

BANGLADESH
UPDATE



284
New cases in 24hrs



15,74,636
Total cases



27,958
Deaths



15,38,855
Recoveries

GLOBAL
UPDATE



5,179,985
Deaths



258,804,967
Total cases

RELOCATING ROHINGYAS

Govt to send 2,000 others to Bhasan Char

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has resumed the process for relocating Rohingyas from Cox's Bazar to Bhasan Char, said officials.

Around 2,000 more Rohingyas are likely to be relocated to the island in Noakhali's Hatiya in the first phase by tomorrow, they said, adding that the Rohingyas have already been taken to the Ukhiya College ground.

The government is planning to shift around 80,000 Rohingyas to the island by the end of next March, Md Mohsin, secretary of the disaster management and relief ministry, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Mohammed Moazzam Hossain, additional refugee relief and repatriation commissioner, said Rohingyas will be taken to Chattogram by bus today and they will stay there overnight. "On Thursday [tomorrow], Rohingyas will reach Bhasan Char by ship."

Around 18,000 Rohingyas have already been moved to the island. The first batch of 1,642 refugees was taken there on December 4 last year.

Bangladesh Navy has implemented a Tk 3,100-crore project titled the Ashrayan-3 Project on Bhasan Char for the refugees.

In Cox's Bazar refugee camps, a family of six-eight people live together within a space of 400-square foot. At Bhasan Char, the buildings have electricity, solar panels, biogas plants, and mobile networks.

The houses have been built four feet above the ground with concrete blocks. Each building will house 16 families of four in its 16 rooms, providing more than the UN stipulated 37 square feet space for each person, said project officials.

Although the United Nations was not engaged in the process of Bhasan Char project, it signed an agreement with Bangladesh last month to provide humanitarian support.

The UN's engagement started nearly a year after Bangladesh started moving the Rohingyas to the island. After the signing of the agreement, the UN said it would allow close cooperation between the government and the UN to provide services for refugees on the island.

Headed for a health calamity

FROM PAGE 1
parasites is called antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

"The AMR is another type of pandemic. It should not be that there is no drug for curing illnesses," Flora said.

Data indicates that the use of antibiotics is driven by practitioners, said Nitish Chandra Debnath, One Health Bangladesh's national coordinator.

"We have to work on it -- we need a strong movement among professionals. AMR is a challenge for both the public health and the economy," he added.

Antibiotics are classified into three sets: the "access group" is prescribed for a wide range of primary level infections, the "watch group" for higher resistance bacteria and the "reserve group" when all alternatives fail.

Of the 21 antibiotics, seven were from the access group, nine from the watch group and two from the reserve group. Of them, 15 are progressively becoming ineffectual.

In 2021, Cefazidime, a watch group drug, has become ineffective in killing different bacteria in 70 percent of the cases. In 2017, its ineffectiveness rate was 62 percent.

The ineffectiveness has increased from 52 percent to 58 percent for Cefixime, from 57 percent to 61 percent for Cefepime, from 52 percent to 65 percent for Ceftriaxone, from 57 percent to 67 percent for Ciprofloxacin, from 20 percent to 40 percent for Carbapenem. All are watch group drugs.

During the period, access group drugs Doxycycline and Tetracycline have become more useful, with their

ineffectiveness rates decreasing from 47 percent to 39 percent and from 58 to 54 percent respectively.

"This may be because of the lesser use of these drugs -- physicians mainly use drugs from the watch and reserve groups," Zakir Hossain Habib, lead investigator and head of microbiology at the IEDCR, told The Daily Star.

Among the access group, drugs that have lost effectiveness include Nitrofurantoin, Sulphamethoxazole-Trimethoprim, Ampicillin, Amoxicillin-Clavulanate and Gentamicin. Penicillin have slightly gained in effectiveness.

The ineffectiveness of Aztreonam, a reserve group drug, has increased to 61 percent from 59 percent; it has remained static at 37 percent in the case of reserve group drug Linezolid.

"We are losing our first-line antibiotics [access group] -- the second- and third-line antibiotics are costly and toxic," said Mohamed Ramzy Ismail, WHO technical expert on essential drugs and medicines in Bangladesh.

There are only a few promising options for new antimicrobials in the research pipeline, he said.

To fight AMR, Ismail called for the "One Health" approach, where Bangladesh has made good progress.

One health recognises that human health is closely connected to the health of animals and the shared environment.

Some countries are using antibiotics more in food production than in medical care.

