

PROJECT SYNDICATE

The Polio Heroes



THE world's progress in fighting polio might be one of the best-kept secrets in global health. Indeed, my heroes for 2015 are the men and women on the frontline in the fight against the disease.

Since 1988, the number of annual cases of polio worldwide has dropped more than 99.9 percent. The disease used to paralyse an estimated 350,000 children every year; in 2015, the number of cases is likely to be fewer than 100.

Moreover, the year 2015 marked another important milestone in our mission to wipe out this debilitating scourge: For the first time in human history, Africa marked a year without any wild polio cases.

Yet I'm often surprised to hear how many people don't know about this mind-blowing progress.

The credit goes to an international coalition of visionary people: the leaders who make polio eradication a high priority in their countries and the funders who underwrite the work of combating the disease. For example, support from the United Arab Emirates has been indispensable to vaccinating children in Pakistan – along with Afghanistan – the only two countries that have never been polio-free.

But the stunning progress we've seen over the last three decades would not be possible without the volunteers and frontline health workers who go out – sometimes at the risk of their own lives – to make sure every child is protected. Whether navigating floods, hiking up treacherous mountains, or working in some of the world's most conflict-ridden areas, 13 million children are alive and



PHOTO: STAR

walking today because of these inspiring individuals.

That's why I'm proud that the Gates Foundation has created a partnership with the UAE to honour these courageous people through the Heroes of Polio Eradication (HOPE) Awards. The ceremony with His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, was one of the most uplifting events on a trip I

made recently to the Middle East.

It was great to meet with the recipients and celebrate their amazing work. There is Freeda, a Lady Health Worker in Baluchistan, Pakistan, who has supported the polio eradication programme for more than 15 years, across often-dangerous parts of the province. Last year, Freeda was injured and a family member was killed in an attack during a vaccination drive. But her commitment to

helping to vaccinate kids never wavered.

Atta Ullah is a community leader and activist in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, who mobilises support from local leaders and health workers for polio eradication activities. He also works to expose fallacies and debunk rumours about polio vaccines.

I had already met the third recipient, Misbahu Lawan Didi, a couple of years ago in Nigeria. It was great to see him again

and to see him recognised for his efforts. A polio survivor himself, Lawan Didi founded the Para-soccer game – an innovative programme focused on building the self-reliance and self-confidence of 3,000 paraplegics.

Then there was Constant Dedo, a polio consultant for the World Health Organisation in Nigeria, who has worked for almost a decade across South Sudan, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Afghanistan.

Constant's story is one of true dedication to polio eradication. While stationed in Pakistan, Constant was shot and required major surgery, but still continues with his work.

Finally, we honoured Bibi Malika, who is not only an important advocate for polio eradication, but also a community leader and a go-to source for medical wisdom in her hard-to-access community in Helmand, Afghanistan. She has been an inspiring example to other women in her area.

All of these amazing individuals have my admiration and gratitude. Thanks to their efforts – and the endeavours of hundreds of thousands of people like them – we are achingly close to eradicating polio. Now we need to finish the job.

I am optimistic that we will get there soon, through the diligence of those fighting the disease and the generosity of countries like the UAE that make their work possible. And on that day, when we come together to celebrate the end of polio, the world will know that it was possible only because of these heroes.

The writer is co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Copyright: Project Syndicate/Mohammed Bin Rashid Global Initiatives, 2015. www.project-syndicate.org

Exclusive to The Daily Star

Comprehensive Disaster Management The Road to Resilience

MD. ABDUL QUAYYUM

SET at the mouth of three great rivers that flow through the low-lying land to pour their waters into the Bay of Bengal, and because of its special geographical feature, Bangladesh is afflicted by a multitude of natural hazards. The Global Climate Risk Index 2010, covering the period 1990–2008, assesses Bangladesh as the most vulnerable country to extreme climate events; it estimates that, on an average, 8,241 people died each year in Bangladesh while the cost of damage was US \$ 1,189 million per year and loss of GDP was 1.8 percent during the period. According to the Ministry of Environment and Forests, the country currently loses 1.5 percent of its GDP due to increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters as a result of climate change.

Nevertheless, Bangladesh has proven to be remarkably resilient, developing well beyond initial expectations, and has made very good progress with poverty reduction. Gross National Income (GNI) per capita has grown from around US\$100 in 1972 to US\$1,314 in 2015, and the country crossed the World Bank threshold for the lower-middle-income group in 2015.

While natural disasters are unstoppable, Bangladesh is a pioneer in disaster risk reduction led by the government, partnered with different development agencies, NGOs and communities. The country has now become a world leader in disaster preparedness. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in his remarks at the

Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction mentioned the achievements of Bangladesh adding that the country "sets an example on disaster preparedness and management in the world."

