

Private doctors' help raises TB detection

States Dhaka-based research

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Involving private medical practitioners in National Tuberculosis Control Programme's (NTP) activities dramatically increased tuberculosis (TB) detection and cure rates, said researchers at a workshop yesterday.

Public-private partnership increased the detection rate from 32 to 72.5 percent while 92 percent of TB patients who received treatment were cured, as per a research project, "Public-Private Partnership in TB Control", they said.

The research was conducted by NTP of Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS); University of Leeds, UK; and Society for Empowerment, Education and Development; in Dhaka between 2004 and 2008.

The research's principal investigator, Dr AN Zafar Ullah, presented the major findings at the workshop in MIS Conference Room of DGHS in the capital.

Regardless of income or area of residence, private sector healthcare is popular and an important player in health service provision, he said.

He explained that since TB was particularly prevalent among people of lower socio-economic status, ensuring free treatment was very important.

"We have seen that over 50 percent of people with TB go to private practitioners where there is a lack of follow up and record keeping procedures. This increases the chances of ending up with drug resistant TB bacteria.

"To solve the crisis, we went to private doctors in Dhaka and provided them free training on TB and informed them about the national TB control programme that serves patients for free," he said.

The project is now being scaled up in Sylhet and Chittagong regions, said Zafar.

Besides, the TB control programme is also trying to contain TB among garment workers, he added.



Bahrain fire victim Nazir's sister wails at the sight of her brother's body that arrived at their home in Chittagong city yesterday. Nazir was among the 13 Bangladeshi workers who were killed in a fire in Bahrain on January 11. The bodies arrived in the country on Tuesday.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS



As part of 18-party alliance's programme, BNP leaders and activists conduct a mass contact campaign in the capital's Dholai Khala yesterday demanding restoration of caretaker government system.

PHOTO: STAR

Air-powered

FROM PAGE 20

French car giant PSA Peugeot Citroen believes it can put an air-powered vehicle on the road by 2016.

Its scientists say it will knock 45 per cent off fuel bills for an average motorist. And when driving in towns and cities costs could be slashed by as much as 80 per cent because the car will be running on air for four-fifths of the time.

The system works by using a normal internal combustion engine, special hydraulics and an adapted gearbox along with compressed air cylinders that store and release energy.

This enables it to run on petrol or air, or a combina-

tion of the two.

Air power would be used solely for city use, automatically activated below 43mph and available for "60 to 80 per cent of the time in city driving".

By 2020, the cars could be achieving an average of 117 miles a gallon, the company predicts.

The revolutionary new 'Hybrid Air' engine system - the first to combine petrol with compressed air -- is a breakthrough for hybrid cars because expensive batteries will no longer be needed.

The system will be able to be installed on any normal family car without

altering its external shape or size or reducing the boot size, provided the spare wheel is not stored there.

A company spokesman said "We are not talking about weird and wacky machines. These are going to be in everyday cars."

Peugeot, which unveiled its prototype on Tuesday, envisages introducing it in smaller models such as the 208 at first.

For more than two years, 100 elite scientists and engineers have been working on the air-powered car in top-secret conditions at Peugeot's research and development centre at Velizy, just south of Paris.

Kidney tissue

FROM PAGE 20

complex structure that is not easily repaired, but the latest findings put scientists on the road to fixing a diseased or distressed organ, they said.

Kenji Osafune of Kyoto University said his team had managed to take stem cells and nudge them specifically in the direction of kidney tissue.

Stem cells are "blank slates" capable of being programmed to become any kind of cell in the body.

Osafune said they had succeeded in generating intermediate mesoderm

tissue from the stem cells, a middle point between the blank slate and the finished kidney tissue.

"There are about 200 types of cells in the human body, but this tissue grows into only three types of cells," namely adrenal cells, reproductive gland cells and kidney cells, he said.

As much as 90 percent of cultures in their research developed into viable mesoderm tissue, he added.

