

## WHO praises Dhaka for adopting new TB control strategy

The World Health Organization (WHO) has a word of appreciation for Bangladesh for the multi-million dollar tuberculosis control now being carried out in the country and wished success in its battle with this dreadful but curable disease, reports BSS.

"I am impressed in the commitment of your government to control T.B. which is world's number one killer disease," said Dr A Koshi, head of WHO's tuberculosis programme.

Dr Koshi, who was here last week to lead a two-member team to assess the progress of the programme in the country, said Bangladesh is the first country in the region to implement WHO's new strategy to control T.B. Strong governmental interest coupled with political will has helped Bangladesh take up the programme ahead of others in the region, he added.

Styled as "further development of tuberculosis and leprosy services in Bangladesh," the 30 million US dollars World Bank-aided programme

has begun in the country nearly a year ago with facilities created at five thanas of five districts in the five divisions in the first phase. It is planned to cover the entire thanas, during the programme period which spans over six years.

Of the three million global population who die annually from T.B., 80,000 are Bangladeshis. TB is the second killer disease in Bangladesh after diarrhoea.

Dr Kochi said that with the discovery of strong and effective medicine and taking of some other points into consideration, the concept hitherto practised (treating the patients at hospitals) has been replaced by keeping him or her at homesteads with constant monitoring till fully cured. Study found such treatment is the most cost effective in treating TB, he said.

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lesser time to cure. He appreciated Bangladesh for taking very little time to be convinced of the programme, while India and China took much longer time. Incidentally both China and India are now implementing the new strategy, he added.

In Bangladesh there are about 46 lakh reported cases of TB with various degree of ailment. The number of active cases is stated to be 5,70,000 and according to survey around 1,50,000 new cases surface every year.

Dr A K Ahsan Ali, Director TB and Leprosy Control said 26 thanas have already been brought under the new programme and it is planned to cover 40 thanas by June. He hinted that it might take little more than six years to cover all thanas.

While talking to BSS before leaving for Geneva, Dr Kochi said of all the dreadful diseases, the current treatment of TB is the most cost effective. A study said if 100 US dollar is invested in TB treatment, it can help earn 27 years of healthy life, he added.

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## More Canadian aid

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Bangladesh, Chan said that it would come and stressed on the need for "a fertile climate of investment."

On the question of quota in the garments sector, Chan said there existed a quota of only six to seven per cent for the last few years and assured that it was a temporary step which would ultimately be waived.

"We do not like the quota system," he said and added that the issue had to be negotiated among Bangladesh, Canada and other countries under GATT. "This is why GATT is so important," he emphasised.

The visiting Secretary of State appreciated the role of the government and the NGO's in developing the economy.

"Our countries have very close ties and we are optimistic that (Bangladesh) will be able to stand quickly on its own feet."

He also stated that some of the development programmes undertaken by the government and the NGO's were really commendable and hoped many other countries will emulate and replicate the positive examples.

Emphasising that the government and the NGO's were facing the economic challenges boldly, Chan commended particularly the development work being done by the Grameen Bank, BRAC and Proshika.

Asked about his views on the water sharing issue between India and Bangladesh, Chan replied it was a matter of concern and should be settled bilaterally.

"The issue should be addressed within the region," he emphasised.

The formation of SAARC is very encouraging and issues like water and other problems of the region should be considered and settled mutually."

He said that the entire world was a global village. "We all should learn to share our resources."

Chan said that the US and Canada too have common rivers and they solve their water problems mutually. In this connection he referred to the Columbia River Treaty signed between Ottawa and Washington.

## Protect women's rights

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undertaking a sincere pledge to develop the condition of the women for bringing about national emancipation.

In a similar message, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia appealed to all to put in united efforts for changing the socio-economic condition of the country's women and establish their due rights in society.

In a separate message, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina called for taking realistic and integrated programme for ensuring social rights, education and overall development of the women community.

The Jatiya Mahila Sangstha (National Women's Organisation) brought out a program in the capital yesterday.