The paradigm shift in disaster management began in the 1990s when the Bangladesh government shifted the focus away from the traditional reactive approach of relief and rehabilitation activities to more proactive approaches that included hazard identification and mitigation, community preparedness and integrated response efforts. In 2000, the Government of Bangladesh and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) began exploring opportunities to fast-track the transition from response and relief to comprehensive risk reduction. This resulted in the design of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP), with a vision "to reduce the risk of people, especially the poor and the disadvantaged, from the effects of natural, environment and human induced hazards to a manageable and acceptable humanitarian level and to have in place an efficient emergency response management system." The programme precedes the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015 that came out of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in 2005. CDMP comprises two phases; Phase I (2004–2009), a pilot phase, laid the foundations for long-term disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Phase II (2010–2015) builds upon and

expands Phase-I achievements by ensuring that the institutionalisation of risk reduction and climate change adaptation occurs across all levels of government.

Now the programme is going to end on December 31, 2015, with the following major achievements:

Disaster risk reduction regulations are now included in different ministries and government departments' planning and budgeting processes. Vital policies and frameworks were developed, including the Disaster

Management Act, Disaster Management Policy (Draft), Revised Standing Order on Disasters (SOD), National Plan on Disaster Management (2010–2015), Cyclone Shelter Constructions, Maintenance and Management Guidelines 2011 and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Disaster Management Framework.

The disaster and climate change vulnerability of over 3 million people (half of them are women) of 321 unions under 40 most disaster vul-

nerable districts have been reduced by 1,865 small and medium scale risk reduction schemes. CDMP financed groundbreaking work to map the seismic vulnerability of nine of Bangladesh's biggest cities using the latest remote sensing and statistical analyses techniques. CDMP, in partnership with Bangladesh Teletalk Ltd., Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), and Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) introduced an Interactive Voice Response (IVR)-

based early warning system. CDMP in partnership with FFWC has extended flood forecast lead time from three to five days, potentially saving the lives, livelihoods and assets of 88 million people living in four river basin areas. This has a potential to reduce 20 percent of crop loss in case of a severe flooding. Seventeen universities, comprising of both public and private and 11 training institutes, including the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC), introduced

certificates, diplomas, honours and masters courses in disaster management with support from CDMP. CDMP has financed more than 300 individual pieces of research, operational guidelines, training manuals and related knowledge products concerning DRR and CCA. These products have supported the paradigm shift of disaster management practices in the country and contributed to the ongoing professionalisation of government officials and NGO workers.

CDMP supported Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence in training and development of 26,465 urban community volunteers. These volunteers have successfully taken part in search and rescue operation of fire, landslide and building collapse incidents including catastrophic Rana Plaza (April 24, 2013) rescue operation. CDMP also supported Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) to expand their operation in South-West coast of Bangladesh through training and development of 6,540 volunteers. CPP played the fore front role during tropical storm Mahasen (2013) response that successfully evacuated 1.1 million people to safe shelters. (Source: UNDP Website).

On November 24-25, 2015, a two-day knowledge fair and workshop on disaster risk reduction and climate change action was organised in Dhaka by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief in association with CDMP, to mark the end of the 10 year programme. The event was held at a critical juncture of global development discourse – it

followed the Sustainable Development Goals Summit that took place in September, and preceded the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) and also the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which was adapted as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, right after the 10-year international disaster risk reduction plan - The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 (HFA).

But the road to resilience is not ending here in Bangladesh, as a recent scientific report released by the World Bank says, Bangladesh will be among the most affected countries in South Asia by an expected 2°C rise in the world's average temperatures in the next decades, with rising sea levels and more extreme heat and more intense cyclones threatening food production, livelihoods, and infrastructure as well as slowing the reduction of poverty. The report cited Bangladesh as one of the "potential impact hotspots" threatened by "extreme river floods, more intense tropical cyclones, rising sea levels and very high temperatures" (Source: World Bank's website).

