



Workers paint the pavement of the National Memorial at Savar as part of its beautification ahead of the 47th Independence Day to be celebrated on March 26. In addition, at least 22 high definition closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras were installed on the memorial premises to heighten security. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

CHILD MARRIAGE RESTRAINT ACT NHRC chief calls for detailed guideline

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A comprehensive guideline for the Child Marriage Restraint Act-2017 is required as enactment of the act with a provision for "special circumstances" was upsetting, said National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Kazi Reazul Haque yesterday.

"We all hoped that the act will prevent child marriage. But now there is a provision to marry off even a 10-year-old boy," he told a programme at the capital's Brac Centre Inn.

World Vision Bangladesh (WVB) held the programme to launch a global campaign to eradicate physical violence against children at homes, schools and workplaces.

The NHRC chief urged the government to place a guideline for the law in favour of an end to child marriage. He also stressed the need for forming a child commission.

Organisers said the campaign is aiming to end abuse and torture of 50 lakh children in the country by 2021.

Referring to data available, Sabera Nupur of WVB said as many as 82 percent of the country's children aged between one and 14 are victims of violence.

Fifty-seven percent of children are victims of violence at workplaces while 77 percent are subjected to corporal punishment.

Each year one billion children experience different forms of violence while the estimated cost has gone up to \$7 trillion per year or eight percent of global GDP.

Addressing the programme, Fred Witteveen, national director of WVB, said gender and disability have to be spotlighted to end violence against children.

Abdus Shahid Mahmood, director of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, and Additional Secretary Mashuk Miah of Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, among others, spoke.

3 more Bt Brinjal varieties soon

BARI DG tells workshop in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI) will release three more varieties of the country's first genetically modified (GM) crop -- Bt Brinjal, which is infused with pest-resistant gene.

BARI Director General Dr Abul Kalam Azad made the announcement at a workshop on "Bt Eggplant Research and Development," in a Dhaka hotel yesterday.

"Bt technology is not a panacea. It works only against shoot and fruit borer. For other diseases, we must manage using other mechanism," he added.

Farmers from Rajshahi, Rangpur, Pabna and Gazipur started cultivating the Bt Brinjal for the first time in 2014.

Currently, around 6,000 farmers in 36 districts are growing four Bt Brinjal varieties -- BARI Bt (Uttara), BARI Bt (Kajla), BARI Bt (Nayontar) and ISD006 Bt BARI.

BARI Chief Scientific Officer ASM Mahbubur Rahman Khan during his presentation on "Performance of Bt brinjal varieties at Farmers Field" and mentioned that the cultivation of this GM crop increased in the country.

Production cost becomes lower for no application of insecticides and higher gross margin obtained in the cultivation of Bt Brinjal, he observed adding that many farmers demanded seeds for cultivation.

However, the sucking insects such as white fly and diseases such as bacterial wilt need to be managed in Bt Brinjal fields, he mentioned.

Prof Anthony M Shelton, director of Feed the Future South Asia Eggplant Improvement Project from Cornell University, said the Bt Brinjal is safe and it has no health hazard.

Speaking as chief guest at the programme, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said the development of brinjal shoot and fruit borer insect resistant Bt Brinjal is a success story of local and foreign collaboration.

With the journey of cultivating Bt Brinjal, Bangladesh has joined a group of 29 countries that grow GM crops.

Agriculture Ministry Secretary (In-charge) Mohammad Nazmul Islam chaired the programme while Environment and Forests Secretary Istiaque Ahmad, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council Executive Chairman Dr Mohammad Jalal Uddin, Department of Environment Director General Raisul Alam Mondol, USAID country representative Matt J Curtis, BARI former DG Rafiqul Islam Mondol, Department of Agriculture Extension Director Manjurul Hannan among others spoke.

'Tk 1.91CR CORRUPTION' HC sends records to CJ in case against Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday sent all the records of a 25-year-old corruption case against former president HM Ershad to chief justice for a decision.

The bench of Justice Md Ruhul Quddus also refrained from delivering verdict on an appeal filed by Ershad against a lower court judgement that jailed him for three years in the case.

On March 9, the bench concluded hearing on the appeal of Ershad and fixed yesterday for delivering verdict on it.

Yesterday, the HC bench came up with the decision citing the documents that

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TB cases on rise: Study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 2.24 lakh new TB patients were detected in 2016, which is four percent higher than that of the previous year, according to the National TB Control Programme (NTP).

The number of TB cases was 2,23,922 last year while the figure was 2,09,438 in 2015.

