

BANGLADESH UPDATE

11,162
New cases in 24hrs

9,77,568
Total cases

15,593
Deaths

8,50,502
Recoveries

GLOBAL UPDATE

4,012,279
Deaths

185,572,381
Total cases

HEALTH SAFETY RULES

HC for steps to ensure those for arrestees

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the authorities to ensure proper maintenance of health safety guidelines while arresting people and sending them to courts for violating ongoing lockdown.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim asked Attorney General AM Amin Uddin to communicate with the authorities concerned regarding the issue.

During the latest lockdown, between 400 and 5,000 people were arrested and punished for the offence every day.

Breaching the health safety guidelines, the authorities carried 30 to 50 of these offenders in prison vans while taking them to police stations and placing them

before lower courts.

"This issue needs to be addressed," the HC bench observed.

The HC bench said this as Supreme Court lawyer Mohammad Asad Uddin placed the issue before the judge and prayed for a suo-moto directive to this effect.

Justice M Enayetur Rahim also asked the attorney general to talk to the registrar general of the Supreme Court so that necessary steps are taken to follow the health safety rules while the arrested people are produced before the courts across the country.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin told the HC bench that he would talk to the administration regarding this issue.

Last of the legends goes

FROM PAGE 1

spanning more than 50 years and nearly 60 films since the days of monochrome. He was affectionately called "the Tragedy King".

But Dilip was more than that.

From an intellectual to an urbanite, a rebel peasant to a lofty royal or even a swashbuckling youngster -- he played all roles with equal amounts of ease and panache and poured his heart into every character thrown at him.

Dilip formed a trio with Raj Kapoor and Dev Anand and established the "golden age" of Indian cinema. He went onto become an inspiration for generations of actors for his own unique style of acting.

He was recently hospitalised after he complained of breathlessness, and he passed away due to prolonged illness, his pulmonologist Jalil Parker told Indian media.

Dilip's family friend Faisal Farooqui tweeted through the actor's Twitter handle -- "With a heavy heart and profound grief, I announce the passing away of our beloved Dilip Saab, few minutes ago. We are from God and to Him we return".

Following the news, many actors, politicians, and media personalities took to social media to express their condolences and mourn the loss of one of India's oldest thespians.

Amitabh Bachchan expressed his condolences on Twitter, where he said Kumar was an institution himself and left behind an indelible mark on Indian cinema. Actors Akshay Kumar and Manoj Bajpayee were among those who offered their condolences on social media.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of legendary actor Dilip Kumar.

In a condolence message, she prayed for the salvation of the departed soul and conveyed deep sympathy to his bereaved family members.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, among others, also mourned the death of the veteran actor on Twitter.

One of the earliest stars of Bollywood, Kumar rose to a level of prominence never achieved in Indian cinema before.

A role model for many, he left behind a legacy for many acting enthusiasts.

Born Mohammed Yusuf Khan on December 11, 1922, in Peshawar, now part of Pakistan, Kumar was the son of Lala Ghulam Sarwar, a fruit seller, and Ayesha Begum.

He was one among 12 siblings and completed his schooling from the Barnes School, Deolali, Nashik, where he grew up in a mixed neighbourhood.

His childhood friend Raj Kapoor, too, later became his colleague in the film industry.

Dilip was an actor, producer, and philanthropist, best known for his work in Indian cinema.

He was fondly referred to as the "First Khan" of Bollywood and was credited for bringing the wave of method acting in Indian cinema.

Still pending as Aedes in action

FROM PAGE 1

Department under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (LGRD) central to it.

The network of the department will be extended to the district level for research, surveillance and training, he said, adding that it will find out which serotype of Aedes mosquitoes is active now.

Through identifying the serotype, it is possible to say whether the country will face an epidemic of dengue, and the authorities concerned will be able to take necessary steps following this, the entomologist opined.

The Mosquito Control Department in Dhaka is currently in a shabby state. Established in 1948 to eradicate malaria, it got its 338 contingency workers regularised under the health ministry in 1972.

It was a vibrant body back then and had done extensive work, including conducting drives against mosquito, its larvae and breeding grounds, along with research relating to mosquito control activities in Dhaka.

However, once the department was brought under LGRD in 1981-1982 and subsequently under the direct preview of then unified Dhaka City Corporation, it lost the essence it was empowered for, said one of its officials preferring anonymity.

Most of the manpower now work under the two Dhaka city corporations and their office premises are now being used as a warehouse of insecticide drums.

In December 2019, a top official of the LGRD ministry said they would prepare a vector management policy keeping in mind modernising the Mosquito Control Department.

