

321 more hospitalised with dengue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The number of dengue cases crossed 14,000 marks yesterday.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at least 321 people were hospitalised with dengue in the last 24 hours till 8am yesterday.

Among the new cases, 75 are from outside Dhaka.

According to the DGHS, 54 people have died of dengue infection in the country this year. Twelve people died in July while 34 have died in August and eight in September so far.

With the new cases, a total of 3,865 were diagnosed during the running month out of total 14,221 infected.

Govt defending

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halted, but a few trees may be cut for its beautification and installing the historic monuments there.

On May 9 this year, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), Association for Land Reforms and Development, Nijera Kori, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon and Ain O Salish Kendra and architect Mubasshir Hossain filed the petition.

The petitioners also urged the HC to ask the authorities to protect and preserve the original and natural historical shape of Suhrawardy Udyan by removing the structures which were constructed beyond the original master plan.

They said in the petition that the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, which is implementing a project titled "Independence Monument" at Suhrawardy Udyan, had said in a press release that 1,000 new trees will be planted at the places where the 100-year old trees were cut.

The new trees cannot play the role like the old trees did in protecting the environment and birds, they said. Damaging a green orchard is contradictory to the Water Bodies Act and the 2009 HC verdict, they added.

Following another petition, the HC on July 7, 2009 directed the government to identify and preserve all the important historic places related to the Liberation War and to set up memorial monuments at the historic places at Suhrawardy Udyan maintaining international standards.

The HC also ordered the government to take steps to protect and maintain the historic places there.

High surcharges clipping

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Biman Bangladesh Airlines, Novoair, and US-Bangla Airlines. AOAB said the total amount Biman owes CAAB is Tk 4,315.11 crore. Of this, the main amount is Tk 920.16 crore, and the remaining Tk 3,394.94 crore are surcharge and other charges.

The now defunct GMG Airlines owes CAAB Tk 368.29 crore. The main amount is Tk 56.98 crore, and Tk 311.30 crore are surcharge and other charges.

United Airways, which has ceased operation, owes CAAB Tk 355.37 crore, Tk 56.88 crore being the main amount, and remaining Tk 298.49 crore being surcharge and other charges.

Regent Air, also defunct, owes Tk 283.38 crore. Of this, the main amount is Tk 136.18 crore, while the remaining Tk 147.20 crore are surcharge and other charges.

The letter did not mention anything about Novoair and US-Bangla.

Talking to The Daily Star, Mofizur said, "In 1991, CAAB issued a circular, fixing the high rate of surcharge. We have been urging the regulatory authority to reduce the rate for many years, but nobody paid heed to our request to save the industry."

"The country's aviation sector will not develop if the surcharge rate is not reduced," he said.

Insiders in the sector said due to the high surcharge rate, airlines can do nothing

AT A GLANCE

- » AOAB urges CAAB to reduce surcharge rate from 72pc to 12pc
- » 4 airlines (in operation, defunct) owe CAAB Tk 5,322cr
- » Tk 1,170cr original amount of debt; rest surcharge
- » At present 3 airlines in operation: Biman, Novoair, and US-Bangla

but go under once they fall into the cycle of debt. The letter cited the three defunct airlines as vivid examples.

They said there are rules in many countries that airlines will pay their dues with surcharge. But the rate in Bangladesh is much higher than in many other countries.

For example, Mofizur said, the annual surcharge in Bangladesh is 72 percent, while in India the rate is 12 to 18 percent, in Singapore, it is eight percent, in Oman 10 percent, and in Pakistan two percent.

Contacted yesterday, State Minister for Civil Aviation M Mahub Ali said, "The finance ministry is also involved in the matter. We will sit down with all the parties concerned soon and try to come up with a positive solution."



Crystal Gold's stay at the beach has been long and unwelcome. In its four years here, it has generated so much silt that the nearby "char" and Jhau forest have been massively damaged. Meanwhile contaminants leaking from it are threatening the area's ecosystem. These photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR



As it stands, the world around it burns

Ran aground 4yrs ago, vessel on Parki sea beach threatens environment

SANJOY KUMAR BARUA

For four years now, a ship has remained anchored at Chattogram's Parki beach.

The 192-metre ship, Crystal Gold, ran aground at the popular beach in Anwara upazila in 2017, when cyclone Mora hit the region. Since then, it hasn't moved an inch, and has now become a threat to the area's ecosystem, said environmentalists.

Legal complications have stalled moving the vessel to a ship breaking yard in Sitakunda, according to the Department of Environment (DoE).

Dr Md Atiqur Rahman, associate professor of geography and environmental studies department at Chittagong University, said, "The ship has been stuck on the beach for such a long time that silt has started to accumulate there.

This could lead to erosion later on. It is also leaking contaminants, which is affecting the area's ecosystems."

In addition, the beach's "char" area is being destroyed by silt, he added.

"If the ship is broken up at the beach area, it could lead to a serious environmental hazard," he said. "The only solution is to move it out as soon as possible."

The area's tourism is also being affected by the ship, according to Shekh Jobaer Ahmed, Anwara upazila nirbahi officer and president of Parki beach management committee.

"As the silt spread to the nearby Jhau (tamarisk) forest, Jhau trees are being damaged, which is driving away tourists from the area," Jobaer said.

