

# 'Bronchiolitis curable without antibiotics'

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Though bronchiolitis is curable without antibiotics, most of the children suffering from the disease are provided with antibiotics that make the treatment costly and facilitate bacterial resistance to the children.

Study revealed that the result is same for bronchiolitis patients whether they are provided with antibiotics or not. But doctors, mostly on the outskirts of the city, are prescribing antibiotics for bronchiolitis.

The study was conducted in 2007 by Institute of Mother and Child Health (ICMH) on 327 children.

In the study, the children suffering from bronchiolitis were divided into three groups. The first group was provided with antibiotic injections while the second group with oral antibiotics while the third group was not provided with any antibiotics.

But the result was same for them as all the children were cured and their staying period in the hospital on an average was four days

and a half.

"Bronchiolitis is the 2nd leading disease in the country causing children's suffering as 21.4 percent children aged 0-2 years suffer from it. Providing antibiotics for bronchiolitis make the treatment costly. At the same time, it creates drug resistance that means the chance of the children's responding to that drug reduces," said Prof ARM Lutful Kabir of Faridpur Medical College and Hospital.

Providing antibiotics to the children at early age also increases the risk of their getting Asthma, he added.

Prof Kabir, principal investigator, said: "But as the symptoms of pneumonia and bronchiolitis are almost the same, the doctors diagnose bronchiolitis as pneumonia and prescribe antibiotic like Ceftriaxone, Ampicillin and Amoxycillin in most cases."

While visiting different city pharmacies, it was found that per phial of Ceftriaxone injection is sold at Tk 150 to Tk 160. Some seven vials are required for each course, said salesman of Shahreen Drugs at Aziz Supermarket in the city.

"It means without proper diagnosis, many doctors are prescribing Ceftriaxone that forces poor parents to spend Tk 1,100 more for nothing. We should think how many people really can afford this extra amount and why they should have to spend this when 50 percent children in this country live in poverty and 25 percent are deprived of their basic rights," said Prof Abid Hossain Mollah of Pediatrics department, Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

Prescribing antibiotic drug where it is not needed actually goes beyond its rational use. Though the management of bronchiolitis is clearly mentioned at National Guideline of Management of Bronchiolitis, very few doctors are following it, he added.

Bronchiolitis is caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and it is a self-limiting disease that is cured within seven days with supportive treatment like nebulisation and oxygen.

Antibiotic drug is not needed for this purpose, experts said.



Participants at a roundtable on 'Capital Dhaka: Traffic congestion and people's suffering' organised by the Prothom Alo at the newspaper's conference room in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 16)

# EXCESSIVE USE OF GROUND WATER DURING BORO SEASON Adverse effect on drinking water feared

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Excessive use of underground water during the boro season may have an adverse effect on the country's drinking water, warned International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) yesterday.

"The potential recharge of the aquifer that could be extracted by shallow tube wells had almost been exploited by 1996. Since then, the use of shallow tube wells has expanded, which suggests that the groundwater resources have already been overexploited," it said referring to the National Commission on Agriculture.

All this was stated in the book "Millions Fed: Proven Success in Agricultural Development" launched jointly by IFPRI and Brac at the Brac auditorium in the capital yesterday. David J Spielman and Rajul Pandya-Lorch edited the book.

The book highlighted the successes in agriculture

development over the last 50 years through 20 case studies from around the world and documented programmes, policies and investments that had positive impacts on hunger and poverty.

David J Spielman said in the 1950s, around one billion people suffered from malnutrition. The number is still the same but the difference is that in the 50's one-third of the people suffered while it has dropped down to one-sixth now.

With such developments, Bangladesh's rice production has increased from 23 million metric tonnes in 1989-90 to 43 million metric tonnes in 2007-08, he said.

"Much of this progress stems from the development of high-yielding dry season irrigated boro rice and the proliferation of simple and affordable tube wells that have been essential to the crop's success," said economist Mahabub Hossain in his article published in the book.

Hossain, also executive director of Brac, said market liberalisation for agriculture technologies in the 1980's significantly contributed to the increased yield, mainly irrigated boro.

He said heavy use of pesticides during boro production is having an adverse impact on the quality of surface water and fish habitats.

In 2008, more than 80 percent of farmers who cultivated modern boro varieties used pesticides while only 9 percent of wheat producers used pesticides and about 16 percent of farmers for other traditional rice varieties, he said.

"Another concern is arsenic contamination, which has been shown a serious problem in Bangladesh, though its link with exploitation of groundwater for boro cultivation has yet to be established," Mahabub Hossain said.

Agriculture Secretary CQK Mustaq Ahmed said consid-

ering the depletion of underground water, the government has already taken up projects to dredge rivers and increase the use of surface and rainwater.

Moreover, boro cultivation in the northern region would be gradually shifted to the southern part of the country by developing saline tolerant varieties, he said.

IFPRI's former board member M Syeduzzaman, who chaired the programme, said despite considerable achievements, 40 percent people still live below poverty line with the country lagging behind many of the Millennium Development Goals targets. These matters need attention, he said.

Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agriculture University Prof MA Sattar Mandal, Zainul Abedin of IRRI, Uttam Deb of Centre for Policy Dialogue also spoke at the book launching ceremony.



Guests hold copies of a book titled "Millions Fed: Proven Success in Agricultural Development" at its publication ceremony at Brac Centre in the city yesterday. From left are David J Spielman, Prof MA Sattar Mandal, M Syeduzzaman, Agriculture Secretary CQK Mustaq Ahmed and Dr Mahabub Hossain.

## Body to probe IER question paper leakage

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities yesterday formed a five-member committee to investigate the leakage of question papers for the first-year honours admission test of Institute of Education and Research (IER).

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique formed the committee with syndicate member advocate AFM Mezbuddin as its convener and Assistant Proctor Dr Md Amzad Ali as the member secretary.

The committee has been asked to submit the enquiry report immediately. The authorities on Friday postponed the admission test following leakage of the question papers and rescheduled the exams for February 25.

The other members of the committee include Dr Md Abdul Awal Khan, Dr Mohammad Anwar Hossain and Proctor Dr KM Saiful Islam Khan.

The VC told The Daily Star last night that the new committee would investigate everything about the leakage.

## WEATHER TODAY

### Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry over the country with partly clouds over Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the country during midnight till morning, Met Office said.

Prevailing mild to moderate cold wave over Rajshahi division and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia and Srimongal may continue.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:39pm today and rises at 6:42am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 30.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 6.6 degrees Celsius at Chuadanga.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.3	13.4	72	50
Chittagong	28.3	14.0	82	63
Rajshahi	24.8	7.5	85	56
Khulna	26.5	11.5	73	67
Barisal	27.8	11.3	86	71
Sylhet	30.2	13.0	55	44
Cox's Bazar	30.0	15.0	89	61

## Radio Today starts journey as 'Green Radio'

METRO DESK

Radio Today, a FM band radio station, started its journey as a 'Green Radio' yesterday.

Rafiqul Haque, managing director of the station, announced this at the annual conference of its correspondents at a city hotel, says a press release.

The radio station will work for creating awareness on reducing global warming and greenhouse effects, Rafiqul Haq said, adding that new centres of Radio Today will be launched soon in Sylhet, Khulna, Barisal, Bogra, Mymensingh and Cox's Bazar.

He also urged the correspondents to dispense their duties by ensuring no harm to the interests of the country and its people.

AKM Manjurul Haque, chief news editor of Radio Today, called upon the journalists to work with dedication and responsibility.

## BANGABANDHU MURDER Family members meet 3 killers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of three Bangabandhu murder convicts met the condemned men in the Dhaka Central Jail yesterday.

Jail sources said 14 family members and relatives met the convicts -- Major Bazul Huda, Lt Col Sultan Shahrir Rashid Khan and Major (lancer) AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed -- separately at a cell of the jail.

Each of the convicts got 30 minutes' time to meet their family in presence of jail officials, said a high official, preferring anonymity.

He told The Daily Star that the relatives talked about family affairs and the convicts wanted to know about the developments of the case.

Wives of the three convicts, other family members and relatives broke into tears during the meeting, but the convicts shed no tears, jail sources said.

On January 9, Major Bazul Huda and Major (lancer) AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed sought presidential mercy through the jail authority, which were rejected later.

## JP-MANJU COUNCIL Manju, Sheikh Shahid retain leadership

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anwar Hossain Manju and Sheikh Shahidul Islam were re-elected president and secretary general of Jatiya Party (JP-Manju) yesterday.

The councillors of JP re-elected them at the party's biennial council held at the Institution of Engineers in Dhaka.

At the council, the party amended its constitution in line with the Representation of the People Order (RPO), ensuring women's representation at different tiers within the party.

JP leader Sadek Siddiqui was elected the party's additional secretary general. The full list of the new committee will be declared soon, said Shahidul Islam.

Led by the secretary general, JP is likely to submit its amended constitution to the Election Commission today, party insiders said.

In his address, JP Chairman Manju called upon all to change the prevailing political culture and to shun politics of confrontation. "We should change the mindset that our political opponent is our political enemy," said the JP chairman.

He added constitutional process would be derailed if the political parties fail to play their role.

JP councillors, leaders and activists from across the country joined the council.

## DHAKA TODAY

### Workshop

UNICEF and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistic jointly organise a workshop to disseminate findings of the joint survey 'Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey'. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 11:30am.

### Meeting

Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) will hold a meeting on nuclear techniques to address the double burden of malnutrition in children. Venue: BAEC auditorium. Time: 9:00am.

## BDR MUTINY Hearing on charge-framing at Feni today

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

The hearing on framing charges against 62 suspected BDR mutineers of 19 Rifle Battalion here at Joylaskar of Dagonbhuiyan Joylaskar will begin today at the Special Court-3 of Bangladesh Rifles.

The three-member court headed by BDR Director General Maj Gen M Mainul Islam will be held at the 19 Rifle headquarters at Joylaskar around 10:00am. Two other members of the court are BDR officials Lt Col Md Akhteruzzaman and Major Md Maqsoodul Alam.