State Minister for Women's Affairs Sarwar Rahaman led the processionists.

Women from all walks of life took part in the march, carrying banners, placards and festoons.

The State Minister also inaugurated a photographic exhibition styled "Anno Chokhe Dekha" (Through Different Eyes) at the Alliance Francaise auditorium.

Prime Minister Begum

Khaleda Zia attended as chief guest a discussion on "Building a World Where Women Matter" at the Osmany Auditorium.

The Bangladesh Mahila Forum organised a seminar at the Bishwa Shahitya Kendra to mark the day.

The forum also awarded its gold medal to the country's elderly poet and distinguished personality Begum Sufia Kamal for her contribution to the development of the women's community for the last 50 years.

Attorney General Aminul Huq attended the function as chief guest while forum president Advocate Ferdousi Sultanah Begum in the chair.

A procession under the auspices of the steering committee of the 4th International Women's Conference NGO Forum also paraded city streets.

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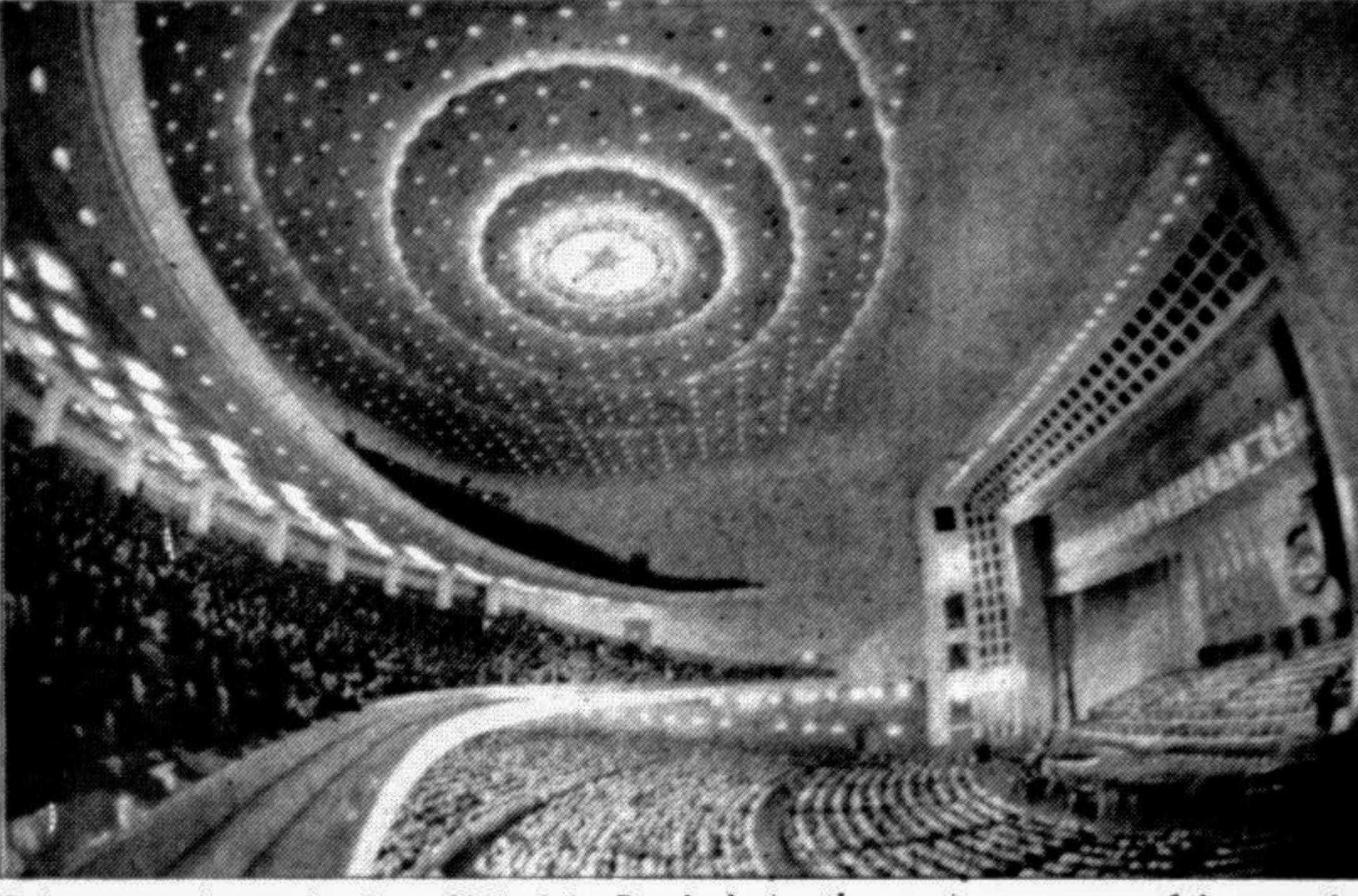
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Delegates gather at the Great Hall of the People during the opening ceremony of the second plenary session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference yesterday in Beijing. — AFP photo

