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'TB is a Major Hurdle for Indian Women'

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Express News Service

CHENNAI: Tuberculosis is one of the leading cause of maternal mortality, about 5.10 lakh deaths due to TB in women were reported in 2013 and TB kills 3 lakh to 5 lakh people in India each year, according to National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT). "Tuberculosis leads to increased maternal and infant mortality and TB is associated with low birth weight babies and increased risk," said Dr Soumya Swaminathan, Director NIRT.

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National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis conducted a symposium titled "Impact of Tuberculosis on Women and Children" on Monday ahead of World Tuberculosis Day on Tuesday. She also spoke about how

women were a high risk group when it came to Tuberculosis.

Lalithaa Kumaramangalam, Chairperson of National Commission for Women said socio-political conflicts in the country really impact the health system of the country. Awareness about HIV was good, but awareness about TB is low as it was a curable disease, and people have taken it lightly. The message should be, TB can not be cured if not diagnosed early, she added. During a panel discussion, the panelists agreed that diabetes was also a risk factor of TB. As diabetes cases go up, the rate of TB cases also might raise. The programme was attended by obstetricians, gynecologists, pediatricians, social scientists and public health specialists.

- Tuberculosis affects nearly three million people in WHO's South-East Asia Region every year
- WHO South-East Asia Region has made gains against TB and is on track to achieve the global target of 50% reduction in TB death rates by 2015 as compared with 1990.
- The access to TB care has expanded substantially since the year 2000 with 88% treatment success rates. Almost 22 million TB patients have been treated

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