The department would carry out

research on vectors and make plans to manage them accordingly. These planning and research outcomes would be provided to all city corporations, districts, upazilas and union parishads, he told The Daily Star at that time.

He also said they would soon prepare a vector management policy to research and control Aedes mosquito population.

Contacted last week, LGRD Minister Md Tazul Islam said they have prepared a draft and it is at the final stage. Once the draft is finalised, they will discuss it at an inter-ministerial meeting.

"The work to control Aedes mosquitoes is going on through different steps including spraying larvicide and adulticide," added the minister.

Deputy Secretary of Local Government Division Numeri Jaman said after finalising the draft, they will send it to the public administration and finance ministries for their opinion.

"So, it will take time and we are working on it," he said.

Experts fear if extensive measures are not taken under proper guidelines to control Aedes mosquitoes, the rise of dengue cases amid the pandemic might put already strained health sector under tremendous pressure.

They say dengue has a common trend of increasing in every alternate year, and the situation witnessed in 2019 may come back.

Last year, 1,405 cases of dengue were reported and the number of deaths was as low as nine.

This year, at least 565 people have been hospitalised with dengue till 8:00am yesterday -- 29 got admitted in 24 hours since Tuesday morning, according to the report of the DGHS control room.



Locals walk on sandbags to cross Shaheed Shahadat Road in the capital's Jurain area. They said the road has remained inundated by such pitch-black stinky water for over a month as waste dumped by different factories clogged the drains. The photo was taken on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Death graph gets steeper

FROM PAGE 1

Husain, adviser at Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control & Research (IEDCR), said pointing to the rampant breach of the Covid safety rules then.

The number of deaths has been rising by approximately 40-50 percent every week since mid-June, shows the DGHS data.

In the past seven days, the number of deaths has gone up by 41 percent. A similar rise was seen in the seven days immediately preceding last week.

Dr Husain warned that deaths would continue to rise until Eid-ul-Azha (likely to be celebrated on July 19) and beyond.

"If the situation does not improve and the restrictions are relaxed before Eid, we will see the daily deaths crossing the 300-mark after the festival," he said.

The total number of Covid-19 deaths in the country now stands at

15,593.

According to yesterday's figures, the current positivity rate also rose to 31.32 percent, with 35,639 samples being tested across the country in the 24 hours and 11,162 of them coming out positive.

The Covid-19 International Modelling Consortium's Bangladesh team has, meanwhile, forecast that the peak of this wave would be sometime after the end of this month and that the country would see 15,000 cases daily during the peak.

The CoMo Consortium was created by researchers at University of Oxford, Cornell University and partners with infectious disease modellers from over 40 countries across the world to provide forecasts of the disease.

The Bangladesh team includes Mofakhar Hussain of University of Toronto, Abu Jamil Faisal, member of the public health and epidemiology committee of DGHS, Prof Syed Abdul

Hamid and Prof Nasrin Sultana of Dhaka University, Abdul Kuddus of James Cook University, Australia, and Shaifun Shimul, an associate professor of health economics at Dhaka University. Shimul leads the team.

"Currently we are seeing over 11,000 people testing positive every day. If we can increase the number of daily tests to 50,000, then we will see 15,000 new daily infections during the peak," said Dr Shimul. "But if the government's testing capacity stands as it is now, we will not be able to detect so many cases and it may report up to twelve or thirteen thousand cases."

The model arrived at this figure by assuming that there will not be any movement restrictions after July 15.

"If government interventions are ensured, the peak may shift to the right. The lockdown will work to flatten the peak," he said.

Dengue spike rings alarm

FROM PAGE 1

One patient has so far died of the disease, according to family members, with DGHS data on deaths yet to be updated as of filing this report yesterday evening.

Among the total dengue patients, 131 are currently undergoing treatment while 434 have recovered.

Experts fear the rise of viral dengue fever amid the coronavirus pandemic might put the already strained health sector under further pressure if extensive measures to control Aedes mosquitoes are not taken.

They said treating a person infected with both dengue and Covid-19 is even more challenging and this may lead to an increase in fatalities.

"There is a clear indication of rising dengue patients and this might contribute to an explosive situation as the Covid-19 pandemic has also taken a dangerous turn," said Prof Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist of Jahangirnagar University.

He said a study they conducted last month found the presence of more Aedes mosquitoes at every ward of Dhaka city than in the same period last year.

Bashar further said there has been a trend of dengue increasing every alternate year.

Last year, health authorities reported 1,405 cases and nine deaths.

