



Fourteen-month-old Afrin at the neurosurgery ward of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Suffering from a brain tumour, she should be in a Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) but the hospital does not have the facility. Afrin's family cannot afford to keep her in PICUs of private hospitals. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Intensive care scanty for kids

FROM PAGE 1

A doctor working at the unit said the weight and the size of a baby usually triple after a year of his or her birth. So the tubes meant for artificial ventilation at the NICU would not fit a one-year-old.

Tofazzel Hossain, an ICU specialist working at the hospital, said children should not be admitted to the ICU meant for adult patients for some obvious reasons.

For instance, he said, the ventilators at the ICU were not designed for children. A child usually inhales 150ml to 200ml of oxygen while breathing against 500ml of oxygen inhaled by an adult on average.

"But, the ventilators at the ICU for adults can't supply oxygen below the 200ml mark. On the other hand, children won't be able to take in the extra oxygen, if given."

Asked for comments on Afrin, Prof Zillur Rahman, the immediate past head of the neurosurgery department at the hospital, said doctors referred patients to ICU observing his or her condition.

However, many such patients receive treatment at the wards as they cannot afford treatment at the ICU. Some of them do recover with special attention from doctors, he added.

But for patients needing the ICU facilities, even a few minutes can be fatal.

Take the example of Tasfir Alam Rabbi, a one-and-a-half-year-old boy who suffered severe head injuries in a road accident in Narsingdi on

February 12.

Hours after the accident, he was rushed to the DMCH around 11:00am. As his condition deteriorated, doctors referred him to PICU, Mohamad Rubel, a friend of the child's father Nur Alam, told The Daily Star that day.

"As we asked the doctors to shift the child to the PICU immediately, they said they don't have one. They told us to take him to a private hospital instead."

Later in the day, Rabbi died at a private hospital in Mohammadpur.

Talking to this newspaper recently, Rubel said the boy could have been saved had he been given immediate treatment at the government hospital.

"Rabbi was at the hospital for around five hours. Again, much of the crucial time was wasted looking for the PICU outside," he lamented.

Talking to The Daily Star, another ICU specialist, said, "On several occasions, we found ourselves in helpless situations. It happened when we found out that a child needs to be referred to the PICU at a private hospital and the family is not capable of bearing the medical expenses."

The Daily Star has talked to the authorities of two city private hospitals, which have the PICU facility. One of the hospitals charges PICU patients Tk 20,000 for a day while the other charges between Tk 30,000 to 40,000.

Contacted, DMCH Deputy Director Khwaja Abdul Gafur said PICU was a very urgent need for the hospital and that they have recently requested the health ministry for it.

"We want to set up a PICU ward at the hospital," he said, adding that the hospital currently has a 35-bed neonatal ICU, and a 20-bed ICU for adults, which were not sufficient.

Talking to this newspaper, Brig Md Jalal Uddin, director of CMCH where a 10-bed PICU was set up under a joint initiative of the hospital and PHP Group in 2015, said the facility was inadequate as compared to the number of patients.

Mesbah Uddin Ahmed, a former secretary general of Bangladesh Paediatric Society, said every government hospital must have a PICU.

He also said on several occasions, they had requested the authorities for setting up PICUs at hospitals but the requests "fell on deaf ears".

Contacted, Abul Kaiser Mahmood Saiedur Rahman, director (hospital and clinics) of Directorate General of Health Services, said they could not open PICU at the hospitals mainly due to lack of trained manpower. "It is very difficult to get skilled manpower."

About PICU, he said only child specialists were not enough for running those. Doctors need specific post graduation degrees and training, which is a long process.

He also said, "The government has made a decision to establish ICU and NICU at every medical college and district hospital gradually within the next five years. We have plans to open PICUs and SCNUs [special care newborn units] too."

Where do they get money?

PM asks; wonders why educated youths choosing wrong path

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed wonder at the militants getting money and arms and being patronised as many students were choosing the wrong path of militancy after going abroad for higher education.

"Now the question is who are providing them [militants] with arms, who are giving money and who are encouraging them? Students are taking the path of militancy after going to many developed countries," she said.

The PM was addressing a programme at her office, marking the distribution of Bangladesh University

Grants Commission's (UGC) gold medals among the winner students of 2013 and 2014.

Hasina said such incidents were taking place in some local educational institutions as well.

She called upon the vice-chancellors and teachers, present at the programme, to keep a close watch on their students' activities, where they go and why they remain absent in classes for a long time.

