

71pc men, 28pc women of lower income group smoke

By A Staff Reporter

About 71 per cent of men and 20 per cent of women in the lower socio-income group have the habit of smoking.

Thirty-nine per cent of male doctors smoke while the percentage of smoker male medical students is 28.

These were stated by Dr Jahanara Begum and Dr Arunodaya Barman in their paper presented to the two-day national seminar on "smoking and health" on Monday at the NIPSOM auditorium.

Smokers falling in the Tk 501 to 1,000 income group in Dhaka city spend about 31.5 per cent of their total expenditure on smoking.

This was revealed in a paper read out by Mr Matlur Rahman, an Assistant Professor of Department of Statistics, Dhaka University, at the seminar. The findings of Mr Rahman based on a survey on 1400 people belonging to different economic groups in Dhaka metropolitan city. Of them, it was found, 590 (42.12 per cent) were smokers.

The survey showed that smokers falling in Tk 1001 to Tk 1500 income group spend over 27 per cent of their total expenditure on smoking. The comparatively richer section of people spend less percentage of their expenditure on smoking. The percentage is 4.29 for the income group above Tk 3,000; 6.79 for income group between Tk 2501 and 3,000; 6.43 for Tk 2001 to Tk 2550 group; 10.71 for Tk 1501 to Tk 2,000 and 13.21 up to Tk 500 group. the survey showed.

Epidemiological investigations by different scientists all over the world show that tobacco smoking plays an important role in the causation of a wide range of diseases including various forms of cancer bronchitis ulcer and cardiovascular diseases.

A study conducted in Admajinagar and Narayanganj

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Lower group

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city area shows that 70 per cent residents in Admajinagar are smokers while it is 58 in Narayanganj where the residents are of mixed socio-economic groups. The daily average spending on smoking per person was found to be about taka five in Narayanganj and Taka three in Admajinagar. This was because the smokers in Narayanganj consume better quality cigarettes.

Another study conducted in Tongi and Joydevpur area indicates that about 70 per cent people in Tongi are smokers while it is 68 in Joydevpur.

A study on smoking habit of household — heads of Dhaka city reveals that the majority of smokers start smoking within fourteen years of age and 81 per cent of the smokers get to smoking through friend circles.

It is also revealed that the number of smokers whose fathers also smoke is very high while the number of smokers whose fathers do not smoke is the least.

It is stated in the studies that all the smokers have some sort of knowledge about the harmful effects of smoking on health and that they are of the opinion that smoking should be strictly prohibited in all public places including buses steamers trains aeroplanes cinema halls auditoriums and in public meetings and gatherings.