



PHOTO: BSS

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with guests and officials at the inaugural ceremony of the 32nd Meeting of Ministers of Health of Countries of WHO South-East Asia Region and the 67th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia Region, at Sonargaon Hotel in the capital yesterday. At the programme, health ministers of the 11 Asian nations adopted the Dhaka Declaration, pledging to control and eliminate vector-borne diseases like malaria, kala-azar and dengue. Bangladesh also signed three memoranda of understanding (MoU) for stronger collaboration among the countries to control the deadly diseases, and for exchanges of health education, treatment and drugs. Approximately 1.4 billion people are at risk of malaria, 871 million of lymphatic filariasis and over 147 million of kala-azar in the region, says WHO.

MIGRANT DOMESTIC HELPS IN LEBANON

Bangladeshis victims of trafficking, forced labour

Reports Lebanon's state-run news agency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Migrant domestic workers from Bangladesh and Nepal are allegedly victims of human trafficking and forced labour in Lebanon, according to a report published in Lebanon's state-owned National News Agency on Monday.

The report titled "Dreams for Sale: The Exploitation of Domestic Workers from Recruitment in Nepal and Bangladesh to Working in Lebanon" mentioned that the female domestic helps are deceived about

their work and living conditions in the Middle Eastern country.

Around 82 percent of the interviewed workers said they felt they were forced to work and over 50 percent claimed to be receiving irregular salary.

The report added that around 60 percent did not have a private place to sleep, while 32 percent were denied other rights, such as to medical treatment, or to take sick leave.

The workers are also victims of physical and sexual violence exercised by the

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FEROZA BEGUM'S DEATH

Condolences pour in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of Nazrul Sangeet virtuoso Feroza Begum.

In separate messages, they expressed their sympathy to the bereaved family members.

Feroza Begum, 84, passed away around 8:30pm yesterday in the capital's Apollo Hospital, a doctor told The Daily Star. She had been suffering from heart and kidney diseases.

In a message, the president said Feroza was a pioneer singer in the sub-continent. Her contributions to popularise the songs written by poet Kazi Nazrul Islam will be ever remembered by the nation, reports BSS.

"Feroza Begum had become an institution because of her musical talent," he added. The president said the nation lost a legendary cultural personality.

Sheikh Hasina called her death an irreparable loss in the country's music arena. "The nation will ever remember her with gratitude for her contributions to the practice and research of Nazrul Geeti," she said, reports BSS.

Ex-prime minister and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia,

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EID, DURGA PUJA Advance train ticket sale starts Sept 26

30 locomotives, 130 coaches, 5 return trips added to existing services

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Railway will start selling advance tickets of trains on September 26 to facilitate holidaymakers ahead of Durga Puja and Eid-ul Azha.

The advance ticket sale will continue till September 30, announced Railways Minister Mazibul Hoque yesterday at a press briefing at the Railway Bhaban in the capital.

Train tickets of October 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 will be sold on September 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 respectively, said a press release. The return tickets of October 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 will be sold on October 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8. However, the ticket sale will remain suspended on Eid day.

The minister said the holidays of important officials and employees of

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Vector-borne diseases will be eliminated

Declares WHO regional conference in Dhaka of South-East Asian health ministers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health ministers of 11 Asian nations yesterday adopted the Dhaka Declaration, pledging to control and eliminate vector-borne diseases like malaria, kala-azar and dengue.

The declaration was adopted at the health ministers' meeting of the WHO South-East Asia Regional conference hosted by Bangladesh at Sonargaon Hotel in the capital.

Bangladesh also signed three memoranda of understanding (MoU) for stronger collaboration among the countries to control the deadly diseases, and for exchanges of health education, treatment and drugs.

Approximately 1.4 billion people are at risk of malaria, 871 million are exposed to lymphatic filariasis and over 147 million are at risk of kala-azar in the region, according to WHO.

Blood sucking insects such as mosquitoes, fleas, lice, biting flies and bugs are the major transmitters of germs to humans.

Fifty two percent of those vulnerable to dengue globally live in the countries of the WHO's South-East Asian Region -- Bangladesh, Bhutan, North Korea, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste.

"The health ministers recognised the need for strengthening health systems to provide timely treatment and response to vector-borne disease outbreaks," says a statement of WHO.

They also committed to strengthening national capacity building by training of vector control teams for efficient surveillance, sharing data and encouraging research.

The WHO Regional Committee meeting, which will start today and continue for three

days, will feature traditional medicines, health workforce education, universal health coverage, and civil registration and vital statistics.

MoU ON KALA-AZAR

The governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate efforts to eradicate kala-azar.

Over 147 million people in the region are at risk of contracting the disease, mainly in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Recently, cases were reported from Bhutan and Thailand as well, says WHO.

The three affected countries need close collaboration to eliminate the disease as over 50 percent of the cases occur in areas close to international borders.

"Kala-azar elimination is within our reach and WHO is committed to it," said Dr Poonam Khetrapal Singh, WHO regional director for South-East Asia.

"If we collaborate, we can surely eliminate the threat of kala-azar," Bangladesh Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammad Nasim told reporters after signing the MoU at Sonargaon Hotel.

Kala-azar (Visceral Leishmaniasis) is transmitted by sand flies, which breed in moist soil, caves, cracks in mud walls and rodent burrows. It is fatal if left untreated.

MoU ON TRADITIONAL AND HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINES

Bangladesh Health Secretary MM Neazuddin and India's Traditional and Homeopath Medicine Department Secretary Nilanjan Sanyal signed an MoU on sharing of raw materials, training and doctors.

Both countries agreed to further improve the rich tradition of Ayurveda with better research, and quality manufac

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