"Due to the trend, there is a huge possibility of a rise of dengue fever this year and the number of cases in June speaks to it. It will continue to go up until August if the authorities concerned do not take necessary steps to control Aedes," he said.

HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital, said doctors will struggle to handle patients infected with both dengue

and Covid-19.

"A dengue patient faces bleeding while a coronavirus patient faces blood clotting. We use an injection of anti-coagulation for coronavirus patients when it is needed to prevent blood clots. But we cannot do it when the same patient also carries dengue virus and his platelet counts remain under one lakh," Ahsan explained.

Prof Dr Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general of DGHS, said a further rise of dengue patients will be very challenging for the number of doctors available.

"Treatment of all other non-communicable diseases has already been hampered due to Covid-19 and it will be a huge challenge for the same number of doctors if the number of dengue patients rises further," Prof Alam told The Daily Star.

He said in 2019 they used separate wards for dengue patients in hospitals but these wards are now used for coronavirus patients. He, however, said they have directed district hospitals to take necessary steps to treat dengue patients.

"We have asked all the district-level hospital authorities to communicate with the dengue cell if they need any support," he said.

Yesterday, Sayeeda Nasrin Bably, an assistant professor of the history department at Jagannath University, died of dengue, said her husband Deputy Attorney General Abdullah Al Mahmud Bashar. She had been undergoing treatment at Square Hospital in Dhaka.

Manzur Chowdhury, entomologist and former president of the Zoological Society of Bangladesh, said the authorities will have to take immediate steps to raise awareness among the people to remove water from all kinds of containers once

a week since Aedes breeds in clean water, adding that its population normally grows in the rainy season -- from May to September.

Md Nazmul Islam, director (disease control) of DGHS, said they have conducted a pre-monsoon survey in Dhaka and already shared the results with the two city corporations, who are taking measures accordingly.

He said in addition to the city corporations, everyone will also have to play their due role.

"We will have to clean flower pots, trays, plastic containers, air conditioners, unused commodes and other sources where clean water remains stagnant to prevent Aedes breeding," said Islam.

Contacted, Chief Health Officer of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Brig Gen Md Zobaidur Rahman said apart from their regular activities, they are also spraying adulticide and larvicide at every hospital treating dengue patients.

He also said after collecting data from hospitals, they are spraying adulticide and larvicide at patients' homes and adjoining areas.

Adulticide is a type of insecticide used to kill adult mosquitoes while larvicide is specifically targeted against the larval life stage of the mosquitoes.

He urged people to stay alert and destroy all possible Aedes mosquito breeding sources.

DSCC Health Officer Mustafizur Rahman said they have also taken similar measures to control Aedes and have been running awareness campaigns.

"Apart from this, we are conducting mobile court drives in government buildings, colonies, and under-construction buildings and imposing fines if we find any dengue larvae there," he said.

Detainees mostly poor, now prey to court frauds

FROM PAGE 1

Section 77 of the DMP Ordinance says, "Whoever willfully puts, presses, hustles or obstructs any passenger in any street or public place, or by violent movement, menacing gesture, screaming, shouting, willful frightening any animal or otherwise disturbs the public peace and order shall be punishable with fine which may extend to two hundred Taka."

Hundreds of family members have been pouring into the court premises in Old Dhaka every morning.

Shilpi Begum, wife of battery-run rickshaw driver Abdul Kuddus from Kamrangirchar, was found waiting outside the court.

Kuddus was arrested near his home on Monday night.

"As my husband's has no earnings since the start of the lockdown, we have no food at home. He went out to drive his autorickshaw around 8:00pm," Shilpi added.

Day labourer Fazlu Mia from Dania area said his 17-year-old son Imran went out to get some things from a convenience store on Monday afternoon when Kadamtoli police arrested him.

He said a clerk of a lawyer approached him and asked for Tk 700 to have his son released.

"I gave the money and he asked me to wait promising that my son will be released. I found no trace of him," he alleged.

Around 4:00pm yesterday, Fazlu was still waiting for his son's release.

Fazlu is not alone. Many are falling into traps of frauds.

Nur Islam, 30, is a rickshaw puller. A team of Ramna police detained him from Bangla Motor area around 6:00am yesterday for not wearing a mask.

His wife Nasima, 27, reached the CMM court after learning about the incident later in the morning but fell into a trap.

"Introducing himself as a lawyer at the court premises, a man told me that it would take Tk 1,500 to free my husband. I believed him and paid," Nasima told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Later, I learnt that those, who are arrested by police for defying lockdown, are fined Tk 100," she said.