## Women's Day celebrated across Asia

HONG KONG, Mar 8: Women across Asia marched in protest, celebrated their identity and were adored today as they struck a reminder of their struggle to overcome a second-class status to men, reports AFP.

About 4,000 Bangladeshi women today marched and sang in the streets of Dhaka after placing wreaths at a memorial dedicated to the 1952 Bengali Language Martyrs.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia said, "Women would have real dignity if they are made more educated and self-reliant."

In South Korea, where women are often treated as second-class citizens, women's groups plan to hold a mass convention in Seoul March 27 to highlight their demand that the government withdraw its decision to abolish the one day a month menstruation leave for female employees.

The former "comfort women" currently suing the Japanese government for compensation, took part in a 300-strong protest near the presidential palace.

She said, "March 8 is a day of crying aloud against their exploitation by an unjust and unfair system."

In Manila, Aging Filipinos forced to work as prostitutes for Japanese troops during World War II joined militant feminists, workers and students today in a street protest marking Women's Day.

The former "comfort women" currently suing the Japanese government for compensation, took part in a 300-strong protest near the presidential palace.

Our thrust is to make women economically self-reliant through initiatives taken in the field of self-employment schemes for women in both rural and urban sectors," she said.

Between 300 and 500 women also took part in a rally organized by left-wing parties in downtown New Delhi to mark the day.

In India, which has a population of nearly 890 million, more than 66 per cent of women are unable to read or write compared with 38 per cent of men.

As for Vietnam, the day was a chance for men to shower roses on loved ones and women co-workers.

Impromptu flower markets of women selling bouquets from their bicycle baskets sprang up across Hanoi. School girls and young women also took the opportunity to show off their ao dai, traditional silk tunics worn over flowing trousers.

The central land allocation committee yesterday approved the necessary allocation to acquire lands for different projects in Dhaka and Narayanganj, reports BSS.

The allocation was made in a meeting of the committee in Dhaka with State Minister for Land M Kabir Hossain in the chair.

The projects include digging and development of Shahjahanpur canal by WASA under the coordinated flood protection project for Dhaka, pipe switch construction under the same project, water treatment plant construction at Sayedabad, construction of the office of local government engineering department in Narayanganj, construction of martyred intellectuals' mausoleum at Rayberbazar and construction of new district jail in Narayanganj.

The members of the committee and the representatives from concerned ministry were present.

Plane crash

From Page 1 Col 4  
nerves said the Boeing 737-200 jetliner split into two before crashing. One wing with an engine scythed the top portion of the Aeroflot and the engine landed a few feet outside the door leading to a service area of the two-storey terminal building.

Others said that the Sahara aircraft was ablaze before it crashed.

The Boeing was completely destroyed and only a charred portion of the tail was found outside another door of the building.

The impact scattered debris over a large area. Aviation fuel spread on the tarmac and set fire to the grass in the area. A car and a food service van also were burnt.