

Sale of antibiotics without doctor's prescription must be stopped: PM

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Online Desk: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said that sale of antibiotics without doctor's prescription should be stopped and necessary restrictions should be imposed. "Antibiotics are available everywhere in Bangladesh, and the sale of such antibiotics without a doctor's prescription must be stopped," she said, reports UNB.

The Prime Minister said this while Director of Biology Department of Ineos Institute of Antimicrobial Research, Oxford University, Prof Timothy E Walsh called on her at her official residence Ganabhaban. After the meeting, PM's speech writer Md. Nazrul Islam briefed the reporters. The PM told the Oxford University researcher that once antibiotics were given from community clinics of the country, but now that has been stopped. "Now antibiotics are given from the public hospitals with prescriptions of physicians," she said.

Urging proper use of antibiotics, the Prime Minister said that efforts are being made to ensure that antibiotics are not sold everywhere in Bangladesh. Timothy E Walsh said that anti-microbial resistance (AMR) has become an epidemic in the world eight now. Noting that if it is not prevented now, it will take a more dire form in the future, he expressed fear that millions may die as a result. He praised Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's actions during her duties as co-chair of the Global Leaders Group on AMR.

At the meeting, the Prime Minister highlighted the various steps taken by the government for the overall development of the health sector, including the establishment of specialized hospitals and institutes such as National Institute of Ophthalmology, Sheikh Russel National Gastroenterology Institute and Hospital, Cardiovascular Institute, and Neurosciences Hospital. Sheikh Hasina said her government has given special emphasis to research in various fields including agriculture, basic and medical science. She said that apart from providing scholarships for general students, fellowships are given in 200 higher education institutions, especially in PhD, post-doctoral and research fields.

The Oxford University professor proposed to introduce Bangabandhu IOI Fellowship from Ineos Institute of Antimicrobial Research for Bangladeshi students for research in medical and basic sciences under the fellowship. In response, the Prime Minister gave her consent in-principle for the fellowship. In addition, Timothy E Walsh also proposed a partnership of the Bangladesh National Parliament on AMR with the Caucuses of the British Parliament and the Prime Minister gave her positive response.