

Cox’s Bazar a new dengue hotspot

HELEMUL ALAM and MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAT

Cox's Bazar has become a hotspot for spreading dengue after Dhaka. Two dengue patients died and 103 patients were hospitalised with dengue in the district this year so far.

However, the number would be far more than that if members of the forcibly displaced Rohingya community – who are currently in Bangladesh's shelter – are included in the list.

Dr ATM Rezwanul Haque Bhuiyan, coordinator of the health sector under the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner, said the dengue outbreak in Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar is much higher.

According to data obtained from Rohingya camps, the number of dengue patients there was 3,029 till June this year, he mentioned.

According to the Directorate General of Health Service (DGHS), a total of 1,789



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dengue patients were hospitalised this year till yesterday, of whom 254 were from outside Dhaka.

A total of three patients have died so far, of whom, two were in Cox's Bazar and one in Dhaka.

In 20 other districts, 151 dengue patients have been admitted to hospitals this year.

In Cox's Bazar, Rohingya camps at Ukhiya and Takenaf have been identified as the prime hot spots.

Civil Surgeon of Cox's Bazar Md Mahbubur Rahman told this newspaper that after Dhaka, the number of dengue patients is the second highest in Cox's Bazar, of whom, most are from forcibly displaced Rohingya community.

He said different combined activities have been going to control the spread of Aedes mosquitoes.

Dr Rezwanul said camp administration and NGOs are conducting anti-mosquito drives at the field level to control Aedes

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With floodwater receding in some areas of Sylhet and the fields emerging again, local children finally got a chance to enjoy a game of football among themselves. And so what they became all muddy? All that mattered at that moment was the match. This photo was taken in Sylhet Sadar's Baishtila area.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Holding tax based on land not rent Demand homeowners as CCC starts collection process

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Despite objections from homeowners, Chattogram City Corporation (CCC) will start collecting holding tax based on property rent, instead of area. This new method will reportedly raise the tax by many times.

CCC started sending notices to homeowners in this regard on April 23.

Officials of the corporation's revenue department said the previous system could not assess a building's true value, as calculations were done based on estimation mostly. Moreover, there was no specific guideline on how to realise holding tax.

CCC used to collect tax based on the land's square feet (Tk 1 to 5 for per square foot) of a respective building, depending on the locality.

Under the new system, holding tax will be collected based on a building's total rent. The tax will be equivalent to 17 percent of the total rent. As a result, homeowners will have to pay way more tax than before, according to officials and homeowners.

The process to reassess the system started in March 2016 and found 1.85 lakh holdings in the port city. CCC set a target of realising Tk 851 crore as holding tax for fiscal 2017-18, which was Tk 131.91 crore earlier.

In 2017, however, local government ministry suspended tax collection based on the reassessment, due to the movement of homeowners, who say the tax amount is too high, and its impact will fall on tenants.

The ministry withdrew the suspension in January this year. Since then, CCC has been preparing to collect the increased tax.

Omar Faruk, a resident of South

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A story of scarcity and negligence

Only one doctor for hundreds of cancer patients in Khulna Medical College Hospital

DIPANKAR ROY

Due to scarcity of trained professionals, unavailability of equipment and overwhelming treatment costs, cancer care is still inaccessible to hundreds of patients in Khulna and surrounding southern districts.

The Cancer Institute of Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) is the sole destination for low-income families in Khulna and Barishal.

Cancer patients in Bangladesh usually receive treatment in three ways: radiotherapy, chemotherapy and surgery.

At present, there is only one doctor for 1,000 patients who receive treatment at KMCH. The highly technical work of giving chemotherapy and radiotherapy is overseen by seven nurses, leaving a huge question mark on their ability to perform the task.

Although there is one radiotherapy machine at the hospital, it is not operational.

As a result, the treatment for terminally ill patients has come to a standstill. Dr Mukitil Huda, the head of the department, works only three days a week. He is the only doctor at the institute as his only colleague Happy Saha has recently been transferred to Dhaka.

There are practically no doctors in the unit on the remaining days. As a result, cancer patients in the region are in great distress.

Regarding the transfer of a doctor, Director of KMCH Md Rabiul Hasan said, "I have nothing to say about the government



decision, but it would have been better for us if she stayed."

A linear accelerator or radiotherapy machine was brought to KMCH in July 2012 to provide better services for cancer treatment. The machine has been lying there almost ever since.

According to KMCH, Tk 7 crore was sought in the 2015-16 financial year for making the machine operational and constructing related infrastructure. But the call for investment at the facility has fallen on deaf years, claimed hospital authorities.

Mukitil Huda, associate professor and

in charge of the radiotherapy department, said, "Since its inception, the unit has been lagging due to lack of necessary manpower and medical equipment."

Patients have to go through a painful ordeal to receive treatment and care due to overcrowding and lack of essential services.

At KMCH, hundreds of patients and their attendants were seen standing in long queues to buy tickets for treatment. Many patients, who were too weak to stand, were seen lying on the dirty floor as all the chairs were occupied.

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Locals block road protesting load-shedding in Sylhet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Protesting prolonged load-shedding, residents of Dakshin Surma and Osmaninagar upazila in Sylhet blocked Dhaka-Sylhet highway on Sunday night.

The blockade started around 10:00pm at Nazirbazar in Dakshin Surma and Khasikapon in Osmaninagar. Around 11:30pm, the blockades were withdrawn after police and the Palli Bidyut Samity assured them of electricity.

The upazilas have been facing severe load-shedding since Friday.

Md Muzibur Rahman Chowdhury, deputy general manager of Palli Bidyut Samity in Sylhet, said, "As the main supply line of power was snapped accidentally, the service is being disrupted. We're looking into it."

Pran official sent to jail Ad team broke law by setting fire inside forest, operating generators

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A Moulvibazar court has sent ABM Rintu, line producer of Pran Company's production house, to jail on charges of illegal practice in Lawachhara protected forest.

This is the first time a case has been filed for the crime of harming the forest environment and the accused has been sent to jail.



Moulvibazar Wildlife and Nature Conservation Department Divisional Forest Officer Md Rezaul Karim Chowdhury confirmed the matter.

Senior Judicial Magistrate of the Forest Court Md Saifur Rahman refused Rintu's bail plea and ordered to send him to prison on Sunday, he said.

Suhel Shyam, a member of Srimangal Stand for Our Endangered Wildlife (SEW), said on June 8, an advertisement team of Pran broke the forest law by setting a fire inside Lawachhara National Park and operating two large generators.

Later in the night, the forest department seized

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CMP gets new commissioner

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Bangladesh Police's Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Krishna Pada Roy yesterday took charge of Chattogram Metropolitan Police (CMP) as the commissioner.

He was greeted as the 31st commissioner with flowers by senior officials at the CMP headquarters.

An officer of Bangladesh Civil Services' 15th batch, Krishna severed as additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police before his new posting on June 30.

The outgoing CMP Commissioner Saleh Mohammad Tanvir was posted to Central Police Hospital (CPH) as its director.



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Starting his day at the break of dawn, 64-year-old Thakur roams from village to village, carrying around 30 kilos of "ghol", also known as "Mattha", a yoghurt and milk-based drink. A familiar face for the last 27 years, Thakur sells a glass of the delicacy for Tk 15 and offers a much-needed respite to locals from the heat. This photo was taken at Dighaliya area of Khulna recently.

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