

Poor state of preparedness to fight swine flu in N dists

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Almost all private hospitals and clinics in frontier Rajshahi and other 15 northern districts are remaining out of the government's preparedness programme against H1N1 swine flu epidemic in terms of isolation capacity and clinical assessment.

"Private hospitals and clinics are yet to be instructed for the preparedness. We expect them to respond to the common call for creating isolation wards in advance," said Dr AKM Nur Kutubul Alam, director of health for Rajshahi division.

"In case of any steep rise of positive cases, we might need extra health infrastructure that the private hospitals can ensure," he said with an alert for flu outbreak in the country as its detection is increasing.

Following the government directives, the authorities of all public hospitals in the region are creating separate isolation wards and making inventory of essential drugs and preventive equipment, but

there is no arrangement for diagnostic laboratory or pathological tests of the flu.

Official sources said none is so far reported to be detected positive in Rajshahi region.

If any suspect is found, the authorities will have to depend on the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) or other organisations in Dhaka for testing H1N1 virus and the process might take more than two days for results.

"Pathological tests of H1N1 influenza are very costly as reagents needed for the test would cost as much as Tk 10,000," said Dr M Johurul Islam, civil surgeon of Rajshahi.

Dr Alam said healthcare personnel at Sona Mosque, Hili, Burimari and Bangla Bandha land ports in Rajshahi division have been put on high alert as part of preparedness to prevent swine flu outbreak.

Replying to a question, he said there would be no blood screening facility and thermal scanner for testing the incoming passengers at the land ports.

Isolation wards were already set up at Pabna, Rajshahi, Natore and Chapainawabganj spending around Tk 1.54 crore while the construction in other districts is underway.

A separate isolation ward is under construction near ward number 24 at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital where an isolated cabin and two emergency chambers were set up and a five-bed isolation ward has been prepared at Rajshahi Infectious Disease Hospital.

Apart from the isolation facilities, the authorities have made a handsome inventory of Oseltamivir, a drug, personal protection equipment (mask, gloves and gown) and disinfectants.

Upazila health complexes were also asked to create isolation facilities while necessary drugs and equipment would be provided from the district headquarters when necessary.

Orientation at every healthcare centre is going on, but maximum people are still away from any knowledge of the flu situation and what to do when affected.

Help establish prosperous country Nahid urges teachers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid called upon the teacher community to turn themselves into a vital means of changing days aiming at establishing a prosperous Bangladesh.

He was speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of a foundation-training course for the BCS education cadres (general and vocational) of 108 and 109 batches at National Academy for Education Management (NAEM) auditorium in the city, said a government handout yesterday.

Expressing the government's determination in establishing a 'Digital Bangladesh' he said, "The only way to make the dream true is to turn the young generation human resource."

He also informed that the government has taken a number of initiatives, including distribution of textbooks to secondary level, drafting of time-befitting education policy, inserting actual history of the Liberation War in the textbooks aiming at improvement of the country's education system.

Sheikh Ekramul Kabir, director general of NAEM, presided over the function while course director Mostafizur Rahman, Prof Bilkis Ara Begum, among others, spoke.

Climate change confce begins in Nepal today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A delegation of All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Climate Change and Environment will attend South Asian Regional Conference on Climate Change which begins in Nepal today, says a press release.

Samajtantrik Mahila Forum convener Rawshan Ara and member secretary Syeda Parveen Akhter in a statement said the incidents of violence against women increasing day by day as the culprits go unpunished.

Protesting the incident Karmojibi Nari Executive Director Rokeya Rafiq and General Secretary Sharmin Kabir in a statement said the incidents of violence against women increasing day by day as the culprits go unpunished.

Samajtantrik Mahila Forum convener Rawshan Ara and member secretary Syeda Parveen Akhter in a statement said the incidents of violence against women increasing day by day as the culprits go unpunished.

They urged the women community to build a united movement to stop violence and repression against women.

PHOTO: STAR
The National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources and Power and Port stages a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding full implementation of six-point Phulbari agreement.

Killing of Tamanna condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Different rights organisations yesterday condemned the killing of Tamanna Haque, a physician of gynaecology at Mitford Hospital, for dowry.

They also demanded proper investigation into the incident and punishment to the culprits.

Khaleda hosts Iftar for professionals

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Khaleda Zia yesterday hosted an Iftar party in honour of professional leaders and eminent citizens of the country on the Parliament's LD hall premises.

Teachers of different universities, physicians, engineers, lawyers, journalists, businesspersons and representatives of other professions and distinguished personalities attended the Iftar.

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