



Eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain speaks at a press conference organised by Supreme Court Bar Association at bar hall room in the city yesterday. On his left is Barrister Amir-ul-Islam and on his right is Mahbubey Alam.

PHASE-II OF NEONATAL TETANUS ELIMINATION 3 m women to be vaccinated

Approximately 3 million women of child bearing age (15-49 years) will be vaccinated during the second phase of the Neonatal Tetanus Elimination (NTE) campaign starting November 5, says a press

release. The government with support from Unicef, the Government of Japan and other partners is mobilising supplies, health workers, volunteers and the public to successfully implement the two-week-long campaign.

The second phase of the campaign will take place in selected unions at upazila level and some wards in municipalities and city corporations across the country. These unions/urban wards have been selected on the basis of neonatal tetanus cases reported between July 2005 and June 2006.

A total of 471 unions in 151 upazilas under 51 districts and some wards under 14 municipalities and five city corporations have been earmarked for the campaign.

The campaign will work through routine outreach EPI (Expanded Programme on Immunisation) sites and will also

cover high schools, colleges, madrasas, garment factories where women aged 15-49 are either studying or working.

The Government of Bangladesh, however, aims to achieve the neonatal tetanus elimination goal by 2007.

Bangladesh has already achieved significant progress towards elimination of neonatal tetanus with 86% (CES 2005) of children now protected against the disease at birth. The Government of Japan, through Unicef, has made outstanding contributions since 1996 to increase the coverage of vaccination in Bangladesh.

Japan provided 239 million Yen (Tk 13.38 crore/ \$2.3 million) for Maternal-Neonatal Tetanus (MNT) and measles supplementary immunization activities. With this support Unicef procured 12 million doses of TT vaccines, 12 million AD syringes and 86,000 safety boxes.



Deputy Chief of Japan Embassy Yonezo Fukuda hands over vaccines for the second phase of the Neonatal Tetanus Elimination Campaign 2006 to Secretary of Health and Family Welfare Ministry AKM Zafar Ullah Khan at a ceremony held at the ministry's conference room in the city yesterday.

ASK greets Irene Khan on winning Sydney Peace Prize

Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), a human rights organisation, yesterday congratulated Irene Khan, secretary general of Amnesty International, on her winning the 2006 Sydney Peace Prize, says a press release.

The Sydney Peace Foundation awarded the prize to Irene Khan for "her courageous advocacy of human rights and her skills in identifying violence against women as a massive injustice and therefore a priority in campaigning for peace".

In a statement, ASK said Irene's winning of the prize would inspire all to work together towards ensuring the human rights of all across the globe and play an important role in stepping up the human rights movement worldwide.

Ras Mela begins tomorrow

Dublar Char fishermen unhappy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ras Mela, the biggest festival for the fishing community in the south of the country, will begin at Dublar Char in the Sundarbans tomorrow.

But the festival will be a low-key affair this year as the fishermen have decided not to set up any idols for this purpose in protest against the government's inaction during last month's tidal surge that left 1,200 fishermen dead.

The community leaders of Adorkol village said they would perform their rituals with Ghat Puja, although the idols of deities are one of the key attractions of the 150-year-old tradition.

The three-day celebrations begin

with devotees taking a dip in the water of the Bay at dawn after the full moon, known as Ras Purnima. The devotees believe that the bath would wipe out all their sins.

People irrespective of faiths and professions join the biggest celebrations in the region.

Around 1,200 fishermen drowned or went missing due to the tidal surge in September last, but the government did not take any initiative to rescue them or recover their bodies, said the community leaders.

They also criticised the activities of Rapid Action Battalion, saying that the Rab members assaulted many fishermen last month in the name of drive against the pirates.