

## **SAUDI ARABIA: Stop TB to Launch Awareness Campaign on Tuberculosis**

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The Stop TB group in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, joined with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Directorate of Health Affairs in Jeddah, the Ministry of Health, and volunteers to launch their annual TB campaign on March 27. The two-day campaign commemorating World TB Day will be celebrated simultaneously in five large malls in Jeddah. The campaign will highlight TB symptoms and what individuals should do if they are experiencing these symptoms. For the eighth consecutive year, the youth of the Makkah region will emphasize TB awareness, this year focusing on the relationship between HIV and TB. This will be the first time any group will present HIV and TB awareness campaigns together socially. Mohammed Bakhriebe, leader and founder of Stop TB, explained that the Jeddah Stop TB youth group has been spreading TB awareness and information for the past seven years to save future generations from this disease. Bakhriebe stressed that preventive medicine and annual checkups are the key to a healthy lifestyle. This year, a number of volunteers from medical institutions and hospitals will assist in spreading awareness to reach the goal of stopping TB. The volunteers will use digital media to further the goals of the campaign by participating in question and answer sessions, which will be moderated through iPads and monitors. Bakhriebe also announced that the campaign was relying on smart, environmentally friendly products to raise awareness and has also aligned with the sport of car racing to draw attention to its message. He noted that Lamborghini, McLaren, and Lotus are supporting the campaign by offering youth the opportunity to test-drive vehicles after they have attended sessions on the risks of shishah and cigarettes and their relationship to TB. TB is under control currently in Saudi Arabia, but there are chances of it increasing. In the past, TB was only found in poor areas, but it has now become more common and is spreading. There were 4,015 TB cases diagnosed in the kingdom in 2011.

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