

Malaria in Khagrachhari kills 44 in 2 months

At least 50,000 attacked as disease spreads in remote areas

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Malaria has become alarming in remote areas of eight upazilas of Khagrachhari district, killing 44 people in about two months.

At least 47,000 are attacked with the disease, according to sources at Khagrachhari Civil Surgeon's office.

Unofficial sources however put the death toll at 70 and the number of affected people at over 50,000.

Sources at Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital said 100 to 120 malaria patients come to the hospital a day. The figure rises to 150 at times.

Officials statistics said over 2,000 people were killed and 1.8 lakh attacked with the disease in last one decade in the hill district.

The disease is almost endemic in about 50 villages in remote areas, from where poor affected people can not come to the district

headquarters for treatment due to bad communication system. Health workers from upazila health centers seldom visit the affected areas due to bad communication system.

This correspondent during a visit yesterday saw rush of malaria patients at Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital, many on floors due to lack of beds.

Out of total 90 patients, 60 were attacked with malaria, mostly coming from different villages in

Sadar upazila. Patients can hardly come from remote areas due to bad communication problem, some patients said.

"There are many malaria patients in our village but poor people can not come as there is no means of transport", said father of four-year-old Sohel Chakma from Nainail.

There are mainly two kinds of malaria in the hills—Plus Modium Felicifurum and Plus Modium Vivex, doctors at the hospital said. About 90 per cent of the patient in Khagrachhari are attacked with Plus Modium Felicifurum type of malaria, Dr. Geeta Dev Barman said.

The hospital blood bank in-charge, Mohammad Abul Khair surveyed 196 patients in last two month. Among them, 84 were from indigenous Tripura community, 33 from Chakma, 11 from Marma and 68 were Bangalees. All were very poor.

Incidence of malaria is more during May-August among indigenous communities, particularly the Tripura community, said Khagrachhari Civil Surgeon (CS) Dr. Muhammad Abu Taher.

The disease spreads in hills during rains as the season is favourable for mosquito breeding, he said.

Alongside government efforts, an international NGO—Global Fund for Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM)—launched a programme this month to control malaria in Khagrachhari, the civil surgeon said.



PHOTO: STAR

Malaria patients on the floor of Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital yesterday.

Forest guards fire at killer tiger in Mongla

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Forest guards fired 30 shots on Tuesday to kill the Royal Bengal Tiger that killed an old woman and 52 cows and goats at Baidyamari and adjoining villages in Mongla upazila in last few days.

Forest guards opened fire when the tiger was seen going away with a cow from Baidyamari village. But neither the tiger escaped with its prey.

Divisional Forest Officer

(DFO) S M Shahidullah of East Wing of Sundarban Forest Division (SFD) said forest guards opened fire out of panic, not to kill the tiger.

Special teams have been formed with forest guards and local people to prevent the tiger from entering human habitats near the Sundarbans.

According to census conducted by SFD in 2004, there were a total of 419 tigers in the Sundarbans. Of these, 147 were in Khulna Range,

112 in Satkhira Range, 97 in Swarankhola Range and 63 in Chandpuri Range.

DFO Shahidullah told this correspondent yesterday that 'severe food crisis' is the main reason for which tigers enter human habitations.

Tigers like deer, monkey, monkey and different species reptiles as food, which have become scarce in the forest, the DFO said.

None has legal right to kill a tiger, he said.

Former BNP MP Talukder sent to jail in Barguna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Former BNP lawmaker Motiur Rahman Talukder was sent to jail when he surrendered before a court in Barguna on Tuesday.

Elected from Barguna-3 (Amtali) constituency, Talukder faces three cases.

Nizam Pada of Nachnapara village in Amtali upazila filed a case with local police station against him for taking Tk 30,000 bribe promising a job to his son March 29.

Nasir Pada of Amtali town filed a cheating case against him on June 7. Nasir alleged that the lawmaker took money from him on an assurance to provide him a job. But he did not provide him with any job.

