

# HYGIENE PRACTICE 90pc diseases in rural areas preventable

Says Brac health expert

**MOON MOON SULTANA, back  
from Mymensingh**

Nowadays, Abdul Aziz, a retired schoolteacher, passes his time delivering massages on hygiene to his neighbouring villagers.

He is the president of an 11-member Village Wash Committee (VWC) of Naudhara village under Trishal Poushava in the district.

The committee works for creating awareness among the villagers to practise safe hygiene and sanitation.

"Earlier I was not bothered about the practice of hygiene among the neighbours due to my personal preoccupation, but now we have got to realise the importance of hygiene practice by all for a healthy and sustainable environment," said Aziz.

The other members of the committee include local government representative (one male and one female), ansar and VDP member, religious leader, and small entrepreneur of the same village.

They hold meeting once in a month and discuss sanitation and hygiene issues.

There are a total of 2139 VWCs in six upazilas namely, Mymensingh, Sadar, Trishal, Bhaluka, Gafargaon,

Haluaghata and Gouripur.

These committees are working to create awareness among people about hygiene practice, which can prevent 90 percent of diseases in rural areas, said a health expert.

With a view to help achieving

hundred percent sanitation across the country by 2010, Brac launched this awareness campaign known as Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programme initially in 50 upazilas of Bogra, Mymensingh, Khulna, Dinajpur, Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Feni and Noakhali in May 2006, said Alamgir Hossain, senior regional manager of Brac health programme.

Brac is going to expand its WASH network in another 50 upazilas in Magura, Jhenidah, Kushtia, Sherpur, Sylhet, Sunamganj, Hobiganj and Cox's Bazar from the next month.

Bishwajit Sarker, regional health coordinator of Mymensingh WASH programme, said it aims at eliminating the practice of using unhygienic latrine and water among the rural and underprivileged people.

Some 37.5 million people in 150 upazilas of 41 districts will be benefited by this programme through the change of their behaviour, he added.

Admitting this, Kamal Ahmed, a

small entrepreneur and VWC member, said 60 percent people of his village are unable to meet their family expenses let alone a sanitary latrine.

Although pouroshava provides some construction materials free of cost to insolvent people, but the meagre quantity is not enough to set up a sanitary latrine, he alleged.

Furatan Begum, 50, a housewife of Modhyabarara village under Aqua Union of Sadar upazila, said, "We were given only one ring slab whereas at least six slabs are required to build a sanitary latrine."

"Moreover, the slab broke down a few months ago when I tried to place it," she added.

When asked, Mofiz Uddin, deputy assistant engineer of public health and engineering department, said earlier the materials were collected locally by the local government representatives, and as such there was little scope to check the quality.

"However, the local government and engineering department has now decided to collect the materials under its direct supervision to ensure quality," he added.

## 'Form body to monitor, regulate cable operators'

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The Cable Operators' Association of Bangladesh (Coab) yesterday urged the government to form a committee to monitor and regulate the activities of cable operators in the country.

The committee should be comprised of officials from the information ministry, finance ministry and commerce ministry and Coab representatives, it said.

The Coab leaders made the call at the launching ceremony of online survey of cable television viewers at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium. Bangladesh Cable TV Viewers Forum (BCTVF) organised the programme.

President of National Press Club Shawkat Mahmud formally opened the online survey.

The Coab leaders demanded proper implementation of Cable TV Operation Rules 2006, which require the cable operators to offer channels to subscribers as per their demands and charge them on the basis of number of channels.

Coab Secretary General Nizamuddin Masud called for a ban on transmission of two Indian channels -- Zee Bangla and ETV Bangla -- arguing that when Indian cable operators do not downlink free Bangladeshi channels, why downlinking of their channels would be permitted in Bangladesh.

He said the results of the survey of cable television viewers would help them get an idea of which channels the viewers want to watch, making it easier for cable operators to offer channels of viewers' choice.

General Secretary of BCTVF Ahmed Feroz also spoke at the programme.

