

264 dengue patients hospitalised in 24 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 264 people with dengue fever were admitted to different hospitals across the country during 24 hours till 8am yesterday.

Of them, only 16 are from outside Dhaka, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

With them, 3,446 people have been diagnosed with dengue this year and only 118 of them are from outside the capital, according to DGHS data.

In total, 788 were diagnosed with dengue during the current month till yesterday morning, which indicates the fast-rising trend of the disease.

At least 2,286 people were infected in July, 272 in June and 43 in May.

Though most of the patients who were hospitalised have so far been released, 1,072 are

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Despite the lockdown, the capital's Mirpur was seen full of vehicles of all kinds, just except buses, as a traffic jam with a long tailback had formed in front of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

DRUG TRADE IN GENEVA CAMP Six gangs vying for control after Ishtiaq's death

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Ishtiaq Ahmed, the top drug lord of Mohammadpur Geneva Camp, who was hiding for a long period, died in a hospital in India after being infected from Covid-19.

Ishtiaq died in the last week of April of this year. Police's intelligence agency and family sources of Ishtiaq confirmed the death to The Daily Star yesterday.

Born in Mohammadpur Geneva camp, Ishtiaq did odd jobs like collecting discarded bottles from roadsides. In early 2004, he started working as a drug carrier. In the following years, he built his own syndicate, got into transport business and started to carry yaba on trucks. He built an empire -- buying cars, 50 trucks, buses, building eight luxurious buildings, and acquiring over 100 bighas of land in Dhaka's Mohammadpur, Uttara, Aminbazar and Ashulia.

Soon after the death of Ishtiaq, four of his associates and two other drug dealers have taken control of his empire and are controlling drug business in the camp, according to insiders.

Sources said Molla Arshad, Ishtiaq's second-in-command, mostly takes care of the narcotics network has now and started a new gang. Born in Saidpur, Arshad is a childhood friend of Ishtiaq.

Both grew up in the Geneva Camp, a densely-populated



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BARISHAL SHER-E-BANGLA MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL

Uphill battle for oxygen cylinders

SUSHANTA GHOSH, BARISHAL

Taslima Begum was waiting in queue for an oxygen cylinder at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital's (SBMCH) Covid-19 unit from 9am to 12pm on Monday. After struggling for three hours, she was finally able to get a cylinder.

She told The Daily Star that at least three hours a day are spent trying to get a cylinder.

Although her husband was admitted there three days ago for Covid-19, he had not received central oxygen yet. His oxygen level had dropped to less than 85.

Saiful Islam from Bakerganj said at least a hundred people stand in queue for oxygen cylinders every day, but everyone does not get it. Family members fear that oxygen for their patients will run out.

Although there are 300 beds at the

hospital, over 350 patients are admitted at the unit, said Covid ward staffer Ferdous. The central oxygen line can facilitate only 97 patients. There are 500 cylinders for others, but currently, they have to be refilled at least three times a day.

After visiting the Covid ward around noon on Monday, at least 60 people were seen waiting for cylinders.

Bappi Ghosh, whose mother is being treated at the hospital, said even though her oxygen level dropped to 55, she did not get high-flow or central oxygen immediately. They had to make do with oxygen cylinders for six hours.

One patient was admitted from Pirojpur's Swarupkathi upazila. The on-duty nurse brought a cylinder from another patient and gave it to him when his acute respiratory distress started yesterday.

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ICU beds being kept occupied by influentials!

Hospital director tells meeting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, BARISHAL

The Covid-19 situation is dire in Barishal. With worrying spike in cases, people are frantically searching for ICU beds to admit their loved ones, only to be informed that there is no empty bed available at the Barishal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital (SBMCH), the lone Covid-dedicated hospital in the division.

There are only 26 ICU beds and 300 general beds at the hospital to treat Covid-19 patients. However, SBMCH is overrun with coronavirus patients at present, with many being treated even on the floors and corridors.

Yesterday, 14 people died at the hospital out of total 18 Covid-related deaths in the division.

Amid such a situation, some influential people keep

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12TH DAY OF LOCKDOWN

All but public transport crowd streets of Dhaka

Rush into capital also continues

UNB, DHAKA

On 12th day of the "strict lockdown", the streets of Dhaka was found loaded with vehicles, bringing back its chaotic days. Everything except public transports were plying city streets and people wandering around with little or no regard to the health guidelines.

The government, meanwhile, extended the current lockdown till August 10 amid a surge in Covid-19 across the country.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque disclosed the decision while talking to reporters after an inter-ministerial meeting yesterday.

He said shops, factories and offices will be reopened from August 11 while public transport will be allowed to ply roads on a limited scale once the lockdown is over.

Visiting at different parts of the capital, including Shahbagh, Uttara, Mohakhali, Mirpur, Kalabagan, Biiyoy Srani, Badda, Farmgate, Shyamoli, Karwan Bazar and Bangla Motor, correspondents of the news agency saw the capital almost returning to normal, with an increased number of vehicles and people on the streets.

Usual traffic jams were also seen at most places during office hours from 8:30am to 11am.

Traffic Inspector Asaduzzaman (Mohakhali), said, "Apart from the absence of local buses, I couldn't differentiate today's Dhaka with pre-lockdown days in the morning."

However, law enforcers were seen vigilant on the streets, as many pedestrians

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GIRL STABBED ON WEDDING DAY

MJF expresses concern

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) has expressed grave concern over the Badarganj, Rangpur incident where a ninth-grader, stabbed by a stalker on her wedding day on July 28, died on Sunday.

