

Aedes larvae found at 69 structures

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday found Aedes-mosquito larvae at 69 structures and houses on the first day of its three-day drive.

DSCC teams destroyed all of the breeding grounds and larvae and warned of fines if they found any larva there again.

The teams visited 50 locations under DSCC -- including Dhaka University, Nayapaltan, Bijoynagar, Fakirapool, Kaptanbazar, Jognagar, BCC Road and Shashi Mohan Basak Lane areas. The drive will be held today as well.

Earlier, DSCC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh directed its officials to start a three-day anti-mosquito drive in seven of its wards from May 10.

According to a DGHS pre-monsoon survey, wards 38, 40, 45, are marked as "high risk" areas, while wards 13, 15, 21 and 23 are at "medium risk". The drives are being conducted in these wards, the mayor said.

Twenty-six mosquito-control workers will spray insecticide in each ward two times a day, he added.

PRAYER TIMING
MAY 10
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:10 12:45 5:00 6:36 8:00
JAMAAT 4:45 1:15 5:15 6:40 8:30
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Breeding grounds for Aedes mosquitoes are abundant this season, as stagnant water remains on top of structures, like this under-construction building, for days on end. The photos were taken yesterday from Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

At risk of major dengue outbreak

DGHS survey shows Dhaka's worrying scenario; experts for swift action

HELEMUL ALAM

Dhaka is at risk of a major dengue outbreak this year compared to the last couple of years, as clear, stagnant water, the breeding ground for Aedes mosquitoes at under-construction buildings is abundant this time around.

The scenario came to light after Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) conducted a pre-monsoon survey between March 23 and April 4.

Experts asked authorities concerned to take immediate steps to address the matter.

"The density [of Aedes mosquitoes] found in pre-monsoon survey this year is higher than that of 2020 and 2021. So, there is a chance of witnessing a higher number of dengue patients this year," said entomologist Kabirul Bashar of Jahangirnagar University.

It is essential to immediately destroy all

breeding grounds like discarded containers to control dengue. This work should start in every ward under leadership of councillors and help from locals, he said.

Of the places where mosquitoes were found, 42.11 percent, the highest, breeding grounds were found at under-construction buildings, while 31.58 percent were at high-rise buildings.

The survey found three Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) wards to be at "high risk" and 10 at "medium risk" of an outbreak. Nine wards in Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) are at medium risk.

Of the objects that harboured mosquitoes, 23.98 were flooded floors, 21.64 percent plastic drums, 10.53 percent buckets, 10.53 percent water tanks (cement), and 4.09 percent flower tubs.

According to data of DGHS control room, 199 dengue patients were hospitalised in different hospitals across

the country till yesterday. It was 28,429 in 2021 and 1,405 in 2020.

Entomologist Manzur A Chowdhury suggested reintroducing "10 minutes at 10:00am every Saturday", the campaign for cleaning houses, as it will be helpful to destroy breeding grounds.

Due to early rain this year, breeding grounds have already been generated, he said.

Dr Md Ekramul Haque, deputy programme manager of malaria and ATD control programme at DGHS, said to control Aedes mosquitoes, an integrated initiative, especially involving locals, is crucial.

TACKLING DENGUE WITH GUPPY FISH

Apart from its regular activities, DNCC has released huge quantities of guppy fish in different water bodies.

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This is the first time RHD is going to hold such a meeting to improve our service in future.

Tanvir Siddique
Superintending
Engineer of RHD

A welcome change

RHD, railway to hold follow-up meetings to evaluate preparations for Eid journey

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Ahead of Eid every year, officials of different ministries and agencies concerned hold a series of meetings. They have one goal: make people's journey home and back relatively hassle-free.

However, the efforts remain futile due to the huge pressure created by the number of passengers and the authorities' mismanagement, resulting in home-bound travellers suffering because of traffic congestion on highways and ferry terminals.

The difficulties don't just end there. The rush often results in road crashes killing many people, followed by non-government organisations' reports on the situation, criticising the government for its inaction.

This has been the picture for quite a few years now. The steps, taken by the authorities to mitigate the issues and their outcomes, are never evaluated properly.

However, this year saw a change, and for the better. The journey home and return went quite smooth without much hassle, except for the last couple of days of the return journey.

In light of this, Roads and Highways Department (RHD) will hold a meeting to evaluate its initiatives today, while Bangladesh Railway is scheduled to sit tomorrow, said officials.

"This is the first time RHD is going to hold such a meeting to improve our service in future," Tanvir Siddique, RHD superintending engineer (road design and safety circle), told this correspondent yesterday.

He said they have been able to address traffic congestion on the most congested highways. However, some areas still saw congestion.

The meeting will discuss the congestion-prone sections of highways and ways of reducing road crashes, said Tanvir.

Demand for transport reaches its peak before the two Eids and some other occasions. The rush leads to an increasing number of road crashes. Hence, the meeting will be held to devise plans to

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RAINDROPS KEEP FALLIN' ON MY HEAD... As the rain relieves the city of heat, these feathered-friends were spotted in Lalmatia yesterday, perched on their resting spot and enjoying the drizzle.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

New outfit trying to emerge following JMB's footsteps

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

A new extremist outfit, "Jama'atul Muslimeen", has been formed, keeping strategic similarities with home-grown, banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB).

Majority of the members, including the so-called ameer of the new outfit, are followers of JMB. Their plan was to remove the democratic government.

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-6) came up with the information following the arrest of 10 members, including ameer Anowar Kabir Milon alias Middat Hossain (50).

The other arrestees are Sohel Rana (30), Aminul (38), Kamrul Islam (55), Rifat Rahman (24), Abdur Rouf (62), Md Shaikh Farid (27), Abdul Alim (50), Rafiqul Islam (46), and Talha Islam (19).

Rab-6 officials said Middat was in Saudi Arabia between 2002 to 2006. After completing his studies, he came back to Bangladesh and met a suspect named Prof Mazid in

Bhola.

Mazid was a follower of then JMB chiefs Shaikh Abdur Rahman and Saidur Rahman. He was even involved in the series bomb blast in 63 districts.

Mazid was later arrested and sent to jail, but still had good contacts with JMB top leaders.

The outfit was recruiting new members in Tangail, Gazipur, Jashore, Khulna, Mymensingh and Dhaka, according to Rab-6 officials.

Middat was close to Mazid and later joined JMB. During the period, Middat got in touch with a number of JMB followers, officials claimed.

Middat was arrested by police's Detective Branch (DB) in 2012 for suspected involvement in militancy. At the time, he planned to form a new outfit and has been working towards that goal since

2018, starting with recruitment, said a high official involved with the investigation.

On information, a team of Rab-6 conducted a drive at a house on BIDC Road of Khulna's Khalishpur and made the arrest recently. The elite force seized extremist books and documents from the arrestees' possession during the drive.

A case has been filed with Khalishpur Police Station.

Lt Col Muhammad Mostak Ahmed, commanding officer of Rab-6, said, "We have applied through Rab headquarters to hand the case over to us. We are looking into the new outfit's activities and keeping an eye on the arrestees' associates to arrest them."

According to officials, Jama'atul Muslimeen was recruiting new members in Tangail, Gazipur, Jashore, Khulna, Mymensingh and Dhaka. They had gathered in Khulna to sort out recruitment plans, said Rab-6 officials.

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