Twenty-seven days ago the court adjourned its proceedings to give the alleged mutineers time to appoint and consult with their lawyers.

BDR sources said, as a representative of the attorney general's office Deputy Attorney General advocate Md Farhad Ahmed would assist the court.

Besides, Judge Advocate

General at BDR headquarters Major Md Nuruzzaman Sheikh, Special Prosecutor advocate Md Monsur Alam and advocate Md Rezaul Karim will also assist the court.

Prosecutor of the case Lt Col Gazi Md Salah Uddin, commander of the 19 Rifle Battalion in Feni, and first witness complainant Subedar Jalal Ahmed, company commander of the same battalion, will place allegations against the accused.

Comilla Sector Commander Col Mirza Ejazur Rahman and Dhaka Sector Commander Col Aziz Ahmed and other high officials of the nearby units will be present to observe the trial.

Major Awal Uddin Ahmed, the officer appointed to support the accused persons in the court, and advocate Kaikobad, who has been appointed by the accused persons, will participate in the proceedings.

## Govt wants to keep 90pc people out of politics

Says MK Anwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP lawmaker MK Anwar yesterday said the government wants to keep 90 percent people of the country away from politics through banning the religion-based political parties.

Although there are religion-based political parties in all the countries of the world, the grand alliance government has dented the religious education from the education policy, he added.

The lawmaker called on all the nationalist forces to resist the government move to ban the religion-based politics.

He made the appeal as the chief guest at a roundtable on 'The success and failure of 365 days of the grand alliance government' organised by

Nagorik Forum at the National Press Club in the city.

Anwar, also a former BNP minister, said the agreement recently signed between the prime ministers of Bangladesh and India is harmful for Bangladesh, as the agreement has protected the interests of India.

"Mongla and Chittagong ports cannot bear the loads of the country's own activities, but our prime minister agreed to open up the ports for India."

Nagorik Forum Chairman Abdullahil Masud in a written statement said a total of 4,133 people were killed and 29,574 injured, and prices of essentials took place for 39 times and 1,59,551 cases were lodged during the first year of the government.

## CIRDAP MINISTERIAL MEET FROM JAN 27 Poverty eradication to dominate agenda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The second ministerial meeting of Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (Cirdap) starts on January 27 in the city to discuss the emerging issues relating to rural development and poverty alleviation in the region.

Ministers and representatives of the 14-member countries of the organisation will discuss issues like globalisation and climate change and find new direction to face the new challenges, said Cirdap Director General Dr Durga P Paudyal while disclosing the meeting schedules at a press conference yesterday.

The meeting is expected to adopt a Dhaka Declaration on rural development on the final day of the two-day meeting on January 28.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to inaugurate the meeting at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. A total of 12 ministers or state ministers from 10 member countries will

participate in the meeting.

The meeting will be preceded by Cirdap executive committee and governing council meetings, donors' meeting and a regional policy dialogue on 'Sustainable rural livelihoods' during January 24-26.

The first ministerial meeting of Cirdap was held in 1987.

A Cirdap statement said the second meeting is being held after 20 years as its member countries felt that there have been a sea of changes in the contemporary national and international policy context and that Cirdap may require repositioning itself in new policy perspectives, approaches, dimensions and strategies of rural development and poverty alleviation to remain contextual and relevant to its member countries.

The press conference held at the Cirdap auditorium was also addressed by KAS Dayananda, director, information and communication division of the regional organisation.



## Journo Ashraf passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ashraf Ali, news editor of The Bangladesh Observer, passed away at his residence yesterday at the age of 67, says a press release.

He had been suffering from brain tumour.

Ashraf Ali, a member of the National Press Club, left behind his wife, two daughters, one son and host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at the journalist colony at Mirpur in the city yesterday. He will be buried at his village home at Sherpur in Mymensingh today.

In a condolence message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said Ashraf Ali, being imbued with the spirit of the liberation war, made significant contribution to journalism in the country.

"With his death, the media suffered a great loss," she said. She also expressed sympathy to the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul.

In a statement, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) President Iqbal Sobahan Chowdhury and Secretary General Altaf Mahmud Chowdhury, Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) President Dr Alamgir and General Secretary Omar Faruk expressed condolence at the death of Ashraf Ali.

National Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud and General Secretary Kamal Uddin Sabuj, Dhaka Sub-Editors' Council and Dhaka Journalist Housing Cooperative Society also expressed condolence.

## Death anniversary

METRO DESK

Today is the seventh death anniversary of Saleha Huq, wife of late Syed Nurul Huq, former director of Power Development Board, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani will be held at the Dhaka residence of her son Engr Syed Ziaul Huque and Barisal residence of her son Dr Syed Maksudul Huq.

Her family members have requested their relatives and well-wishers to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## Begum Rabia Khatoon

METRO DESK



Today is the 3rd death anniversary of Begum Rabia Khatoon, wife of late Haji SM Ilyas, a businessman, and mother-in-law of Engr M Akram Ali of BTV, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at House No. 01-(D-6), Road No. 15, Rang Water Front, and Gulshan-1 in the city after Maghrib prayers.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the programme and pray for salvation of the departed soul.