After his release, Nur said, "Police detained me even though I was pulling

my rickshaw wearing a new mask."

Court sources said until yesterday, over 4,000 people were arrested in connection with violating lockdown rules and taken to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka.

The magistrates fined them only under section 77.

On the first three days of the lockdown, the court sent 75 to jail for failing to pay the Tk 200 fine.

Since Sunday, the court released those who failed to pay the fine immediately, the sources added.

Iffekher Ahmed, additional deputy commissioner of DMP (Media), said those who are going out without any reason are being arrested irrespective of being rich or poor.

"Those who are arrested always try to establish a reason," he added.

Human Rights Forum Bangladesh in a statement yesterday expressed deep concern over the arrest, detention and penalising of people, including those of the low income working class, and demanded sufficient relief for them so that they do not need to go out.

CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

Bangladeshi film receives a standing ovation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

"Rehana Maryam Noor" received a standing ovation by the audience at the Cannes Film Festival yesterday.

The film, which was screened at 11:15am (3:15pm Bangladesh time), is the first Bangladeshi venture to be officiously selected for Cannes in the "Un Certain Regard" section.

Singaporean producer Jeremy Chua joined director Abdullah Mohammad Saad, lead Azmeri Haque Badhan and the rest of the crew at the screening.

"I am immensely grateful and overjoyed after the reaction," said Badhan in her Facebook live video after the screening. The actor was seen in tears of joy after the event. "I give all credit to Saad, and the wonderful team who worked so hard to make it this far."

Earlier, a huge queue was seen en route to the theatre that displayed the film, portraying the buzz that "Rehana Maryam Noor" has already created in the festival.

All eyes will now be fixated on July 16, when the award-giving ceremony of the Un Certain Regard section will be held.

GLOBAL PASSPORT INDEX

Bangladesh slips to 106th position

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has slipped to 106th position in the 2021 Henley Passport Index, sharing the spot jointly with Lebanon and Sudan.

Last year, Bangladesh was ranked 98th along with Iran.

The Henley Passport Index "includes 199 different passports and 227 different travel destinations. Updated quarterly, the Henley Passport Index is considered the standard reference tool for global citizens and sovereign states when assessing where a passport ranks on the global mobility spectrum", according to the Henley & Partners website.

In the latest index, Japan secured the top position followed by Singapore, South Korea, Germany, Italy, Finland, Spain, Luxembourg, Denmark and Austria.

Among the South Asian nations, India was ranked 90th along with Tajikistan and Gabon, Sri Lanka 105th along with Iran, Nepal 109th and Pakistan 113th.

Dream comes

FROM PAGE 1

Lionel Messi and Neymar continue the legacy. The flame of fanaticism has not dulled a bit.

The fan base in Bangladesh has taken this rivalry to a new extreme, starting in the 1970s, when television brought matches into the public eye like never before.

Everybody is now waiting to watch Lionel Messi's Argentina face off against Neymar's Brazil on Sunday (6:00am BST) at the historic Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro.

There can be no neutrals when it comes to a Brazil-Argentina game, such is the nature of the prevailing mentality among Bangladeshi fans. Even those who support other teams are made to take a stance.

Close friendships and even the bonds of family are sometimes on the line. The advent of social media ensured that the banter, the war-of-words and bragging rights spread like wildfire past walls, neighbourhood tea stalls and university campuses.

This pandemic has certainly restricted the showcase of expressions and its energy among fans. Gone is the possibility of watching the game in the streets in front of giant screens, victory marches on the streets after games, drum beats, music and chants. Celebration, overall, is stifled, but a few unfortunate incidents have already taken place outside the capital after the dream final became a possibility.

Brazil still hold the edge after 105 matches between the rivals, winning 41 compared to Argentina's 38. Brazil also lead Argentina 163 to 160 in terms of goals.

However, Argentina fans can point to a victory in their last encounter, a 1-0 win during a friendly in 2019. Earlier that year, Brazil had defeated Argentina 2-0 in the Copa America semifinals. Brazil also had the last laugh the last time they met their archrivals in a Copa America final, beating Argentina 3-0 in 2007, the first of Messi's four final losses in the tournament.

The last time Messi and Neymar faced each other in an international game was in 2016, when the two were teammates at Barcelona. Brazil dominated in a 3-0 win, with Neymar scoring the second goal on the stroke of half-time.

Irrespective of history and recent records, this game offers no clear favourites and neither statistics nor tactical analysis will affect the mindset of fans, who are unwilling to settle for anything less than a glorious success for their beloved team.