



Medicare scare

Policy dialogue told out-of-pocket expense 63pc, medicine cost accounts for two-thirds of the amount

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Medicine cost eats up more than two-thirds of the money people directly pay for health service, pushing those with chronic diseases towards poverty, said speakers at a policy dialogue yesterday.

The out-of-pocket (OOP) payment is about 63 percent of total health expenditure in the country, said Bushra Alam, senior health specialist of the World Bank. And more than two-thirds of the amount is spent in buying medicine, she noted.

"Because of the burden [of OOP payment]," said economist Hossain Zillur Rahman, "about 40 lakh people are pushed into poverty risk every year."

The OOP health expenditure is a patient's payment from his own pocket straight to the healthcare provider.

Besides OOP, unplanned urbanisation, lack of inter-linkage between health service facilities, lack of reliable health data and the rise and prevention of non-communicable disease were also discussed by health practitioners, researchers and policy makers at the dialogue.

Organised by Poverty and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) at the capital's LGED Bhaban in Agargaon, the programme highlighted "Health challenges of Sustainable Development Goals: Path to Universal Health Coverage in Bangladesh".

Hossain Zillur, executive chairman of PPRC, said unnecessary prescriptions and superfluous diagnostics are some of the unwelcome consequences of the growing pharmaceutical industry in the country.

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Virat Kohli lived through a thunderous spell from Pakistan speedster Mohammad Amir and scripted a masterful 49 to guide India to a five-wicket win over Pakistan in their Asia Cup T20 encounter at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

A Mirpur anticlimax

India thrash archrivals Pakistan

AL-AMIN

Wherever India and Pakistan meet on a cricketing plane, it is considered as the mother of all battles. And it was no exception when the two bitter neighbours renewed their rivalry at the home of Bangladesh cricket in Mirpur last night.

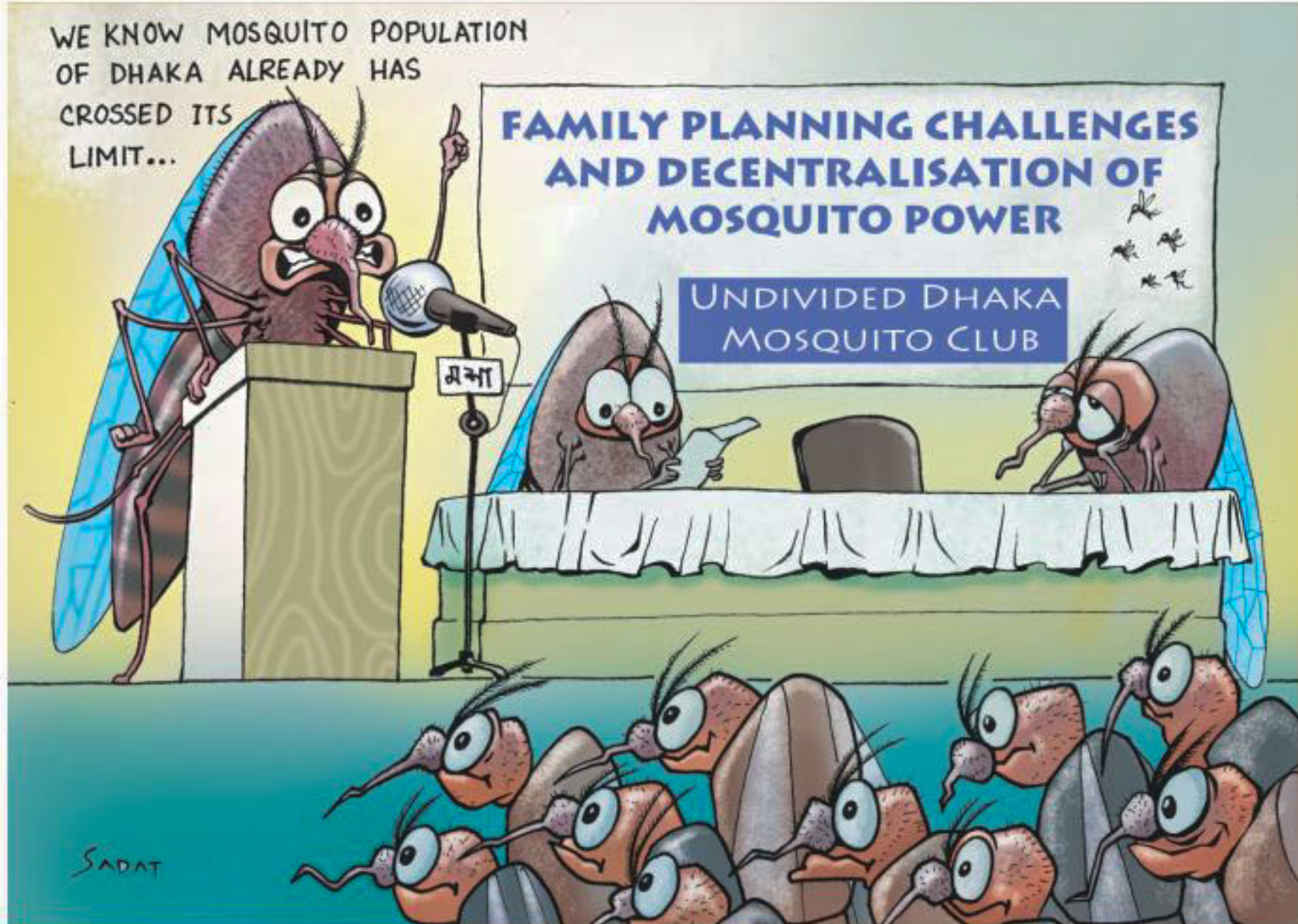
A near-packed holiday crowd, thunderous roars from two distinctively divided sections and a world audience zoomed in through their TV sets -- a common phenomenon that has made this battle so special.

