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## Multi-sectoral response crucial to end tuberculosis

Say experts as one dies in every 12 minutes with TB in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at an event yesterday stressed a multi-sectoral strategy to accelerate efforts to eliminate Tuberculosis (TB) by 2035 in the country.

Deaths from TB have reduced from 45 deaths per 100,000 in 2015 to 25 in 2021, according to the National TB Control Programme by the Director General of Health Services (DGHS).

"Despite our efforts, TB is still common in the country, with one person being infected with the disease every minute," said Dr Md Mahafuzer Rahman Sarker, line director at the DGHS, while addressing the event in Dhaka.

International Center for Diarrheal Disease and Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b) organised the event marking World TB Day 2023.

Dr Md Mahafuzer Rahman Sarker said that around 375,000 individuals were infected with TB in 2021, of whom 42,000 died.

"This means that one life was lost every

twelve minutes," he said.

In his opening remarks, Prof Dr Kazi Shafiqul Halim, Director (MBDC) at the DGHS, said, "To achieve the goal of reducing TB infection to 95 percent by 2035, it is necessary to increase the rate of detection, notification, ensuring services for all as well as increasing public awareness."

**Around 375,000 individuals were infected with TB in 2021, of whom 42,000 died. This means that one life was lost every twelve minutes.**

DR MD MAHAFUZER RAHMAN SARKER  
Line Director, DGHS

The event was attended by 18 lawmakers, including Shirin Akhter, Subarna Mustafa, Aroma Dutta, and Rashed Khan Menon. They expressed their solidarity on the need for engagement and commitment of political leaders to eliminate TB.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

**SWEET TRADITION TURNS SOUR...** As Ramadan approaches, the soaring price of dates has become a cause of concern for many across the country. The sweet fruit, a traditional staple during the holy month, has become costlier alongside other most-consumed items during this period. This has dampened the festivities for many who are already feeling the pinch. This photo was taken from Karwan Bazar kitchen market yesterday.

## US human-rights report biased

Says Hasan Mahmud

BSS, Dhaka

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday said the recently published US human-rights report has been prepared after collecting information from biased sources, and so, it is one-sided.

He said this while replying to journalists after exchanging views with leaders of Bangladesh Federal Union of Newspaper Press Workers and Bangladesh Newspaper Workers' Federation at the ministry conference room at the secretariat in Dhaka.

"They collected data not from a single source, but rather from different anti-government and biased sources. So, the report is one-sided. Definitely, we are not rejecting the entire

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

**PRAYER TIMING**

**MARCH 23**

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:55	12:45	4:45	6:16	7:45
JAMAAT 5:30	1:15	5:00	6:20	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Early pregnancy linked to low income

Speakers reveal findings of survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pregnancy before the age of 18 is prevalent among those with low per capita household income, revealed a survey.

The prevalence is the highest (46.3 percent) among the lowest per capita household income group (less than Tk 2,500 per month), said the report.

It also revealed that among the participants, 35.8 percent of women in Bangladesh conceive their first child before turning 18. The highest incidence of early pregnancy was observed in Rangpur division (48.9 percent).

The findings of the report, titled "Monitoring the Implementation of SDGs for Ensuring Girls and Child Rights in Bangladesh", were shared at an event yesterday, jointly organised by Plan International Bangladesh, Aparajevo Bangladesh, Yes Bangladesh and Youth for Change under the Y-moves Project.

All the organisations conducted the survey.

Shamim Ahmed, executive director of Yes Bangladesh, presented the keynote at the event.

The survey results show that decisions regarding family-planning

methods are taken jointly by males and females in 69.3 percent of households. They mostly receive family planning information from television (53.7 percent), community workers (33.2 percent) and social media (29.5 percent).

Around 18 percent of the

**"The government is working towards ensuring a women-friendly society. Gender-based violence is prevalent all over the world. The unpaid job of care-giving, mostly performed by women, is yet to be recognised. We have to change this situation."**

LAWMAKER ADIBA ANZUM MITA

surveyed women faced physical violence over the last 12 months; 21.9 percent, the highest, reported physical violence in households with a per capita monthly income of less than Tk2,500. In households with a per capita monthly income of more than Tk 10,000, physical violence was found to be the lowest

(9.5 percent).