The ship used to belong to Crystal Group. But facing legal complications over dubious bank loans and payment of crew members, the company sold it off to Four Star Enterprise.

AT A GLANCE

- » Ship: Crystal Gold
- » 192m bulk carrier
- » Ran aground at Parki beach in 2017 during cyclone Mora
- » Legal complications stalled its removal

DANGERS

- » Leaking contaminants
- » Affecting biodiversity, tourism
- » Accumulating silt can lead to erosion

LEGAL ISSUES

- » Ship belonged to Crystal Group
- » Four Star Enterprise bought it at auction in 2018
- » Started dismantling it on the beach
- » DoE intervened, slapped Tk 2cr fine
- » Four Star appealed to HC, who rejected application
- » Now it remains anchored on the beach

Sources said Crystal Group even secured multiple loans against the ship.

The Daily Star tried to contact Crystal Group owner Morshed Murad Ibrahim, former president of the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry, but failed to reach him for comments.

Four Star Enterprise bought the ship at an auction near the end of 2018, said Md Amjad Hossain, its director.

Unable to move the vessel, it took initiatives in December that year to dismantle the bulk carrier on the beach, but the DoE intervened and slapped it with a Tk 2 crore fine, saying it had not taken the mandatory clearances required, he said.

"In early 2019, we imposed a compensation of Tk 2 crore on Four Star Enterprise for breaking the ship on the beach without permission," confirmed Mofizul Alam, director of DoE (Chattogram region).

"At that time, biodiversity and sea life of the Parki beach area got ravaged by the ship breaking," said Mofizul. "We only allowed Four Star to break the ship if they followed 32 conditions, but those weren't followed."

Asked, Md Amjad Hossain said they have appealed to the High Court after DoE ordered for the compensation.

But the court has rejected their application, said the DoE director. About the vessel, he said they are trying to come up with a solution in this regard.

Contacted, Anwara upazila vice-chairman Mrinal Kanti Dhar said, "Thousands of tourists visit Parki beach every year. Just 17 km away from the port city, tourists come here to see the Bay of Bengal and Karnaphuli river at the same time."

"However, this ship is damaging the environment of the area. The authorities should move it from the beach immediately," he added.

Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited
Based on Islamic Shari'ah

**Operations Wing
Engineering Division**
63 Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka

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Senior Vice President

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(Dilip Kumar Paul)
General Manager

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Universal College opens campus

CITY DESK

Universal College Bangladesh (UCB) -- a partner of Monash College, Australia -- officially inaugurated its campus on Sunday, said a press release.

Education Minister Dipu Moni was the chief guest at the event while Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi was the special guest.

Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury, Australian High Commissioner Jeremy Bruer, UCB Group CEO Dr Sandeep Ananthanarayanan, chairperson Bob Kundanmal and director Zarif Munir were also present. The campus is located on SA Tower (1), Gulshan Avenue in Dhaka.

JP MP Masuda

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he added. She is survived by her son, daughter, a host of relatives and well-wishers.

Masuda was elected MP for the first time in 2019.

Opposition Leader Raushan Ershad, JP Chairman GM Quader, Opposition Chief Whip Mashiur Rahman Ranga, among others, expressed deep shock at her demise. Hailing from Chattogram, Prof Masuda was involved with various social organisations.

Her first namaz-e-janaza was held at her residence in Moghbazar after Jhor prayers yesterday. Her second namaz-e-janaza was held at JP central office at Kakrail after Asr prayers. The third one will be held at Laldighi maidan (ground) in Chattogram today after Jhor prayers. She will be laid to rest at Gahira village in Raozan today after Asr prayers.

In a condolence message, GM Quader said Prof Masuda played a unique role in nation building as an ideal teacher. She worked tirelessly to strengthen Jatiya Party. She also played a special role in the socio-economic development of the masses.

সিকিউরিটি প্রিন্টিং করপোরেশন উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়, গাজীপুর-১৭০৩।
(দি সিকিউরিটি প্রিন্টিং করপোরেশন (বাংলাদেশ) লিমিটেড এর অর্ধাংশে পরিচালিত)

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সিকিউরিটি প্রিন্টিং করপোরেশন উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়ে নিম্ন বর্ণিত বেসরকারি এবং অত্র বিদ্যালয়ে প্রচলিত অন্যান্য ভাতাদিতে নিয়োগ দানের লক্ষ্যে আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদের নিকট হতে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

পদের নাম	পদ সংখ্যা	শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা	অভিজ্ঞতা	বয়স	বেতন স্কেল
প্রধান শিক্ষক	০১	ক) স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে মূলতম বিএডসহ স্নাতকোত্তর (কোন পরীক্ষায় তৃতীয় বিভাগ/শ্রেণী/সমমানের জিপিএ গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়।)	মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়ে প্রধান শিক্ষক হিসেবে ২ বছর বা সহকারী প্রধান শিক্ষক হিসেবে ৫ বছরের অভিজ্ঞতাসহ কম পক্ষে ১২ বছরের শিক্ষকতার অভিজ্ঞতা বা কর্মরত প্রধান শিক্ষক থাকতে হবে।	অনূর্ণ ৫৫ বছর	জাঃ- স্কেল ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী ৩৫,৫০০-৬৭,০১০/-
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(এহতেশামুল করিম)
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