The PM said Islam is a religion of peace and it never allows killing any innocent person.

Criticising the trend of being suicide attackers, Hasina said committing

suicide is a great sin and it is not possible to mix the great sin (suicide) with the great religion. "The people of Bangladesh are pious, not fanatics."

People of every religion will perform their rituals peacefully and independently in Bangladesh as it was built with a non-communal spirit, she told the function.

Termining drug addiction a social menace, she stressed the need for recovering children from drug addiction. The guardians and teachers have to take greater responsibility in this regard, the PM added.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid also spoke at the programme.

Five jailed for court

FROM PAGE 1

All the convicts are staff of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court. Of them, muster-roll clerks Alamgir Hossain and Jahangir Hossain are absconding.

The court also fined each of them Tk 20,000, in default of which they will suffer two months more in jail.

Each of the convicts will have to serve seven years in jail of the 14 years of prison sentences, as the punishment for the offences -- one for the forgery of record and the other for making fake documents -- would be concurrent.

In the judgment, the judge observed that the main duty of ACC official Shafiqullah, who investigated the case, was to find out those involved in forging the bail orders and bring the offences committed by the culprits before the common people. But he did not do it intentionally.

Moreover, he did not include some important persons, including another Bench Assistant Nure Alam of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka, as witnesses in the charge sheet.

"If such an investigation officer like Shafiqullah is working in the ACC as an investigator, the image of that organisation must be questionable," the judge observed.

He also ordered to send a copy of the judgment to the ACC chairman for taking legal action against Shafiqullah.

The judge also said Moshleuddin and Naim as government employees did not discharge their duties, adding that, in collusion with three muster-roll clerks committed the offences.

So, if the example is not set by awarding them maximum punishment, other officials and employees will be encouraged to commit such crimes.

The court also observed that by giving exemplary punishment to the accused, the prestige and image of the judiciary could be upheld and people's faith in the judiciary could be kept intact, the judge added.

According to the case documents, 106 accused in 76 criminal cases, now pending with Dhaka Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, were released from prison in five months following the fake bail orders made by Moshleuddin and Naim.

Of the 106 accused, fourteen in 14 cases were released from jail in January, 20 accused in 10 cases in February, 20 accused in 14 cases in March, 16 accused in 12 cases in April and 40 accused in 26 cases in May 2015 through the fake bail orders.

As the 106 accused managed to come out of prison, they never appeared before the court and were hiding with arrest warrants against them, Mahmud Hossain Jahangir, public prosecutor of the bail forgery case, told The Daily Star yesterday.

On July 12 in 2015, Obaidul Karim Akando, an official of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court, lodged a case with Kotwali police against the two court staff -- Moshleuddin and Naim.

Hours after filing of the case, police arrested Moshleuddin on the court premises, but Naim managed to flee.

On August 23, Rapid Action Battalion arrested Naim in the capital's Adabar area.

Later, police held muster-roll clerk Ismail. Naim and Ismail gave confessional statements before magistrates on different dates.

On March 15 last year, the ACC pressed charges against the five.

AL man elected in Liton's constituency

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Awami League (AL)-nominated Golam Mostafa Ahmed was elected yesterday in by-polls to the Gaibandha-1 constituency, which fell vacant following the murder of the ruling party lawmaker Manzurul Islam last December.



Golam Mostafa

Golam bagged 90,169 votes, beating his nearest rival, Jatiya Party-nominated barrister Shamim Haider Patwari, by 30,069 votes.

Returning Officer GM Shahatab Uddin announced this around 9:00pm, some four hours after polling ended with 49.97 percent of the over 3.3 lakh votes being cast amid a few scattered incidents of violence.

Golam told journalists at Chandipur around 1:30pm that voting was being held in a fair and peaceful manner. Shamim alleged to The Daily Star over the phone that vote rigging occurred in some places.

Visiting seven polling stations between 9:00am and 2:00pm, this correspondent hardly found any crowd.

Most voters he talked to credited the peaceful environment to the presence of over 4,000 law enforcers. Till 11:00am, one centre in Kismat Haldia Government High School witnessed 210 of its 3,408 votes being cast.

CASTING HER VOTE AT THE UTTAR SHAHABAJ GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOL CENTRE, LITON WIFE'S SYEDA KHURSHIDA

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Indian army chief arrives on March 30

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invitation of his Bangladesh counterpart Gen Abu Belal Muhammad Shafiq Huq.

