provide a forum for participants to share professional expertise and strengthen relationships.

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Contact person who will reply to your query instantly

• Mr. Dibakar Biswas : Mobile: 01819-552190 • Mr. Satyajit Roy : Mobile: 01819-552187 • Mr. Ahsanuzzaman Hasan : Mobile: 01819-552178 • Mr. Mizanor Rahman : Mobile: 01819-552191

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