

Antibiotics given by quacks poses health risks: Study

BSS, Dhaka

A good number of unqualified village doctors practicing allopathy have been prescribing antibiotics for quick recovery from various infections, putting health of rural patients at high risk, an ICDDR, B study reveals.

The study, still going on since the last three years, says the village doctors, almost 95 percent of rural healthcare professionals, are treating common cold, fever, pneumonia and diarrhoea with inappropriate and harmful drugs including antibiotics.

Antibiotics are used to treat bacterial infections, not illnesses such as common cold and flu caused by viruses.

Taking antibiotics without proper instructions can make bacteria resistant to the medicine and harder to treat.

According to doctors, stopping anti-

biotics at early stage of treatment may also increase the risk of more serious infections.

So it is important to take antibiotics only when it is necessary and prescribed only by the qualified doctors.

Taking antibiotics must not be stopped at early or mid stage of treatment, although the symptoms of disease may develop.

"Antibiotics are seen to be recommended by village doctors even for common cold and fever that do not require such medicines," Dr Mohammad Iqbal, one of key investigators of the study, tells BSS.

He added ignorance and moneymaking tendency have been leading a section of quacks to continue such unauthorised practice in rural areas.

Dr Iqbal said 88 percent of antibiotics in rural areas of Cox's Bazar are recommended by village doctors as opposed

to only 5.3 percent by the MBBS doctors.

A minor intervention among quacks at the mid-level of the 42 month study has acted to prevent the malpractice substantially, he added.

He suggested that these quacks should be brought under strong regulatory mechanism to deter recurrence of such practices.

According to the nationwide survey beginning in 2007, the country has a shortage of 60,000 qualified physicians; 280,000 nurses; and 483,000 health technologists.

Thousands of village doctors, who include drug sellers, doctors practicing homeopathy as well as traditional and religious healers, are filling the huge gap of service providers in the field of healthcare.

Reducing inequity a must to attain MDGs

Says expert

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Existing social-economic discrimination among people in the country should be reduced to attain Millennium Development Goals (MDG), said eminent economist Quazi Kholiqzaman Ahmad yesterday.

"Most of the people of the country are lagging behind as they are intensively deprived of basic needs. They can not overcome the deprivation due to social, economic and political reasons," he said.

He was addressing a press conference organised by People's Forum on MDGs (PFM), pointing out some recommendations to attain MDG targets.

Kholiqzaman, also chairman of Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), said what the workers get as wage is meager. Conversely the inflation rate has increased in recent years. As a result, people cannot meet their needs.

Only 10 to 15 percent of people get the chance to study in good educational institutions and get a well paying job. The rest remain deprived while discrimination among people widens, he said.

"What is the benefit to Bangladesh becoming a middle income country if we can not

mitigate this discrimination," questioned Kholiqzaman. The World Bank targeted Bangladesh to become a middle income country by 2015.

Director of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad Nilufar Banu made recommendations for MDG-1 to MDG-8.

She said challenges to MDG-8 are unemployment, declining share of the poorer populace in national income, low per capita income and absence of fair access to international trade.

To overcome the challenges, all forms of trade that distorts subsidies to the advantage of the rich should be stopped and trade policies should be reoriented, she said.

She added that allocated aid to meet basic demands should not be bound under the conditions of free market economy and privatisation.

Nilufar said "MDG-consistent" framework of Debt Sustainability should be applied.

A high level MDG Review Meeting has been scheduled by the UN secretary general as part of the UN's 65th General Assembly from September 20 to 22 to assess progress and achievements of MDG targets of the first decade.

PFM will point out their recommendations unofficially at the assembly.

Cancelling debts under MDG projects demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sixteen organisations led by Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh (equitybd) yesterday demanded cancellation of all foreign debts under the MDG financed projects.

They were speaking at a human chain formed in front of the National Press Club.

Debt per head in the country, now US \$159, will rise to US \$250 by 2015, said the leaders of the organisations at the human chain.

These debts are illegal as they are being used for the rich and ruling class people, they said.

They blamed the developed countries for climate change.

Among others Mostafa Kamal of equitybd, Shamim Aktar of Esho, Fakhruddin Ferdous of DCI, Subol Sarkar of Bhumihin Samity, Mahub Hasan of CDP, Badrul Lam of Krishak Federation, Zayed Iqbal of Bangladesh Krishak Federation addressed the programme.

Azad for more Indo-Bangla cultural exchange

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad yesterday stressed the need for more cultural exchange between Bangladesh and India to strengthen people to people relations between the two countries.

Speaking at a function on the occasion of dance performance of an Indian troupe here yesterday he said cultural exchange would strengthen cultural relations between the two countries as well as bilateral ties in the areas of trade and commerce.

Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre of Indian High Commission in Dhaka arranged the function at National Museum auditorium in the evening.

Noted Indian Bharatnatyam Dance performer Nivedita Parthasharathy led the troupe which has a schedule to stage dance performance in Chittagong and Sylhet this week.

Referring to the support of the people and government of India in the War of Liberation, the information minister said the people of Bangladesh would always greatly remember the generosity of the Indian people who share same culture and heritage.

