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**Care 16212**

# Healthcare, drug getting costlier

State contributes only 23pc of expenditure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two-thirds of the country's healthcare expenditures are made for curative purposes while less than one-seventh spent on prevention.

And the lion's share of the medical expenses is spent from people's pockets with the state contributing less than one-fourth, shows a survey. According to Bangladesh National Health Accounts (BNHA) 1997-2012, expenditure on medicines and curative purposes accounts for 67 percent of the total healthcare expenditure in the country in the 16 years studied.

Spending on medicines and other medical products rose to 41 percent in 2012 from 38 percent in 1997, while the cost of cura-

**Prices of medicines on the rise**

**Diabetes, cancer, heart patients increasing**

**Most of treatment cost comes from people's pockets**

**Per capita healthcare expense half of WHO standard**

tive services increased to 26 percent from 22 during the same period.

However, spending on preventive cares, including primary healthcare, immunisation, nutrition and public health awareness campaigns, was only 13 percent of the expenditure on healthcare in 2012, according to the report launched at a programme at a city hotel yesterday.

The increase in the expenditure on curative services resulted from a possible rise in the number of people affected by diseases and from the mostly unregulated drug market.

Non-communicable diseases like diabetes, cancer and heart diseases, which require

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Alleged supporters of the blockade torch a vehicle on Dhanmondi Road-27 in the capital yesterday while the driver tries to start the engine and get away.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

## BNP expels 2 over fake US statement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of strong criticism, the BNP has expelled two of its US-based leaders for faking two statements attributed to the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs and six Congressmen. The statements condemned the confinement of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to her Gulshan office. Zahid F Sardar Sadi and Dr Mojibor Rahman, both special advisers to BNP's US chapter, were expelled from the party, BNP Vice-Chairman Sadeque Hossain Khoka told this at a press conference in New York City on Tuesday. Sayrul Kabir Khan, a

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# US-S'pore consortium to build LNG terminal

Unsolicited deal okayed to import costly alternative to natural gas

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

A US-Singapore consortium is going to build the first-ever floating LNG terminal in Bangladesh and import gas for \$17.1 per million cubic feet (mmcf), 10 times higher than the national gas sales price.

The cabinet committee on economic affairs yesterday approved an unsolicited deal with the US-Singapore consortium of Astra and Excelerate (AEC) under the Power and Energy Fast Supply Enhancement (Special Provision) Act, 2010.

The import of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), though at a very expensive rate, is likely to ensure the country's energy security in the long run.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith told reporters after yesterday's meeting that the price of the imported gas would have been much higher, but not that much as it would be mixed with local gas.

According to an energy ministry proposal, if LNG was mixed with local gas, the average cost of gas will rise to \$4.39 per mmcf from \$1.7, implying that the government will have to hike gas price in future.

However, the minister said the gas price would not go much higher for the consumers.

Prime Minister's Energy Adviser Towfique-e-Elahi Chowdhury said the gas would take two years to reach the country and the price would be fixed in

line with the oil price on international market.

After yesterday's approval, Petrobangla will now sign an agreement with the AEC for setting up the terminal and the company is expected to start supplying gas by mid-2016.

The AEC would install the terminal at Maheshkhali in Cox's Bazar to facilitate LNG import from Qatar with which Bangladesh signed a memorandum of understanding in 2011.

Finance Minister Muhith said the government's agreement with Qatar would expire this month. He added fresh negotiations would start for extension of the tenure and expressed the hope that it would be done in time.

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## Experts identify radiation source

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Experts, who started working for the recovery of suspected radioactive substances from a container at Chittagong port yesterday, hope to complete it by today.

The 36-member team, comprising specialists from Bangladesh, US and Sri Lanka alongside customs and port officials, yesterday opened the container and removed most of the scrap metals from it before suspending the day's operation around 6:00pm.