"We need to find ways to target all behaviour that contribute to the misuse of these fragile medicines," he added.

WHO ANTIBIOTIC CATEGORISATION

ACCESS GROUP	WATCH GROUP	RESERVE GROUP
first or second choice antibiotics	first or second choice antibiotics	"last resort"
offer the best therapeutic value, while minimizing the potential for resistance	only indicated for specific, limited number of infective syndromes	highly selected patients (life-threatening infections due to multi-drug resistant bacteria)
	more prone to be a target of antibiotic resistance and thus prioritized as targets of stewardship programs and monitoring	closely monitored and prioritised as targets of stewardship programs to ensure their continued effectiveness

Govt given ultimatum

FROM PAGE 1
On November 3, the government raised the prices of diesel and kerosene by Tk 15 per liter and the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) on November 7 increased the fares for intra-city and inter-district buses by 26.5 percent and 27 percent respectively following a strike by transport owners.

Over the last couple of weeks, students have been demanding half fare for bus rides. Students and transport workers got into heated debates over the bus fare issue.

On Sunday, a student of Begum Badrunnesa Government Girls College was threatened with rape by a bus driver's helper when she wanted to pay half fare, according to media reports.

PROTESTS CONTINUE

Yesterday, about 100 students of Dhanmondi Ideal College, Dhaka City College, and Birshreshtha Munshi Abdur Rouf Public College blocked Science Laboratory intersection in the capital around 12:30pm to stage demonstrations, said witnesses.

Protesters wrote slogans on buses using spray paints and markers.

The blockade caused congestion in Dhanmondi and New Market areas. Caught in traffic snarls, bus passengers were seen getting off.

Protesters alleged that some 50-60 students of Dhaka College chased them around 1:15pm. At one stage, they picked up a demonstrator.

The demonstrations continued for about two hours.

Adnan, a student of Dhanmondi

Ideal College, said they were giving a 48-hour ultimatum to the government to meet their demand. He threatened that they would resume their protests on Saturday if their demands were not met by Friday.

At Bakshibazar, an agitating student demanded the government implement half bus fare for students and issue a gazette in this regard immediately.

Shahen Shah, additional deputy commissioner (New Market Zone) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the student who was picked up was freed in the evening.

In Savar, Jahangirnagar University students raised a five-point demand, including half bus fare for students, abolition of seating bus service and stopping harassment of students in public transport, reports our JU correspondent.

Later, they submitted a memorandum to Vice-Chancellor Prof Farzana Islam.

Students have been staging demonstrations since November 18 demanding half fares for bus rides.

On November 20, students of two colleges vandalised 10-12 buses in the capital's Science Laboratory area during protests over half bus fare.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) Chairman Nur Mohammad Mazumder said there was no provision of half fare in public transport.

"Since it is a private service, reduction of fares depends on bus owners," he said.



A group of youths grabs a college student, in white shirt, who was among others staging a demonstration demanding half fare in buses at the capital's Science Laboratory intersection yesterday. Cops present there did not intervene. Inset, agitating students block the intersection.

PHOTO: COLLECTED/ PALASH KHAN

Killers trained, target clear

FROM PAGE 1

All of them are associates of the councillor, said locals.

Meanwhile, the family members of Soheli, councillor of ward-17 and also the panel mayor of Cumilla City Corporation, termed it a political killing.

"Political rivals are behind the murder ... We want justice," Soheli's elder brother Syed Mohammad Alamgir told The Daily Star yesterday.

Councillor's wife Shahnaz Akhter said, "My husband was popular not only in the locality but also across the Cumilla city. They killed him in a planned way."

The councillor, also the president of ward-17 Awami League, was shot nine times and eight of the bullets went through his body. Haripada was the member of the ward-17 AL unit.

"The killers wanted to confirm his death on the spot. We hardly found any bullets in the dead bodies," said a source at Cumilla Medical College morgue after the autopsy.

Law enforcers could not arrest anyone even 24 hours after the grisly double-murder that took place around 4:00pm on Monday.

Police, however, recovered three locally made guns, 12 bullets usually used in rifle, a bag of crude bombs and two black garments from Sangraish, around 500 metres away from the spot.

Anwarul Azim, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Model Police Station, said the criminals might have left those there.

Police collected footage of several CCTV cameras, three of them installed in front of the office, to identify the

killers.

No case was lodged till filing of this report around 10:00pm yesterday.

Soheli's Personal Assistant Majedul Haque Badal, who was shot in one of his legs, said, "The killers stormed the office shouting that they were members of a law enforcement agency. Six to seven people were sitting with the councillor at that time."