But Saturday night will go down as a mismatch and an utter disappointment for the paying public in the annals of the rivalry. India won the game by five wickets with 27 balls to spare.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 2

Mosquitoes go out of control

Dhaka South lacks chemical to fight the menace; North fails to clean waterbodies



HELEMUL ALAM

City dwellers have been facing severe mosquito problems for the last couple of weeks, as the two city corporations have failed to take timely action in controlling the booming mosquito population.

Until Tuesday, mosquito control drives in Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) were almost absent due to a shortage of adulticide and larvicide -- chemicals used for killing mosquitoes.

The DSCC also failed to clean the water bodies in its areas in time although the cleaning should have been done well before the season of culex mosquito starts. Shamiul Hossain Shimul, a resident of Mirpur-13, alleged that he could not sleep

at night due to the blood sucking insects. "I use mosquito repellents, but those cannot ensure relief for a long time. The most disgusting part is when mosquitoes whine near my ears."

Selimul Alam Mukti, a Mirpur-12 resident, said, "It's very difficult to stay at home without using mosquito coils or sprays. I have to keep the ceiling fan switch on almost all the time to drive mosquitoes away."

He said the intensity of mosquito infestation had increased over the last couple of weeks.

Javed Akhtar, a resident of Kalshi in Mirpur, said "Mosquitoes are everywhere, be it indoors or outside. Mosquito net is a must if I want to sleep."

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Tigers take on Lanka today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh, with one win from two Asia Cup T20 games, will take on Sri Lanka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur at 7:30pm today. Sri Lanka won their only match against UAE, so they have a little more breathing space, but with tough matches to come for both sides, today's encounter is an important one in their quest to reach the final.

Sri Lanka have not yet been exposed to Bangladesh's increased prowess, which they showed by beating Pakistan, India and South Africa in ODI series last year. The teams last played in the 2015 World Cup down under, a match which Sri Lanka won handily.

READ MORE ABOUT THE MATCH ON PAGE 14

RSF condemns cases against Star editor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to stop what it said was "hounding" of The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam over his comment that, like many other newspapers and TV stations, he published information in 2007 that seemed to implicate Hasina in corruption, which could not be verified independently.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

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