Amalai Awami League (AL) president Nurul Islam Mridha filed another case against him on April 16 for demanding Tk 1 lakh extortion during BNP rule. Mridha alleged that he had paid him Tk 50,000 on April 15, 2003.

Earlier, joint forces launched several raids at his residence but in vain.

Ex-Pabna BNP MP, 3 party leaders sued for extortion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A former BNP lawmaker and three other party leaders have been sued here in connection with an extortion case.

Former BNP lawmaker KM Anwerul Islam, elected from Pabna-3 constituency, and Faridpur upazila BNP Secretary Abdul Hakim, Upazila BNP Organising Secretary Idris Ali Master and Hakim's father Ishaque Ali were sued on Tuesday, police said.

Police said Shariful Islam Mithu filed the case against them with Faridpur police on June 19. He alleged that the four had demanded Tk 3 lakh toll from him in 2006 and occupied his 16 decimal land for refusal.

CLASH WITH POLICE LAST YEAR

86 Netrakona AL men chargesheeted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Netrakona district Awami League president Shamsujjuha and secretary Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru and 84 other leaders and activists of the party and its front organisations were chargesheeted yesterday in a case filed last year for alleged attack on police.

SI Mashrakul Anwar of Netrakona Sadar police station submitted the charge sheet to the court of a First Class Magistrate. SI Anwar was the investigation officer (IO) of the case.

In the charge sheet, SI Anwar

said, on May 10 last year, the 14-party alliance led by district AL president Shamsujjuha brought out a procession in the district town demanding updating the voter list.

During the procession, party men attacked injured at least 20 policemen including Additional Police Superintendent Sanaullah and the then SI of Netrakona police station time Ali Osman.

The then SI Mir Rakibul Islam filed a case with Netrakona sadar police station in this connection accusing over 100 leaders of Awami

League and its front organisations, the charge sheet said.

On May 10 last year, a clash ensued as law enforcers intercepted the 14-party alliance procession at Mukterpara bridge in Netrakona town. At least 20 police men and 50 processionists including district AL president Samsujjuha and secretary Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru were injured.

Talking to his correspondent, Shamsujjuha and Khasru claimed that the case was case, filed only to harass Awami League leaders. All the accused are on bail.

Flood situation improving in Moulvibazar, Sylhet

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The flood situation improved in Moulvibazar and Sylhet districts yesterday. All the rivers in Moulvibazar are flowing below their danger marks in Moulvibazar. But they were still above their marks in Sylhet, officials said yesterday afternoon.

Our Moulvibazar Correspondent reports: The flood situation in Moulvibazar started improving Tuesday night. All the rivers in the district are flowing below their danger marks, official sources said yesterday.

With flood water receded from habitats, affected people are now demanding repair of breached river embankments immediately for protection from possible flood again in the current monsoon.

Four out of seven upazilas of the district were flooded by waters from Monu, Dholai and Juri rivers.

Sufferings of affected mounted as the areas were inundated twice in a month. Kamalganj upazila was the worst affected by the current spate of flood as the Dholai river breached its embankment at several points in the area.

Six out of nine unions and Kamalganj municipality reeled under water twice in a month.

About 40 educational institutes in the upazila have been damaged.

Our Staff Correspondent reports from Sylhet: In Sylhet city, Kamalgarh, Chhararpar, Manipur Rajbari, Mendibag, Kolapara, Ghashitola, Sheikhaq, Tultikor areas were still underwater.

Water Development Board (WDB) Superintending Engineer of GM Shamsur Rahman said the Surma river was flowing 42 cm and 47 cm above the danger marks in Sylhet city and at Sunamganj district headquarters at 6 pm yesterday, WDB sources said.

The river was flowing 27 cm and 133 cm above the red marks at Kanaighat and Amolshid in Zakiganj. The Kushiyara was also flowing 83 cm above the danger level at Sheolaghata in Beanibazar.

A stone laden cargo vessel—MV Asia drowned in Surma at Chhatak yesterday morning. However none was killed.



Flooded Teroratan area in Sylhet city yesterday.

10x3

9x3

6x2