Haripada sustained bullet wounds first during the indiscriminate firing, he added.

Another injured, Badal, however, gave a different version claiming that he identified at least two of the masked attackers by their voices.

The two he named are: Shah Alam and Soheli alias "Jail Soheli" -- both are local criminals. Alam had a rivalry with the councillor over some local issues, claimed Badal.

However, this newspaper could not independently verify his claim.

Jahangir Hossain Babul, councillor of Ward-16, alleged that Alam, known as a drug trader, had a dispute with Councillor Soheli as he opposed Alam's illegal activities.

A week ago, Alam opened fire in Pathuriapara area when some locals tried to catch one of his friends for disturbing a girl, he told The Daily Star.

Soheli informed police of the matter, which irked Alam, said Babul, a friend of the slain councillor.

He also alleged that police personnel reached the spot around an hour after the incident.

Farooque Ahmed, superintendent of Cumilla police, said apart from other possible causes, police were

looking into the involvement of Alam and "Jail Soheli" in the murders.

Asked about the delay in going to the spot, the SP said police went to the spot after hearing about the incident.

Yesterday, hundreds of people gathered outside the councillor's office and his house after the body of councillor Soheli was taken there from the hospital.

In tears, they demanded justice for the killings.

"We want justice," Momena Akter was shouting near the councillor's office.

"The councillor was our guardian. He used to always help poor people like us," she said.

Soheli was buried at the family graveyard following a namaz-e-janaza at local mosque premises. Haripada was cremated in Tikkarchar area.

Before the janaza, Syed Mohammad Nadim, only son of the Soheli, said, "What I only want is capital punishment of those who killed my father."

The spot where Soheli was murdered is four-five km from Bibir Bazar land port.

The name of the councillor, who had a huge popularity in his locality, came up in the discussion after communal violence took place during the Durga Puja celebrations in the city.

Iqbal Hossain, who is accused of placing the Holy Quran in the city's Nanua Dighir Par puja mandap in the early hours of October 13, used to reside in one of Soheli's houses at Pathuriapara as a tenant.

Sharmin hits magical figure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opener Sharmin Akhter smashed a century as Bangladesh thrashed United States of America by 269 runs in their second match of the ICC Women's World Cup 2022 Qualifier in Harare yesterday.

Sharmin's unbeaten 130 off 141 deliveries, together with healthy contributions from Murshida Khatun (47), Nigar Sultana (33) and Fargana Hoque (67) propelled the Tigresses to a massive total of 322 for five in 50 overs after they were asked to bat first.

USA, who don't have official one-day international status, struggled in their chase right from the beginning, losing wickets at regular intervals before being bowled out for 53 in 30.3 overs.

Salma Khatun, Fahima Khatun and Rumana Ahmed scalped a couple of wickets each for the Tigresses, who sit on top of Group B with four points from two matches.

Bangladesh had started their qualifying campaign with a three-wicket victory over Pakistan.

MATARBARI PROJECTS

Govt to form 'development authority'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is set to form a "development authority" to coordinate all development programmes of Matarbari, along with the 1,200 MW coal-based powerplant, in Cox's Bazar's Maheshkhalhi.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday gave instructions in this regard at the Executive Committee of National Economic Council [ECNEC] meeting.

In it, the government approved 10 development projects at a cost of Tk 29,344.27 crore, including the first revision of the Matarbari power plant and two new projects -- a digital connectivity establishment and an elevated road over haor areas.

"The Matarbari project is revised at Tk 51,854.9 crore... There will be more development works. Different institutions are set to be built there, including power plants. There is also a plan to build a tourism centre on Sonadia island," said Prof Dr Shamsul Alam, state minister for planning.

"The prime minister has decided that all those development works will be coordinated by a single authority named Matarbari Development Authority."

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AL man shot dead in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Masked criminals shot dead an Awami League activist from the Marma community in Bandarban's Rowangchhari upazila yesterday evening.

The dead is U Thowai Nu Marma, 40. "Criminals in masks shot him dead in Talukdar para near his house in Taracha union around 7:00pm," said Bandarban Superintendent of Police Jerin Akhter.

A woman also sustained bullet wounds during the attack. However, her identity could not be confirmed immediately, she added.

Chaw Hai Mong Marma, president of Rowangchhari upazila AL, said U Thowai Nu was a member of Taracha union AL.

A police team went to the spot to recover the body, the SP said.