Chairman of trustee board of the National Museum Azizur Rahman spoke, among others, on the occasion while Indian High Commissioner Rajeev Mitter gave the welcome address.



Speaker Abdul Hamid and former speaker and BNP lawmaker Jamir Uddin Sircar share a lively moment at a programme in the South Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban organised by all-party parliamentary group (APPG) and the national committee for anti-poverty campaign. Parliamentarians, inset, of the ruling party and the main opposition yesterday pledge to work together to make the country poverty-free. (Story on Page 16)



First 'e-service centre' launched

BSS, Dhaka

The 'district e-service centre', the first of its kind in the country, was launched in Jessore on Thursday with a new hope of taking all services of the district administration to the doorsteps of the people.

"In line with the present government's plan to build Digital Bangladesh, the centre was launched in Jessore to reach all kinds of service of the district administration to the doorsteps of the people," Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Abdul Wahab told the inaugural function as the chief guest.

He hoped that such a centre would help lessen harassment of the people in getting services and information of the local administration side by side with materialising Vision-2021 of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

It was informed at the function that all services and information of the district administration will be available through direct application or postal service even online.

"The centre would ensure that all services and information of the administration are available through direct application or postal service even online," said Mohammad Nazrul Islam Khan, national project director of the UNDP-funded Access to Information (A2I)

Programme under the Prime Minister's Office, which set up the centre.

Khan said all works would be completed speedily if all sectors of the country are modernised. "Keeping this in mind the centre was launched so that people can get quick services without any hassle," he said, adding the activities will be later expanded throughout the country.

Parliament members Mostafa Faruq Mohammad, Khan Tipu Sultan, and Khaledur Rahman Tito were present at the function as the special guests.

The function was addressed, among others, by Khulna Divisional Commissioner Mashiur Rahman, UNDP Assistant Country Director KM Morshed, Police Super Dirar Ahmed and local Press Club President Ekramul-Dowla.

Deputy Commissioner of Jessore Nurul Amin presided over the function, while Field Expert of A2I Programme Mostafizur Rahman highlighted different aspects of the programme.

To get services or information of local administration, people have been requested to click the website of district www.dcjessore.gov.bd or contact phone No 0421-65044 or 01753-171797.

Bullet-hit elderly man dies in city

Staff Correspondent

A 70-year-old man early yesterday succumbed to his injuries 15 days after he was bullet hit in crossfire between two gangs in the city.

The deceased Kamrul Islam, a resident of Kaptan Bazar, was caught in crossfire of two groups of criminals in Sutrapur of the capital on September 2.

Kamrul's son Bulu Mia said his father was shot while returning from a Ifar party that night. He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College where he died yesterday.

Forman Ali, operation officer, Sutrapur Police Station said an investigation is going on in this regard though no one has been arrested as of yesterday.

A murder case was filed against unknown criminals with the Sutrapur Police Station.



Water from the pipelines of Wasa leaks onto the road at Shashan Ghat Moar in the city's Lalbagh yesterday. The dirty water from sewerage lines also mixes in the water.

Power generation at Baropukuria resumes

UNB, Dinajpur

Power generation at Baropukuria coal-fired power plant resumed yesterday afternoon after a 4-day suspension following technical glitches.

Both units, which had a combined power generation capacity of 250 megawatt (MW) when the plant went into operation in 2004, were now adding 115MW to national grid after repair of technical faults, said Chief Engineer Biswanath Hawladar.

He said Unit 1, which has a capacity of 125MW, was generating 55MW since 4pm and Unit 2, which resumed generation on Thursday and soon redeveloped technical fault, restarted generation at 4pm yesterday following repair of glitch.

The unit 2 also has an original capacity of generating 125MW.

Power from both the units was being added to national grid he added.

'Improve reproductive health service'

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni yesterday said reproductive health service should be improved to a large extent in the country to achieve millennium development goals (MDG) in health sector.

Reproductive health service was not improved to the expected level, despite remarkable success in other areas of health sector, Dipu Moni said while addressing a discussion in the city.

The discussion was arranged on the occasion of presentation of a research paper on "Implementation of MDGs: role of youths to ensure reproductive health for all" at the auditorium of Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB).

The foreign minister said youths must serve a role to make people aware against early marriage, early age pregnancy, and religious and social superstitions.

The foreign minister urged all to explore possibilities to achieve MDGs in health sector for a healthy nation and a knowledge based society.

He said the government would provide policy services to implement the recommendations from different researches.

Meher Afroz Chumki, chairman of parliamentary standing committee on ministry of women and children affairs, Yuki Suehiro, deputy representative of UNFPA; and KM Tareq, acting director general of FPAB; spoke at the discussion among others.

The research paper was jointly presented by Mahfuza Rahman, Mainul Islam, Kamal Pervez, Parizat Khatun, Azmerina Tanjir, Israt Jahan Baki and Shahana Rahman.

Organisers said the research paper prepared by FPAB will be presented in the coming session of the United Nations General Assembly.

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