"Yet, some 39 percent of TB cases remain undetected," said Dr Rouseli Haq, line director of the NTP under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

TB incidence in Bangladesh was 3.60 lakh last year, she said referring to the data of the World Health Organization (WHO). However, some 1.3 lakh of those remain unidentified.

"The missing TB patients remain a major risk for the spreading of infectious diseases," Dr Rouseli said at a press conference organised by the NTP, Brac and their partner NGOs on the eve of World TB Day today.

The WHO says Bangladesh is one of the world's 30 high risk countries for TB, which causes 45 deaths a year per

lakh in Bangladesh.

Health experts say TB is treatable if it can be identified, and the government is providing free treatment for it. Early detection of TB means better and faster cure. However, the challenge is a large number of missing cases that remain beyond treatment, they added.

Dr Shayla Islam, head of TB Control Programme at Brac, said crowded

2.24 lakh new TB patients were detected in 2016, but 39pc of cases remain undetected

the largest prison in Bangladesh was 20 times higher than that of the general population.

Dr Nazim Arefin Saki, focal person on drug-resistant TB at the NTP, in his presentation said that of the TB cases detected last year, childhood TB cases were 9,291, which was 7,984 in 2015.

Childhood TB is usually 10 percent of all TB cases, but only 4.3 percent was detected in Bangladesh in 2016. It is higher than the previous year's figure of 4 percent.

WHO Bangladesh's National Professional Officer Dr Viqarunnesa Begum said measures to detect childhood TB needs to be scaled up as early detection can reduce TB to a great extent.

Health experts identified lack of adequate TB identification and treatment facilities and human resources, especially in the remote and char areas as well as floating nature of people in urban areas as some of the major challenges for eradicating TB.

They suggested more screening of TB in vulnerable communities and using best technologies to detect it.



Mamata to keep Bangabandhu's statue at Baker Hostel

Warns of actions against those demanding its removal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday said Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's bust will stay in Kolkata's Baker Hostel and warned of actions against those demanding its removal.

"Bangabandhu is an inspiration to both Bangladesh and West Bengal. There is no question of removing the sculpture. Stern actions will be taken against those demanding its removal," she said.

"Bangladesh's war of independence is our inspiration and it is our duty to preserve the memory of Bangabandhu," she also said, adding that any opposition to this end would not be tolerated.

State Education Minister Partha Chatterjee said, "No one made such claim to us; but the news appeared in the media. We will not entertain such demand."

The Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, stayed in the government dormitory as a student of Islamia College (now Maulana Azad College) in the 1940s. The statue was installed on February 23, 2011. Earlier, rooms 23 and 24 of the hostel were recognised as

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Various military hardware including torpedoes are on display at the stall of Bangladesh Navy at the military hardware exhibition. The combined display of the three forces began yesterday at the National Parade Square on the occasion of the Independence Day and National Day 2017. PHOTO: ISPR

Seven-day military hardware display begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A seven-day military hardware display began at the National Parade Square in the capital yesterday.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Wednesday inaugurated the combined display of the three forces on the occasion of the Independence Day and National Day 2017.

The exhibition will continue till March 29 and remain open from 9:30am to 5:30pm every day.

Among the 36 stalls and pavilions, Bangladesh Army has 24 and Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Forces have six stalls each

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বিশ্ব যক্ষ্মা দিবস ২০১৭

"ঐক্যবদ্ধ হলে সবে, যক্ষ্মা মুক্ত দেশ হবে"

একনাগাড়ে ৩ সপ্তাহের বেশি কাশি যক্ষ্মার প্রধান লক্ষণ

তাই অবহেলা না করে কফ পরীক্ষা করান নিয়মিত পূর্ণ মেয়াদের চিকিৎসায় যক্ষ্মা সম্পূর্ণ ভাল হয়

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- মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল
- বক্ষব্যাধি ক্লিনিক
- নগর স্বাস্থ্যকেন্দ্রে

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পরিবেশক: আজিজ সুপার মার্কেট, শাহবাগ: প্রথমা (৯৬৬৪৮২৫), পাঠক সমাবেশ (০১৭১৩০৩৪৪৪০), কাঁটাবন: প্রকৃতি (০১৭২৭৩২৮৭২৩), বেইলি রোড: সাগর পাবলিশার্স (৯৩৫৮৯৪৪), বিমানবন্দর: বুক ওয়ার্ম (৯১২০৩৮৭), নরসিংদী: বই পুস্তক (০১৮১৮৫৩৪৮৯৩), কুষ্টিয়া: বইমেলা (০১৭১১ ৫৭৫৬০৬), চট্টগ্রাম: বাতিঘর (০১৭১৩০৪৩৪৪)