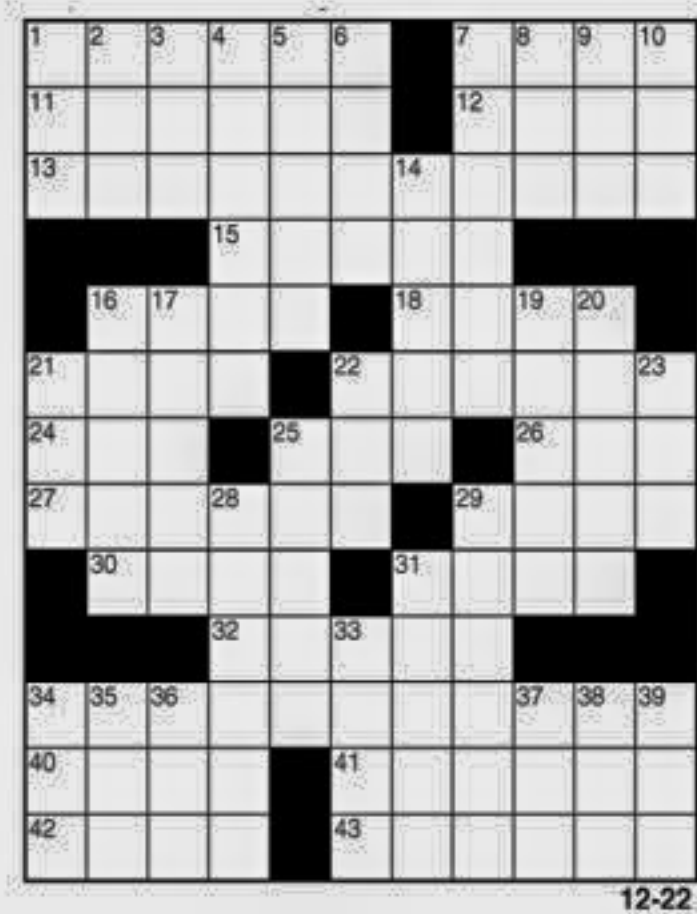
While the lives of everyone in the country will be altered by climate change, the impacts of progressive global warming will fall hardest on the poor. Continued action, beyond CDMP, is therefore much needed to "Build Back Better."

The writer is a development communications expert. Email: Quayyum@gmail.com

According to the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Bangladesh currently loses 1.5 percent of its GDP due to increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters as a result of climate change.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Approached menacingly
 - 7 Present
 - 11 Grove fruit
 - 12 Land unit
 - 13 Christmas treat
 - 15 Central
 - 16 Easter lead-in
 - 18 Bike part
 - 21 Inlet
 - 22 Seasonal spice
 - 24 Wisdom bringer
 - 25 Tim, to Bob Cratchit
 - 26 Pollen collector
 - 27 One of Santa's team
 - 29 Top-rated
 - 30 Put away
 - 31 "Chestnuts roasting on an open --"
 - 32 King or czar
 - 34 Christmas treat
 - 40 Wee bit
 - 41 Old English coin
 - 42 Yuletide
 - 43 Shells out
- DOWN**
- 3 Fellow
 - 4 Car part
 - 5 Deal maker
 - 6 Small seabird
 - 7 Top story
 - 8 Rink surface
 - 9 Monk's title
 - 10 Baseball's Williams
 - 14 Started
 - 16 Company symbols
 - 17 News item
 - 19 Fossil resin
 - 20 Baseball's Pee Wee
 - 21 Heel
 - 22 And not
 - 23 Acquire
 - 25 Conclude successfully
 - 28 Ordinary
 - 29 One under par
 - 31 Disgusted
 - 33 Big galoots
 - 34 Seamstress' aid
 - 35 Old card game
 - 36 Salt Lake City player
 - 37 Where there was no room
 - 38 Homer's neighbor
 - 39 Methane, for one



YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

HOOPS MINTS
 ENDUP OVERT
 MADRE SYRIA
 ADVASE DOG
 VICEROYS
 ASHY SEURAT
 STOOP DRONE
 TOPROW VANE
 SPACEMAN
 SAM FRAY
 PLATO SODAS
 ADIEU TRACE
 NADAL ESSEX

A Day-long Workshop on Financial Statement Analysis for Securities Valuation An International Perspective

Program Type: A Day-long Workshop
Date: Saturday, 9:00AM–05:00PM, December 26, 2015
Resource Person: Dr Shahed Imam, Associate Professor of Accounting, Warwick Business School, the University of Warwick
Eligibility Criteria: The workshop is designed for financial analysts, investment managers, capital market journalists and investors in general. Applicants are expected to have graduate degrees from any recognized university in any discipline. A working experience in corporate business, capital market journalism and academic/research institutions is desirable.
Registration: Prior registration is required. Interested applicants shall apply in prescribed form available online at <http://acmd.com.bd>. Filled-in applications are required to be submitted to the program office via E-mail to samirafin05@gmail.com by December 25, 2015.
Fees: Interested candidates shall pay a fee of Tk. 2,000 each payable by account payee check or a pay order in favor of Accounting for Capital Market Development (ACMD). Payment can be made on the program date.
Certification: Participants shall receive a certificate of participation from the University of Dhaka at the end of the program.
Partnerships and Collaborations:
Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE)
Bangladesh Merchant Bankers Association (BMBA)
Capital Market Journalists Forum (CMJF)
The Financial Express

Organized by:
Accounting for Capital Market Development (ACMD)
 Department of Accounting & Information Systems (AIS)
 University of Dhaka, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh
 Program Director: Dr. Mizanur Rahman
 Project Office: Room#107, Academic Building, Faculty of Business Studies
 Please contact Ms. Samira Siddika at samirafin05@gmail.com or visit <http://acmd.com.bd> and <http://www.facebook.com/AccCMD> for further information about the training program.