

Life expectancy now 70.7 years

Total fertility rate static, infant mortality rate down, says BBS survey

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Life expectancy at birth increased to 70.7 years last year in Bangladesh from 70.4 years in 2013, according to a survey of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

For women, life expectancy was 71.6 years and for men 69.1 years, says the survey titled Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2014.

Experts say this is a 'remarkable achievement that reflects an overall improvement of public health scenario in the country.

Life expectancy was 67.7 years in 2010 that rose to 69.0 years in 2011 and 69.4 years in 2012.

The total fertility rate per woman aged 15-49 remained unchanged at 2.11 for the last two years. The rate hovered between 2.11 and 2.12 since 2010.

AKM Ashraful Haque, project director of Monitoring the Situation of Vital Statistics Project of the BBS, presented the survey report at a seminar at Bangabandhu International Convention Centre in the capital yesterday.

He said infant mortality rate dropped to 30 per 1,000 live births last year from 36 in 2010. Under-five mortality also decreased to 38 per 1,000 live births from 47 in 2010.

Maternal mortality ratio per 1,000 live births came down to 1.93 in 2014 from 2.16 in 2010. Besides, the rate of disability dropped to nine last year from 10.18 in 2010, says the survey.

Mean age at marriage for males increased to 25.9 years in 2014 from 23.9 in 2010. For females, however, it dipped to 18.3 years from 18.4.

Experts have lauded the progress in the demographic indicators, but say the country's major challenge now is improving people's quality of life.

Bangladeshis now live longer due to improvement in public health scenario. This would result in a rise in the number of the ageing population,

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which would put pressure on the country's economy and the healthcare system, said Dr Abdur Razzaque, emeritus scientist at the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b).

The country now has a huge number of young population, which would gradually go down, he said.

According to a 2014 report of the UN Population Fund, some 30 per cent or 47.6 million of the 158.5 million Bangladeshis are young (10-24 years), and it will be between 10 and 12 per cent by 2030.

Teachers of the university were present at the inauguration.