## 3-day folklore workshop begins tomorrow

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

With a view to enriching the country's culture and heritage, Asiatic Society of Bangladesh is going to organise a three-day workshop on folklore beginning from tomorrow under its current 'Cultural Survey of Bangladesh' project.

National University Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Wakil Ahmed will inaugurate the workshop styled 'Role of proverbs and maxims in the folk knowledge', said Prof Sirajul Islam, chief editor of 'Cultural Survey of Bangladesh' project at a press conference.

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh organised the press conference at its office in the city yesterday.

Prof Sirajul Islam said about 150 folklore researchers from different districts and upazilas and local folklore activists will join the workshop and present proverbs and maxims collected from their own areas.

He also said these collected proverbs and maxims will not only enrich our culture but it can also contribute to the research of history, social science, anthropology, economics and agriculture as regional sayings reflect social attitude and relations.

Reading out a written statement, he said, "About 30000 proverbs and maxims will emerge from the workshop and it will be a big achievement for us if the collected proverbs and maxims are published after proper analysis."

Prof Islam also said the influence of folklore is very evident on the fine arts, stage arts, design, fashion, exhibition and clothing all over the world as its attraction is also increasing day by day.

Citing a survey of World Intellectual Property Organisation, he said the annual market price of country's tangible and intangible commodities is about Tk 1000 crore.

The folklore researchers will uphold their own districts' valuable proverbs and maxims in 16 sessions of the workshop and will discuss about the regional characteristics, language and present condition of the proverbs and maxims, Prof Islam said.

Referring to the Bangladesh Asiatic Society's current project, he said after the Banglapedia it is one of the mammoth tasks of the society which will contain thirteen volumes and each volume will deal with the cultural aspects of Bangladesh like its architecture, the fine arts, literature, folklore, and indigenous culture.

Asiatic Society President Prof Emajuddin Ahmed said the influence of globalisation is also evident in Bangladesh like other countries of the world and the country's folklore is at the brink of extinction due to the influence of globalisation.



PHOTO: STAR  
Noted litterateur Selina Hossain inaugurates Jahanara Imam Museum at Elephant Road in the city yesterday.

## JAHANARA IMAM MUSEUM INAUGURATED

# Next generations will take pride in it: Selina Hossain

**DU CORRESPONDENT**

Many of the invited guests and journalists were eagerly reading a framed letter written by Shaheed Janani (mother of the martyrs)

Jahanara Imam during the War of Liberation asking her son Rumi, a freedom fighter, to sacrifice his life for the freedom of the country.

The museum will also protect the history from distortion, she added.

Jahanara Imam's youngest son Saif Imam Jami in collaboration with the relatives took the initiatives to preserve the memories of her mother.

Many of the memoirs of Jahanara Imam including her bed, photographs, letters, books written or read by her, awards and utensils have been kept in an organised way in a small room.

There are also her spectacles, batches, passports, chequebooks of different banks and other things.

Jahanara Imam, also founder of Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee (committee to eliminate killers and collaborators of 1971),

also known as Forum for Secular Bangladesh, died at a hospital in the USA after prolonged sufferings from cancer in 1994.

Saif Imam Jami presided over the inaugural ceremony.

He said, "In 1994, I could feel my mother's love for the country and its people, I could also see the love that the people gave to my mother. At that time I thought to preserve her memories in any form."

"Today's museum is the realisation of that thought," he added.

The museum will remain open from 10:00am to 5:00pm on every Saturday.

Artist Hashem Khan, Prof Muntaisir Mamun, writer Shahriar Kabir, Kazi Mukul, Shyamoli Nasrin Chowdhury, Salma Haq, Shimul Yusuf, Mofidul Haq, Shaheed Rumi's friends and others were present on the occasion.

## Expand DOTS coverage to combat TB

### Experts tell workshop

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Directly Observed Treatment Short course (DOTS) programme must be expanded to successfully combat tuberculosis (TB) in the country as a huge number of people are vulnerable to the disease, experts at a workshop said yesterday.

