

Doctors to chart disease pattern

By Paawana Poonacha/TNN

Bangalore: From next year, doctors doing private practice in Karnataka will have some additional job. They will have to fill up self-addressed, printed post cards issued by the health department every week, detailing cases of diseases that they treat in their clinics and nursing homes.

The health department's initiative to rope in private medical practitioners is part of the Rs 28-crore World Bank-aided Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), which will be executed state-wide from January 2005. The weekly bulletins, thus gathered from private doctors, will be documented to predict disease patterns and provide preventive/ radical treatment for patients.

The World Bank has chosen nine states in all for IDSP, and the programme in Karnataka will particularly survey prevalence of 13 diseases and other healthcare issues. It aims to bring down prevalence rate of these diseases to "acceptable standards" as declared by WHO. "Hitherto, data collected from government hospitals was just a rudimentary effort that

catered to only 30 per cent of the disease-surveillance pattern in the state. As private medical practice accounts over 60 per cent of healthcare service in the state, IDSP is largely banking on private doctors' cooperation for its success," State Health Commissioner Mohammed Sanaula points out.

The surveillance programme includes training over 25,000 health workers statewide to draw a plan of action after analysing reasons and patterns of disease outbursts. For this purpose, the existing 249 surveillance units and medical colleges are being upgraded with on-line networking.

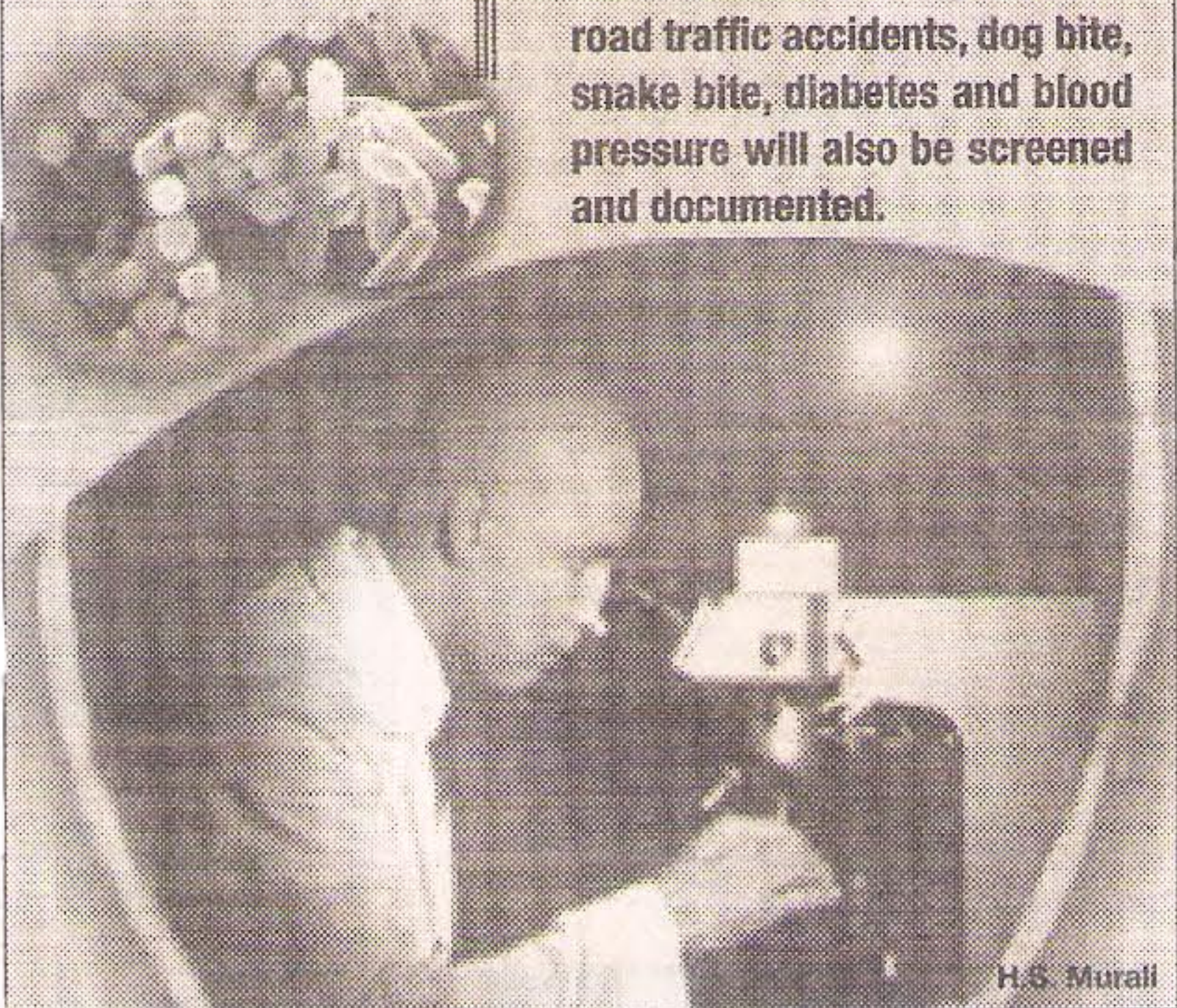
The World Bank is expected to back IDSP for five years following which the state health department will execute the programme by raising its own resources.

According to the commissioner, following IDSP's preliminary survey of disease pattern over one year, the department is setting up blood testing units in areas where there is high prevalence of malaria and other blood-related infections, increase number of Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centres in areas where there is high prevalence of HIV, and so on.

DISEASES under WATCH

● Gastroenteritis, cholera, typhoid, viral hepatitis, Handigodu Syndrome Disease, Kyasanur Forest Disease, leptospirosis (rat fever), tuberculosis, plague, HIV, Sexually Transmitted Disease, filaria (Japanese encephalitis), and polio.

● Other healthcare issues like road traffic accidents, dog bite, snake bite, diabetes and blood pressure will also be screened and documented.



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