Though diplomatic sources in Dhaka said this would be a return visit by the Indian army chief after Gen Belal's September 2015 tour of India, officials said the visit holds a special significance in the light of improving bilateral military cooperation.

According to diplomats, officials and foreign relations experts, the Indian army chief would travel to Dhaka apparently to firm up the defence deal expected to be signed on April 8 following the official talks between Hasina and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Hasina will visit India on April 7-10 when the two countries would also ink at least 30 agreements, Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) and documents, heavily focused on development projects in the areas of connectivity, infrastructure and energy.

"We have so far finalised about 18-20 deals which can be signed anytime...we are expecting to complete

finalising over 30 deals before the beginning of the PM's visit. We have around 50 proposed deals in hand," said a foreign ministry official.

During his first visit to Bangladesh, Gen Rawat will call on President Abdul Hamid, PM Hasina and hold meetings with top officials of the armed forces to cement the defence relations with Bangladesh.

There had been regular exchange of high level bilateral visits by defence officials from both the countries in recent years.

Former Bangladesh Army chiefs Gen Moeen U Ahmed (ret'd), Gen Md Abdul Mubeen (ret'd) and Gen Iqbal Karim Bhuiyan (ret'd) visited India in February 2008, November 2011 and April 2013. Besides, the chiefs of Navy and Air Force, Border Guard Bangladesh and Bangladesh Coast Guard had been to India last year.

On the other hand, former Indian army chief Gen Dalbir Singh Suhag (ret'd) visited Bangladesh in June 2015 and former Indian Air Force chief Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha came here in February last year.

Former Indian defence minister Manohar Parrikar made his first visit

to Bangladesh on Nov 30-Dec 1 last year.

DEFENCE COOPERATION DEAL Dhaka and New Delhi have agreed to sign an MoU on bilateral defence cooperation.

Wishing anonymity, a senior foreign ministry official said: "We are going to sign an MoU on defence cooperation with India on April 8... there is nothing contentious [in the deal] and no threat to our defence and sovereignty. It's not at all like the umbrella defence agreement which we signed with China."

Ruling out rumours about the deal, he said Bangladesh and India already set a mechanism to cooperate in security and defence fields. The proposed MoU would help the two neighbours enhance cooperation to enable their forces to fight against terrorism and violent extremism, he added.

The official, who deals with the India-Bangladesh matters, said the armed forces of the two countries collaborate with each other in many areas, but there was no such bilateral deal. That's why the two countries were considering institutionalising

the existing cooperation mechanism.

Asked about the salient features of the proposed defence deal, an Indian diplomat in New Delhi told to The Daily Star that agreements were expected on the lines of cross-border cooperation between the two countries' agencies. Any deal with respect to supply of defence equipment was highly unlikely.

He said the proposed defence deal was being prepared to the "comfort level" of Bangladesh and there would be no element in it which might not be suitable to Bangladesh's needs.

About Indian's offer of defence line-of-credit, the diplomat said his country made the offer purely to buy equipment needed for UN peace-keeping operations, anti-land mining vehicles, medical and disaster relief efforts and search and rescue operations etc.

He said New Delhi was ready to cooperate and collaborate with Bangladesh's defence forces to set up manufacturing and service centres for the common defence platforms that both countries possess, like the Russian defence hardware.

Recipe for happiness

FROM PAGE 1

into account GDP per capita, healthy life expectancy, freedom, generosity, social support and absence of corruption in government or business.

A global initiative launched by UN in 2012, the SDSN in its new report said their previous reports considered evidence that good governance has enabled countries to sustain or improve happiness, even during an economic crisis.

"Results presented there suggested not just that people are more satisfied with their lives in countries with better governance, but also that actual changes in governance quality since 2005 have led to significant changes in the quality of life," it asserted.

Some other latest global indexes on corruption, freedom of the press, economic freedom and rule of law support the findings of the Happiness Index.

indexes by Transparency International, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland and Finland were always top scorers.

Their positions also looked bright in the press freedom indexes released by Reporters Without Border, economic freedom indexes by the Heritage Foundation and global rule of law index by World Justice Project.

On the other hand, those countries scored poor in happiness index remained at the bottom of the indexes released by TI, Reporters Without Border, Heritage Foundation and World Justice Project.

Bangladesh could not score well in any of the indexes. The country ranked as 15th most corrupt country or 145 among 176 countries in TI index; it ranked 103 out of 113 countries in the rule of law index by World Justice Project.