One Mabiya Steel Company Chittagong in April last year exported the container carrying 19 tonnes of scrapped stainless steel for India via Colombo Port. On April 29, the Colombo port authorities detected radiation from the container and sent it back to Bangladesh.

Masud Kamal, director of Radioactivity Testing and Monitoring Laboratory in Chittagong, said they have identified the source of the radiation.

"It is positioned at the rear part of the container. So we need to remove all the scrapped materials first... We hope to reach the source by tomorrow [today]," he said.

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## 21 kg gold seized in Dhaka, Ctg

STAR REPORT

Some 185 gold bars, weighing over 21 kg, were seized in the capital's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and Chittagong city yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of Customs and Customs Intelligence officials conducted a search in a flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines at the Shahjalal airport and seized 120 gold bars, weighing around 14 kg. The bars were wrapped in cloths, said Kazi Md Ziauddin, joint commissioner of Customs.

The plane from Dubai via Chittagong landed at the airport around 12:30pm.

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## facebook

Facebook restricts violent video clips

BBC ONLINE

Facebook has begun placing warnings over videos posted to its site, stating their contents might "shock, offend and upset" if viewed.

The alerts prevent the videos from automatically playing in feeds unless they are clicked, unlike other clips.

The site is also preventing graphic videos and photos from being shown

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Only a handful of people are seen at a weekly market in College Gate area of Rangamati yesterday. It usually teems with people buying and selling goods. A police van, inset, is parked in front of the closed Rangamati Medical College Hospital, the inauguration of which was the main reason for days of unrest and curfews in the town.

PHOTO: STAR



# Normalcy yet to return in Rangamati

PINAKI ROY from Rangamati

Though the ban on public gathering in the district was with drawn yesterday, life in Rangamati was yet to return to normalcy.

A small number of people were at local marketplaces with the district administration tightening security and local politicians hoping for calmer days ahead.

This correspondent visited the College Gate weekly bazaar yesterday only to find a handful of people there.

"This is very unusual for a Wednesday morning. A lot of people are supposed to be here on this day," said Md Borhan, standing outside his small restaurant named Panahar Sweets.

The people of Rangamati usually gather at the weekly bazaars in College Gate Tabalchhari, Banarupa and Reservebazar, looking for kitchen items and other daily essentials, he said.

"But today the market opened after three days but the presence of people is very disappointing," said Borhan, blaming the situation on the recent violence.

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**The Daily Star**  
Integral Energy Limited

**ONLINE POLL**  
Do you think President Abdul Hamid should intervene and take initiative to hold a dialogue to end the current political standoff?

Yes (77%)  
No (23%)  
TOTAL VOTES: 339

**TODAY'S POLL**  
Do you think the government should immediately launch a probe into the gun attack on BNP chairperson's adviser Reaz Rahman?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT  
www.thedailystar.net

**PRAYER TIMING January 15**

Fazr	Azan	Jamaat
5-30	6-05	
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-36	5-40
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

## PARIS ATTACK Yemen's al-Qaeda claims responsibility

AFP, Dubai

Al-Qaeda in Yemen has claimed responsibility for the attack on Charlie Hebdo in a video posted online, saying it was "vengeance" for the French weekly's cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed.

Nasser al-Ansi, one of the chiefs of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), said the attack was ordered by Ayman al-Zawahiri, the jihadist network's global commander.



Nasser al-Ansi

"We, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, claim responsibility for this operation as vengeance for the messenger of Allah," Ansi said in the video entitled "A message regarding the blessed battle of Paris."

"The leadership of (AQAP) was the party that chose the target and plotted the attack in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and financed the plan... It was following said the attack was ordered by Ayman al-Zawahiri, the jihadist network's global commander."

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## Bubble for relaxing at work

MAIL ONLINE

Ever get so stressed at work that you feel like you just need to relax in a world of your own?

Now you can thanks to a 'bubble' designed to provide a calming refuge for stressed office workers.

Called the Orb pod, it allows the user to escape bustling open-plan workspaces and find time for

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