Tarmina Akter (14), a madrasa student, was the daughter of Toyab Ali of Lohanipara village.

MJF also expressed deep concern over the rise in child marriage amid the pandemic.

According to MJF, the family encouraged child marriage, even though they claimed that they arranged the wedding considering the girl's safety, as the stalker used to harass her.

The parents could not save the girl by arranging her marriage, without informing the local administration, mentioned MJF, in a press statement yesterday.

MJF believes that in order to prevent child marriage, various departments of the government should take more stringent measures at local level.

The number of child marriages is on the rise during the pandemic, due to the closure of schools, lack of safety of girls and financial instability of the parents. Parents are violating the law and secretly marrying off their underage girls, the statement read.

MJF has already sent a letter to the ministry concerned with an aim to create awareness against violence against women and child marriage.

MJF Executive Director Shaheen Anam said, "No specific allocation has

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JoyJatra TV running broadcast illegally since 2018: Rab

Two of Helena Jahangir's associates arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The so-called IPTV JoyJatra Television was running its broadcasting since 2018 by taking web allocation from a Hong Kong satellite broadcaster in Bangladesh and 34 other countries illegally.

"JoyJatra purchased the allocation for Tk 6 lakh per month," Khandaker Al-Moin, director Legal and Media wing of Rapid Action Battalion told a press briefing, hours after the arrest of two close associates of Helena Jahangir who are top officials of JoyJatra Television and JoyJatra Foundation.

The members of the elite force arrested the duo -- Hazera Khatun (40) and Sanaullah Nuri (47) from the city's Gabtali area yesterday.

He also said Hazera in primary interrogation disclosed that JoyJatra TV provided satellite TV receivers to 50 cable operators across Bangladesh. She also admitted that in 50 districts, Helena appointed representatives from whom she collected Tk 50,000 to Tk 1 lakh at a time, and Tk 10,000 to Tk

20,000 monthly. Hazera said Helena also collected Tk 10,000 to Tk 20,000 from different upazila representatives at a time and monthly charges ranging to Tk 2,000 to Tk 3,000.

Hazera was the general manager (admin) of JoyJatra TV and deputy general manager (admin) of the foundation, while Sanaullah was the coordinator of representatives of JoyJatra TV.

Hazera completed her masters from a university in Cumilla in 2009 and worked in a garments factory. She is also a distant relative of Helena Jahangir, and maintained all financial transactions of Helena's business and personal property.

Arrested Sanaullah used to take money for giving jobs as correspondent of the illegal IPTV channel, Rab said.

HELENA ON 14-DAY REMAND IN 4 CASES

Meanwhile, businessperson-turned-politician Helena Jahangir was placed on a 14-day remand

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18 BRAHMAN-BREED COWS

HC upholds seizure by custom officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday upheld the customs officials' decision to seize 18 cows of Brahman breed from Dhaka airport on July 5, as they were imported without any prior permission from the authorities concerned and without opening letter of credit (LC).

It refused to order the government to hand over the cows to importer -- dairy farm Sadeque, a concern of Sadeque Agro Limited.

The HC, however, directed the customs authorities to dispose of in 15 days the application submitted by the dairy farm for releasing the cows to its custody.

The court also asked the government to file a case under the money laundering prevention law against Sadeque if it imports the cows from the US with laundered money. Such an order came as Deputy Attorney General Samarendranath Biswas told the court that the cows have been imported through money laundering.

The HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim came up with the directives after hearing a writ petition filed by Md

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Black stone Vishnu idol recovered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Police on Monday night recovered a statue of Lord Vishnu from Boro Goali village in Daudkandi upazila of Cumilla.

The height of the black stone statue is about 23 inches and its width is 9.5 inches. It weighs about 12kg.

Nazrul Islam, officer-in-charge of Daudkandi Police Station, told The Daily Star, "A teacher named Abu Yusuf found the statue one and a half months ago. But he didn't inform us. On secret information, we recovered it from his house at 9:30pm on Monday."

However, Abu Yusuf, headmaster (in-charge) of Chargoali Khandaker Nazir Uddin Multipurpose School, said, "I noticed this statue about 20-22 days ago while digging soil from a pond... We could not inform police as we were busy with work."

Local union parishad member Faruk Ahmed said, "The statue was found one and a half months back... But some people were trying to cover up the matter by not informing police. So, I informed the law enforcers."

Dr Ataur Rahman, former regional director of Chattogram divisional archeology department, said, "The unearthed Lord Vishnu statue is very valuable. It is possibly more than 1,000 years old. It should be immediately handed over to Mainamati museum for proper preservation."



As the metro rail is 68 percent towards completion, some roads of the capital have regained their space for vehicular movement, as it was lost due to construction materials and machineries occupying large parts of the roads. This photo was taken from the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area on Monday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Miscreants cut veins of teen in Savar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SAVAR

Leg and hand veins of a teenager were cut allegedly by miscreants in Charalpara in Ashulia early yesterday.

The victim was identified as Jeem (13). He worked as a bus driver's helper.

He is being treated at the ICU of Enam Medical College Hospital in Savar.

Six to seven persons attacked Jeem around 3am while he was returning home from work, said Md Liton, his elder brother. Hearing his screams, locals rushed to save him, and the attackers fled.

Liton said the attack was carried out over a feud as he and his brother protested their drug peddling. "We have informed the matter to Ashulia police and will file a case soon," he said.

However when contacted, Ziaul Islam, inspector (investigation) of Ashulia Police Station, said they just heard about the incident and no one filed any complaint yet.