Among the surveyed women, 14.7 percent reported that they faced obstacles from male family members in terms of education and employment, which was found high in Mymensingh division (20.1 percent).

The findings reveal that about 46.2 percent of households have children who faced physical punishment and/or psychological aggression at home and outside (educational institutions, public places, transport, etc).

The survey was conducted between June 2021 and January 2022. A total of 3,175 households were randomly chosen and interviewed, especially women belonging to the reproductive age group (15-49 years) from 64 districts in Bangladesh.

Lawmaker Aparajita Haque, who is also a member of the parliamentary caucus of child rights and standing committee (post, telecommunication, and technology), said, "The government is determined to ensure the rights of women and girl children. This survey result will help us to enrich our efforts."

Lawmaker Adiba Anzum Mita,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## 'Fresh SCBA election in three months'

Demand group of SC lawyers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of "general lawyers" of the Supreme Court yesterday demanded holding a fresh election to the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in three months under an acceptable election-conducting subcommittee, led by a senior lawyer.

They claimed that no election took place on March 15 and 16, as the attempt to hold it with help of police failed.

In a views exchange meeting, they adopted a resolution saying that a meeting will be held before April 1 to form a 14-member interim committee, which will make a voter list under SCBA's constitution and arrange a fair election in three months.

The meeting was held at the South Hall of SCBA in the capital, with its former secretary Gias Uddin Ahmed in the chair. Former SCBA leaders and their general members attended the meeting.

Pro-BNP lawyers' panel president candidate and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## 'DNCC to monitor kitchen markets during Ramadan'

Says Mayor Atiqul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Md Atiqul Islam yesterday said they would monitor the kitchen markets strictly to keep the supply of daily essentials and their prices in a stable state during the month of Ramadan.

Addressing a view-exchange meeting at Nagar Bhaban with the business leaders of different kitchen markets under the north city corporation, the mayor said in different countries, the price of essentials comes down during festivals, especially while celebrating religious festivals. But the scenario is the opposite in Bangladesh, the mayor said.

"We will take stern actions if anyone increases the price unnecessarily during Ramadan," he warned.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

## MATERNAL, CHILD SURVIVAL US, UK officials celebrate progress of Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and British High Commission (BHC) co-hosted an event celebrating Bangladesh's progress over the last decade towards ending preventable deaths of mothers, newborns and children.

USAID and BHC co-hosted the event jointly with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The 2012 Call to Action was a groundbreaking event that catalysed a global movement to dramatically improve maternal and child survival, said a press release.

Following Bangladesh's Call to Action launch 10 years ago, the government reiterated its commitment to end preventable child deaths by 2035 by building on its previous successes in reducing child mortality, the release added.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## A small step towards former glory

Lalbagh Fort's 'Hammamkhana' restored

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lalbagh Fort, the 17th-century monument present in Dhaka, has seen multiple renovations throughout the centuries. However, perhaps few are as impressive as the complete restoration, retrofitting and 3D architectural documentation of the Mughal "Hammamkhana (royal bathhouse)" in the fort.

The project by the Department of Archaeology and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, which was inaugurated on March 24, 2021, came to an end yesterday. It has been funded by the US Department of State's Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) programme, with an allocation of \$1,85,933 (around Tk 2 crore).

State Minister of Cultural Affairs KM Khalid was the chief guest at the



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

closing ceremony of the project, with special guests US Ambassador to Bangladesh Peter Haas and Cultural Affairs Secretary MD Abul Mansur. The event was chaired by Chandan Kumar Dey, director general of the Department of Archaeology.

"We have restored 11 cultural heritage spots in Bangladesh in the past 20 years through the AFCP, and we are glad to be a part of the restoration project for such a marvellous structure," said the US ambassador.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

**"We have restored 11 cultural heritage spots in Bangladesh in the past 20 years through the AFCP, and we are glad to be a part of the restoration project for such a marvellous structure."**

PETER HAAS  
US Ambassador

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