

166 Rohingya refugees die of diseases

A total of 166 Rohingya refugees died of diarrhoea, acute respiratory problem, gastric and gynecological diseases at different camps in Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The information was revealed in a recent survey conducted by the experts of the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control Research (IEDCR).

The experts conducted their survey on the disease, situation among 1,22,480 inmates of nine refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and one camp in Bandarban districts.

IEDCR research scientist Dr E Karim said that 159 Rohingyas, out of the 22,707 affected, died of gastric, gynecological disease, scabies and injuries.

He said two refugees died of diarrhoea which affected a total 25,304 in the camps. At least 9,580 Rohingyas were suffering from acute respiratory infection and 107 had Malaria, he added.

He said that a total of 16 government medical teams with 29 doctors were working in the refugee camps.

A total 404 tubewells were sunk and 2253 latrines were installed in the refugee camps.

In one camp in Bandarban district, out of the total 8925 inmates, 698 were affected by diarrhoea but only one died.

Three inmates of the camp died of gastric, gynecological problems, scabies and injuries out of the total affected 3029 since they came to Bangladesh.

A total of 674 Rohingyas were suffering from acute respiratory infection while another 64 were suffering from malaria.



EID HAIRDO : Rush at a city salon yesterday. —Star photo

Sweet home

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tween Taka 5 to Taka 90 above the normal fares at the Gabtoli, Saidabad and Mohakhali inter-district bus terminals in the city.

A Noakhali-bound passenger had to buy a Taka 80 ticket for Taka 150 while a Chittagong-bound man said he brought the Taka 85 ticket for Taka 160.

Bus tickets for the Northern districts increased by a lower percentage as passengers are reportedly preferring to avail railway services.

Some travellers complained that a number of transport companies were selling bus tickets only for longer routes. A Jessore-bound passenger said he was compelled to purchase a Dhaka-Khulna bus ticket.

Inter-district buses arriving in the capital were mostly empty during the day.

Meanwhile, the ticket counters at the Kamalapur Railway Station was found to be relatively less crowded during the day as most trains departing for the major cities were booked in advance.

Ticket black-marketeers

were also seen hanging round the station.

A passenger who wanted to buy a Dhaka-Rangpur ticket was initially refused at the counter as it was sold out. But he was advised by the salesman at the counter that he could purchase a Dhaka-Parbatipur ticket, at a higher price, and get off at Rangpur.

When the passenger agreed to buy the ticket for Taka 130 and made the payment, he was given a Dhaka-Rangpur ticket with a face value of Taka 120. When inquired as to why he was not given a Dhaka-Parbatipur ticket for which he paid, the salesman bluntly told him that he could take it or leave it.

Ticket black marketeers were also active outside the Kamalapur Station area and were selling tickets at over Taka 15 to Taka 50 of the actual price on the ticket.

The launch terminals at Shadarghat were also busy during the day as a large number were using the riverine routes to reach their destinations around the country.

UN envoy

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claim Bangladesh and the international community have rejected.

Describing his mission as a humanitarian one, Eliasson said that he would try to revive Bangladesh-Myanmar repatriation talks which broke down because of non-cooperation from Myanmar.

Relations between Bangladesh and Myanmar have chilled since Dec 21, when a Myanmar patrol killed on BDR jawan and a civilian in an attack on a BDR outpost. Since then the influx of refugees turned into a torrent.

Myanmar also failed to send its Foreign Minister to Bangladesh, scheduled to arrive in February to return Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman's November trip to Yangon.

Eliasson said the UN wants to play a catalytic role for a lasting solution to the refugee problem.

Eliasson, who visited some of the refugee camps on Wednesday, said, "It was a moving sight. About 80,000 of the refugees are still without shelter."

Eliasson in Yangon

BANGKOK, Apr 2: A senior United Nations official arrived in Yangon today to begin an investigation into the flood of Muslim refugees fleeing Myanmar to neighbouring Bangladesh, an official report said, reports AFP.

Yangon radio, in a broadcast monitored here, said UN Undersecretary General Jan Eliasson arrived in Yangon from Dhaka this afternoon at the invitation of Myanmar Foreign Minister Ohn Gyaaw.

Russian Finance Minister sacked

MOSCOW, Apr 2: Russian President Boris Yeltsin today sacked Finance Minister Yegor Gaidar, architect of the republic's ambitious economic reform programme, a residential spokesman told Reuter.

