

Rain in the last few days has left this potholed road in front of the capital's FDC in a deplorable condition making it difficult for vehicles to drive on. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Moudud hospitalised with chest pain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP lawmaker Moudud Ahmed was admitted to the coronary care unit of United Hospital in the capital's Gulshan yesterday around 3:00pm with severe chest pain.

Doctors said they will need 48 hours to assess the condition of his health, Moudud's personal assistant, Shahidul Islam, told The Daily Star.

The 74-year-old standing committee member of the main opposition party had been complaining of chest pain since morning, when he reached Dhaka by a flight from Sylhet, where he attended the BNP chairperson's rally on Saturday.

Moudud, also a former law minister, had fainted in his Gulshan residence around 1:30pm. Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, the prime minister's energy adviser and Moudud's brother-in-law, visited him at the hospital in the afternoon, said Shahidul.

Diarrhoea figures on rise

Doctors blame waterlogging, temperature

AKRAM HOSEN

The number of patients admitted to the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B) significantly increased in the last two weeks, staying above 500 on most days.

The figure usually hovers between 300 and 350. Till 7:00pm yesterday, the number was 415 and the hospital administration expected it to exceed 450 by midnight.

About 40 percent of the patients have cholera while the rest different forms of diarrhoea.

To cope with the influx, the administration of the diarrhoeal diseases unit, already having around 400 beds, set up another 100 beds under a tent at the hospital premises.

"Every year the number of patients peaks before and after the monsoon," said Dr Azharul Islam Khan, chief physician and head of the diarrhoeal unit at ICDDR, B.

More people suffer from diarrhoea because of the incessant downpour, flood, waterlogging and the heat. "Majority of the patients who come here at the hospital suffer because of water contamination," he said.

The supply water gets contaminated from leaks in pipes. "As long as we don't have safe water supply at every corner of the country, we will have to live with occasional out-

breaks of diarrhoea and cholera," he said.

The government must treat the issue of contaminated water more seriously and do all it can to provide safe drinking water, he said.

Moreover, people of the lower income bracket always take street food, becoming the first victims when the humidity and temperature rise causes food to rot quickly and easily, he said.

He advised people to drink oral saline when they suspect to have diarrhoea and severe dehydration and frequently wash their hands with soap, especially before eating and after coming from the toilet.

The hospital authority also advised people to go to a hospital as soon as possible if drinking oral saline does not help. It also recommended people to boil water before consumption and to avoid street foods and juices if they can help it.

"Since we cannot change all the things that cause diarrhoea, we have to learn how not to die from it," they said.

The highest number of patients to have been admitted this season was 608 on September 1, informed Ramzan Ali, coordinator of the hospital.

Moreover, the highest number of patients to have come from one area on a single day was 43 from Narayanganj on Friday, he said.

POLLS UNDER CG Hearing on writ petition Thursday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday fixed Thursday for holding hearing on a writ petition seeking its directives on the authorities to hold the 10th parliamentary elections under a non-party caretaker government.

The HC bench of Justice Mirza Hussain Haider and Justice Muhammad Khurshid Alam Sarkar fixed the date after accepting the petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Eunos Ali Akond.

Akond on Thursday filed the petition pointing out that the Supreme Court in a judgement on the 13th amendment to the constitution on May 10, 2011 declared the caretaker government system illegal and unconstitutional, but it

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CONTEST IN NEXT ELECTIONS MPs need not resign: EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The sitting MPs need not resign to contest in the next parliamentary polls as their posts are non-profitable, said Election Commissioner Abu Hafiz yesterday.

People holding office of profit cannot contest in the parliamentary polls, according to Representation of People's Orders.

There has been a debate since the 15th amendment to the constitution in June 2011 on whether the posts of MPs are profitable or non-profitable. It created confusion as to whether sitting MPs will have to resign or not to contest in the polls if the election is held without dissolving the parliament.

"Several eminent jurists have informed us that there is a High Court verdict declaring the post of MPs non-profitable. We will have to follow the court's verdict and we are trying to collect the verdict's copy," Abu Hafiz told reporters at his Election Commission (EC) Secretariat office. However, he could not say when the HC verdict was delivered and what it actually said.

On creating a level playing field, he said if the election is held without dissolving the parliament, the EC will amend electoral code of conduct in such a way so that candidates of ruling and opposition parties get equal opportunities in electoral campaign. Replying to a question about the EC's role if BNP resists polls, Abu Hafiz said, "I think those who do politics for the people will not resist polls because it is in the public interest that polls are held."

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A Moments Indulgence Rabindranath Tagore

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