This embryonic intermediary can be grown either in test tubes or in a

living host into specific kidney cells.

Osafune stressed there are still many hurdles to overcome before applying his work to actual medical treatment.

"It is not known yet if simply transplanting regenerated cells would really cure kidney ailment," he said, adding: "I would say that we have arrived at the preliminary step on the road to the clinical level."

Osafune's research is published in online science journal Nature Communications.

Man murdered by wife, his brother

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A man was killed allegedly by his wife and his younger brother at his residence in Durgapur upazila of Rajshahi early yesterday.

The victim was Abu Saleh M Bablu, 48, of Deluabari village.

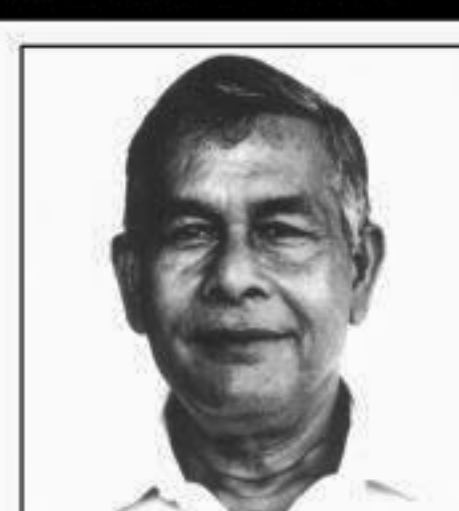
Police arrested Bablu's wife Masuma Akhtar Lina, 35, and his younger brother Abu Saleh M Dablu, 32, in connection with the murder.

Quoting Bablu's two sons who witnessed the incident, Durgapur Police Station Officer-in-Charge Saiful Islam said the duo killed the man by pressing a pillow on his face.

The arrestees confessed to the killing, he said adding that they committed the murder following an extra marital affair between them.

The victim's uncle Abdus Sattar filed a case with the police station.

IN FOND MEMORY



Mrs. Anwara Islam, died on 24 January 2006 - exactly the same day and date as her husband Mr. Sirajul Islam who died twenty four years earlier.

Please join us in praying to the Almighty Allah to grant them eternal peace.

Lubna, Akbar & Duree (Children)
Anika, Talita, Numair (Grand Children)
Amani & Tijaan (Great-Grand Children)

Ms Lubna Choudhury
Founder-Principal, B.I.T.

Demand not

FROM PAGE 1

The organisation has been observing an indefinite strike since January 10. It threatened the government with non-stop agitation, assembling teachers from across the country if their demand was not met by yesterday.

Traffic from Kadam Foara to Paltan intersection came to a halt as the agitators started their demo around 9:00am, blocking Topkhana Road. Traffic congestion spilled onto the roads leading to the press club, causing sufferings to commuters.

In the evening, organisation chairman Selim Bhuiyan said, "We will stay at night as well to continue our non-stop sit-in till our demand is met."

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid termed the demand impractical and said there was a political motive behind the demonstration.

Selim said the education minister insulted the teachers by announcing a hike in their house rent and medical allowance. "The teachers will not return home until an announcement about the nationalisation of our jobs comes."

BNP leader Moudud Ahmed joined the sit-in, saying BNP will meet the teachers' demand if the party is voted into power.

Talking to reporters at the education ministry, Nahid observed, "I am compelled to say -- even though I never want to -- that there is a political motive behind the demonstration."

The demand for nationalising the jobs, at a time when teachers across the country are happy with the announcement of the hike, is creating confusion among the teacher community, the minister said.

Nahid questioned the organisation leader why he did not demonstrate during the tenure of his party's government if the demand is so important.

The teachers are making the demand now because the government just nationalised non-government primary schools, said the minister.

Nationalising the primary schools "was an obligation" but the same cannot be said of secondary schools, said Nahid. He urged the agitating teachers not to create confusion, adding talks may be held if necessary.

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GROUP OF EIGHT MEMBER