Another report says conservatives and radical reformers launched a new attack Thursday on the government of Russian President Yeltsin prior to next week's session of parliament.

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Police raid Golden Temple: 6 arrested

AMRITSAR, Apr 2: Police raided the Golden Temple Complex here today on suspicion that pilgrims' hostilities in Sikhdom's holiest shrine were sheltering Sikh militants police said, reports AFP.

Police cordoned off the complex before dawn and searched hostilities in the premises in a three-hour operation that ended with the arrest of 10 people, four of whom were later released, Amritsar police chief H S Dhillon said.

They did not enter the holy of holies, he said.

The raid, conducted by police from the neighbouring Punjab district of Kapurthala, was the first time the premises of the Golden Temple had been searched by police in six months.

Temple managers accused police of harassing innocent pilgrims and hurting the sentiments of Sikhs.

"It was an attempt to vitiate the saintly atmosphere of the temple," said Harinder Singh Khalsa, Secretary of the powerful Sikh Temple Management Committee based in this holy city.

Khalsa resigned as Indian ambassador to Norway to protest the June 1984 army assault on the Golden Temple codenamed Blue Star.

Like a bird

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crimination is being waged by Yangon against the Muslims," one Western diplomat told AFP.

According to the letter Muslims are systematically stripped of their land which is then handed over to Buddhists in the area as Yangon tries to wipe out the Muslim majority.

The trip to Arakan, which was organised by the junta, turned into a fiasco after plain-clothed military intelligence officers began beating up villagers who tried to talk to the envoys.

A confidential report prepared by one of the diplomats who made the trip tells how a villager had a revolver put to his stomach by a Myanmar military intelligence officer as he tried to talk to an ambassador.

Other villagers were openly dragged away and beaten up for talking to the envoys.

"When we felt that the persons who were speaking to us had the imminent danger of being physically eliminated we left them," said the diplomat in his report.

The report concluded that the visiting diplomats came away convinced that the Muslims were being persecuted by Yangon and that an uneasy calm prevailed in the area.

United Nations Under-Secretary General Jan K. Eliasson, who is on a special trip to solve the problem of the Muslim refugees who have been flooding into Bangladesh from Myanmar arrived Yangon from Dhaka today.

During his stay he is expected to visit the Arakan region.

The Myanmar junta has repeatedly denied it was waging war against the Muslims, insisting its troops are involved in the anti-insurgency operation in the area and that many of the refugees were illegal immigrants.

JN Hall

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youths and finally managed to arrest three youths from Kamalapur area while they were heading towards Mugdpara after dropping two of their accomplices at Syedabad.

Another youth connected with the ring was later arrested from a house at T & T colony.

The arrested are Monwar Haider Manu, student of Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute, Abdul Mukit Haider, Aslam and Jahangir.

Police source said Munna, student of Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute also an alleged terrorist, led the group but managed to escape arrest.

Munna, a leader of the student wing of Jatiya Party was earlier arrested for brandishing arms at Jagannath College last year.



Police with the recovered spurious orsoline, raw materials and equipment.

8 killed in Comilla road accidents

From Our Correspondent
COMILLA, Apr 2: At least six persons were killed and 21 others injured, in a road accident at Korpai in Buriachang upazila on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway this morning.

The accident took place when a Dhaka-bound bus from Comilla collided with a speeding truck coming from opposite direction at 6.15 am.

Of the victims, two were killed on the spot while the others succumbed to their injuries at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH).

Dr Abdul Kader, Principal, Comilla Victoria College and

The Midnight File

Libya to compensate Venezuela for damages to embassy

NEW YORK, (United Nations), Apr 2: Libya will compensate Venezuela for damages to its embassy in Tripoli that was set ablaze by demonstrators angry over UN sanctions against Libya, its ambassador here said today. Libyan ambassador Ali Ahmed Al Houndary made the pledge in a meeting with Security Council Acting President Simbarashe Sibmanenduku, the ambassador from Zimbabwe, diplomatic sources said, reports AFP.

Albanian government resigns

TIRANA, Apr 2: Albania's government resigned today following last week's landslide victory at the polls for the opposition democratic party which closed the book on 45 years of isolationist communist rule. The government of outgoing Prime Minister Vilson Ahmeti, who submitted his resignation to President Ramiz Alia, was expected to carry on in a caretaker capacity until a new government is formed, a spokesman for the Democratic Party told AFP.