Although the government and non-government organisations (NGOs) have been working to control the disease, patients' reluctance to complete the full course of medicine due to the lack of awareness hampers the success of their efforts, they said.

If a TB patient does not complete the six-month course of medicine properly, the disease may become severe and turns into Multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB), the speakers said, adding that 70,000 people die from TB and 3,00,000 people contract the disease

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According to the new schedule, classes of the institutions that have only one shift will be held from 8:00am to 2:00pm during March to August in lieu of 10:00am to 4:00pm, a press release of the education ministry said yesterday.

However, during September to February, classes will be held from 10:00am to 4:00pm, the release added.

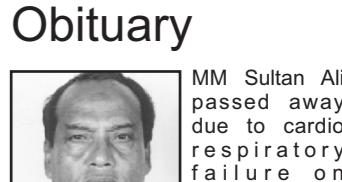
But, the timings will remain unchanged at the institutions that have double shifts. Classes of the

"All the TB patients must be brought under DOTS," he added.

At present, the rate of TB detection is 71 percent and the rate of cure is 91 percent, said Dr Nazrul Islam, superintendent, TB Control and Training Institute.

Director of the National Institute of Chest Diseases and Hospital Prof Mostafizur Rahman, Programme Chief of Brac Health Programme Jalal Uddin Ahmed, President of National Press Club Shawkat Mahmud, General Secretary Kamal Uddin Shabuj and Vice-President Abdur Rahman Khan also spoke.

## Obituary



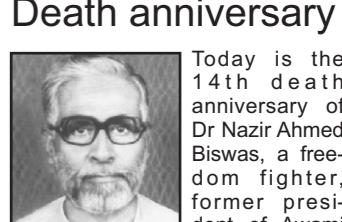
MM Sultan Ali passed away due to cardio respiratory failure on Saturday at the age of 70, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, two daughters and one son to mourn his death.

His gulkhwani will be held at his residence at House No #5, Road No #6, Block #E, Section #2, Mirpur in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow.

All have been requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

## Death anniversary



Today is the 14th death anniversary of Dr Nazrul Ahmed Biswas, a freedom fighter, former president of Awami League Chaudanga district unit and founding vice-chairman of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, says a press release.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## RU IRREGULARITIES UGC continues investigation in presence of pro-BNP teachers

**RU CORRESPONDENT**

The University Grants Commission (UGC) yesterday continued its investigation into alleged irregularities and corruption at Rajshahi University (RU) during the last five years.

Campus sources said some influential Pro-BNP teachers received the complaints along with the probe body members.

For this reason, many complainants did not lodge their complaints, they added.

A complainant told newsmen that he could not say anything about recruitment-related corruption fearing future harassment from the teachers who were sitting there.

He said Prof Nazrul Islam, former president of RU Teachers' Association (Ruta) and relative of RU VC, was sitting there from the morning.

Sources also said Convenor of Pro-BNP teachers' group Prof Abdus Salam, social science faculty dean Prof Sadekul Islam, science faculty dean Prof Abdul Hashem and education and research institution dean Prof Nazrul Islam were also sitting in front of the treasurer's office from the morning to monitor who were giving interview before the probe body.

Many teachers, students and officials have criticised the body for allowing the Pro-BNP-Jamaat teachers to sit there, and raised questions about its neutrality.

## WEATHER TODAY Light to moderate rain likely

**UNB, Dhaka**

Light to moderate rain or thundershowsers accompanied by temporary gusty or windy wind is likely at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy rainfalls are also likely at places, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishwardi, Majidee Court and Bogra and lowest 23.9 degree Celsius at Majidee Court.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:50pm today and rises at 5:13am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in celsius	Humidity in percentage		
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.7	26.0	75	72
Chittagong	32.8	25.6	67	76
Rajshahi	33.6	25.5	83	—
Khulna	32.5	27.0	80	72
Barisal	32.0	26.2	92	83
Sylhet	29.7	25.7	98	90
Cox's Bazar	33.9	26.2	69	71

## Call to gear up social afforestation