Bangladesh could not perform well in economic and press freedom indexes

released a few months ago. It ranked 128 among 180 countries in economic index while it's position was 144th in press freedom index.

The underlying messages of those indexes are the same: democracy, good governance and rule of law can reduce corruption, improve quality of people's lives, and increase their happiness.

For our poor ranking in economic freedom index, Heritage Foundation says: "The fragile rule of law continues to undermine economic development in Bangladesh." It also blamed corruption and repeated political crises for constraining economic dynamism.

And according to the World Justice Project, effective rule of law reduces corruption, improves public health, enhances education, alleviates poverty, and protects people from injustices and dangers large and small.

There are numerous studies suggesting that corruption increased poverty,

deprived people of basic needs and proper nutrition. Thus it reduces people's life expectancy too.

The countries with little tolerance for corruption and government and strongly sustaining rule of law performed well in the index. People of those countries are happier than other countries.

So, happiness index should not be considered in isolation. The happiness index is linked to other global indexes. Our poor ranking in the Happiness Index once again expose the poor governance, weak rule of law and deficiency in democracy.

Policymakers of our government need to know the causes of happiness and misery of people. They should work more to improve governance and quality of rule of law.

If they do so, people will be benefited and the country's ranking in all global indexes including the Happiness Index will look better.

Bangladesh scores low

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The intentional use of wastewater in aquaculture is declining worldwide due to safety concerns and loss of land areas close to urban markets.

"Unintentional waste-fed aquaculture occurs in Bangladesh through fish farming in water bodies containing faecally contaminated water."

According to the report, on an average, high-income countries treat about 70 percent of the municipal and industrial wastewater they generate. That ratio drops to 38 percent in upper middle-income countries and to 28 percent in lower middle-income countries. In low-income countries, only 8 percent undergoes treatment of any kind.

These estimates support the often-cited approximation that, globally, over 80 percent of all wastewater is discharged without treatment.

"In a world where demands for freshwater are continuously growing, and where limited water resources are increasingly stressed by over-abstraction, pollution and climate change, neglecting the opportunities arising from improved wastewater management is nothing less than unthinkable," the report said.

Currently, two-thirds of the world's population live in areas that experience water scarcity for at least one month a year.

Referring to the World Economic Forum 2016 report, water crisis was determined as the global risk of highest concern for people and economies for the next 10 years.

On current trends, the UN programme forecasts that water demand -- for industry, energy and an extra billion people -- will increase 50 percent by 2030.

The United Nations World Water Development Report is the UN's flagship report on water. It is published each year with a focus on different strategic water issues. The title of the 2017 report is "Wastewater: The untapped resource". The launch of the report is at the core of the World Water Day celebrations.

'1 IN 4 CHILDREN TO LIVE WITH WATER SCARCITY BY 2040' One in four of the world's children will live in areas of extremely high water stress by 2040, the Unicef warned

yesterday.

In a report titled, "Thirsting for a Future: Water and Children in a Changing Climate," the Unicef, said, "By 2040, 1 in 4 children -- 600 million children -- will live in areas of extremely high water stress. It should come as no surprise that the poorest, most disadvantaged children will suffer the most."

The report said an estimated 600 million people live in low-elevation coastal zones that will be affected by progressive salinisation and that Bangladesh is one of the worst victims of salinisation in water.

"One of the countries worst affected by saltwater intrusion and groundwater salinisation is Bangladesh, where approximately 20 million people living in coastal areas are already affected by drinking water salinity."

The report said by 2050, soil salinity in the country is projected to increase by an average of 26 percent, with increases above 55 percent expected in some areas.

Citing an example of aquifer innovations in Bangladesh, the report said because of the country's low-lying topography and its location on the Bay of Bengal, most of Bangladesh's coastal communities are exposed to frequent flooding caused by cyclonic storm surges.

With the goal of establishing more reliable drinking water sources for such communities, Unicef and partners have worked with the Government of Bangladesh to pilot a Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) system, it said.

Each MAR system can serve several hundred people and can be easily maintained by the communities themselves. Storing freshwater in the ground is an important climate-resilient option that can help overcome the impacts of cyclonic surges.

The MAR system provides safe water when other traditional sources have been damaged by floods. The approach has been scaled up and currently more than 100 MAR systems are operational.

Their success so far indicates that the MAR system has the potential to be used throughout Bangladesh and in low-lying areas around the world, said the report.