Department store robbery: No arrest yet

By Staff Correspondent
Police are yet to arrest any of the robbers involved in looting goods and cash from a department store at Hatirpol Wednesday evening.

A high official of police said that police through different agencies including the Detective Branch were haunting the robbers but failed to arrest any till filing of this report last night.

A group of armed men numbering around 25 looted gold-ornaments, cash, sarees and cosmetics from Shtol Department Store as well as from the customers inside the store Wednesday evening.

Cresson quits

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The recent defeats in regional and district voting prompted renewed calls from the opposition for early parliamentary elections and even the resignation of Mitterrand, half-way through his second seven-year term.

Mitterrand consulted with more than a dozen Cabinet ministers and senior Socialists on Tuesday and Wednesday as he deliberated his response to the elections.

According to French law, Cresson's entire Cabinet must resign, and Berengery will be charged with forming a new one.

Unconfirmed French radio reports early Thursday said Berengery's post as finance minister would be filled by the governor of the Bank of France, Jacques de Larosiere.

Another report adds: Pierre Berengery entered government from the back door, a self-made man who helped modernize the economy while one of its most effective finance ministers.

A pragmatist and skillful negotiator enjoying the full confidence of President Francois Mitterrand, Berengery, 66, won plaudits at home and respect abroad during two stints as head of the government's most important ministry.



Released Kashmiri politicians wave to supporters yesterday at Srinagar airport after 25 months of detention. —AFP photo

Freed Kashmiri leaders vow to fight for rights

SRINAGAR, India, Apr 2: Five top Kashmiri political leaders, just released from prison, said on Wednesday they would fight for the right to self-determination for the people of Indian-ruled Jammu and Kashmir state, reports Reuter.

In a joint statement, they ruled out any solution to the issue within the frame work of the Indian constitution and urged human rights organisations to intervene to stop atrocities they said were being committed by Indian security forces against Kashmiris.

The statement accused India of going back on its commitment to settle the Kashmir dispute through a plebiscite as guaranteed by the UN Security Council.

The leaders, who met reporters soon after arriving in Srinagar, the state summer capital and centre of a secessionist revolt, said they would refuse to be a party to any political process within the framework of the Indian constitution.

The five leaders -- Ali Shah Gilani, Maulvi Abbas Ansari, Abdul Ghani Lone, Abdul Ghani, Qazi Nissar Ahmed -- were released on Tuesday and political analysts said the move could be a step towards restoring normality in the troubled state.

"We have taken a vow to continue our fight for the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir," the statement said. "We will under no circumstances betray the people who have laid down their lives."

The statement appealed to militant groups fighting to end Indian rule in the Himalayan valley to close ranks and desist from any activity that might harm their cause.

More than 6,000 people have been killed in the last two years after secessionist militants intensified their campaign for Kashmir's independence or its merger with Pakistan.

7 thieves stoned to death in West Bengal

NEW DELHI, Apr 2: Villagers angered by a sudden spurt in burglaries, stoned seven alleged thieves to death in two separate incidents in West Bengal state, Press Trust of India news agency reported Thursday, reports AP.

Five of the deaths occurred in the industrial Howrah and two in the neighbouring 24 Pargana district.

Beating of burglars is common in Indian villages, but rarely they are stoned to death.

Fake orsoline recovered

From A Correspondent
GOPALGANJ, Apr 2: Gopalganj police recently recovered huge quantity of fake orsoline and arrested one person engaged in making the item.

On secret tips, CID Inspector Akbar Hossain with Sub Inspector, Sunil Kumar and an informer raided a house near the Model School in the town and arrested Firoz Khan red-handed. Police also recovered huge empty foil roll for making saline packets and impure raw materials.

A case has been filed with Gopalganj police.

KAFCO

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economically with the alleged overpricing of the project by about 80 million US dollars and the cost over-run claimed by the contractors.

Three international experts last February said the 456-million-dollar project was overpriced by 80 million US dollars.

A member of the KAFCO Board of Directors representing Bangladesh yesterday said that he was not sure about the time of the resumption of the construction work.

According to KAFCO sources, it will take six to eight months time for 're-mobilisation'.

When asked he told this correspondent that the Bangladesh authorities would 'henceforth watch things now that everything is open'.

Observers say that Bangladesh authorities need to examine all aspects as to what led to such a high amount of cost over-run.

Meanwhile, according to sources, the MPs belonging to Awami League and the Five-Party alliance are going to raise the KAFCO issue with Parliament which goes into session April 12.

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