

Dengue claims 6 lives in 24hrs

869 new patients hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least six dengue patients have died and 869 were admitted to hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

With this, the total number of dengue cases rose to 36,131, of which 11,278 are from outside Dhaka.

Meanwhile, the total number of deaths rose to 134, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Of those, 79 were in Dhaka, 23 in Cox's Bazar, 14 in Chattogram, five each in Barishal and Khulna, three in Mymensingh, two in Rajshahi and one each in Narsingdi, Narail, Bogura, Kishoreganj and Feni.

A total of 32,400 patients have recovered from the disease, of whom 9,905 are from outside Dhaka.

Some 3,597 dengue patients -- 1,318 of whom are outside Dhaka -- are still undergoing treatment.

Experts urged the authorities concerned to conduct extensive drives to identify clusters of Aedes mosquitoes immediately.

They also suggested taking effective measures to destroy all Aedes breeding sources.

During a monsoon survey conducted by the DGHS between August 11 and 23, Aedes mosquitoes were found in 13.4 percent of houses in Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and 11.75 percent of houses in Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC).

The survey included 1,319 households from 40 DNCC wards and 1,830 from 58 DSCC wards.

It also found 13 DNCC and 14 DSCC wards with high Aedes mosquito densities to be at high risk.

President Hamid leaves for Germany

BSS, Dhaka

President M Abdul Hamid departed Dhaka early yesterday for a 16-day visit to Germany and the UK for medical check-ups.

A Qatar Airways aircraft, carrying the president and his wife Rashida Khanam, departed Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport around 3:20am yesterday.

The 78-year-old president, who has been suffering from an eye condition named glaucoma for a while, is scheduled for health check-ups in Germany and London.

He is expected to return from London on November 13.



Farmers have begun gathering crops from paddy fields in Sylhet after the region saw the worst floods in decades damage farmland. The photo was taken in the Mogolgaon area of the district yesterday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

BUS STRIKE 'TO STOP THREE-WHEELERS'

Easybike drivers enjoy 5 times regular income

KONGKON KARMAKER

Just a day ahead of the BNP rally in Rangpur, the district transport owners' association called for a 36-hour strike on Friday saying that they were protesting against the battery-run three-wheelers on the highways.

The strike, however, has turned out to be a blessing for the three-wheeler drivers.

Some of the three-wheeler drivers, as they shared with The Daily Star, earned between Tk 3,000 and Tk 3,500 a day during the strike. Their average daily income stays between Tk 600 and Tk 800.

Dalilur Rahman, a three-wheeler driver in Rangpur, said there were around 30,000 three-wheelers in the city.

As heavy vehicles were out of operations during the strike, most of these three-wheelers started plying on long routes including Rangpur-Parbatipur, Rangpur-Saidpur, Rangpur-Phulbari, Rangpur-Lalmonirhat, he added.

There are five entry points to Rangpur. Of those, the Rangpur-Kurigram road is the entry point for the people of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram, the Dinajpur-

Rangpur road for the people of Dinajpur, Thakurgaon and Panchagarh, and the Rangpur-Bogura road is for the people of Gaibandha and Bogura.

Besides, there are two more regional routes -- Phulbari-Rangpur and Rangpur-Parbatipur -- that can be used to enter Rangpur.

As heavy vehicles were out of operations during the strike, most of these three-wheelers started plying on long routes including Rangpur-Parbatipur, Rangpur-Saidpur, Rangpur-Phulbari, Rangpur-Lalmonirhat.

This correspondent visited all these entry points on Friday night and Saturday morning and found a large number of people entering Rangpur using these routes.

The majority of this crowd went to Rangpur by the three-wheelers.

Mahbubur Rahman, a leader of Kurigram BNP's Nageswari upazila unit,

said he and other activists used 50 three-wheelers to cross a 100km road and reach Rangpur.

One-way three-wheeler charge for this distance was Tk 3,500, he added.

Dulal Mia, another three-wheeler driver of Mahiganj Satmatha, said he was charging a traveller to Rangpur from Kaunia Tk 150. Eight people could travel on his easy bike. He has been earning Tk 4,000 a day.

Abdul Jalil, a leader of Panchagarh BNP, said he and other activists reached Rangpur riding around 200 three-wheelers.

Meanwhile, the transport workers in Kamarpara and Rangpur Central bus terminal were frustrated as their earnings were affected because of the strike.

Mominul Islam, a helper of the Dhaka-bound bus, said he received no payment for the days.

Abdul Aziz, a driver of another Dhaka-bound bus, echoed him.

BNP Vice Chairman AZM Zahid Hossain alleged the government enforced the strike using the transport workers' leaders and bus owners. But nothing could stop people from joining the rally.

No polls under AL

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survive amid the rising prices of essentials and said the government destroyed all the achievements and dreams of the country during the 15 years.

"Those who destroy the country and its people cannot be in power," he said, adding that the BNP's only goal now was to oust the government.

The people have woken up and they will resist all the misdeeds and misrules, he said.

Although there was a transport strike in Rangpur, tens of thousands of BNP supporters made it to the venue. Many of them reached there on Friday morning and waited for the event for almost 24 hours.

Fakhrul thanked the crowd for spending the night in warehouses, abandoned buildings and open fields just to attend the rally.

"If the government was not afraid of the people, then why was the transport strike enforced?"

Even though the ground at Collectorate Eidgah is larger than a standard cricket stadium, the crowd spilled over onto the nearby streets.

A large number of law enforcers were seen in the area.

Pictures of Khaleda Zia and Tarique Rahman were seen in banners and posters placed on the walls in the vicinity.

BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury

said hartal was usually enforced by the opposition party but now the government itself was enforcing it.

"Basically, the government is alienated from the people and that's why it's called this hartal," he said.

He then described "how badly the economy was doing".

Referring to the PM's apprehension of a famine, he said, "You will be ousted before that happens."

Another standing committee member, Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku, said, "The party [BNP] members' dedication will not go in vain. Hasina must go and will go.

"We will not return home without victory."

BNP Vice-Chairman AZM Zahid Hossain said, "The city has turned into a city of processions."

The government should take the safe exit to avoid the people's wrath.

The rally was chaired by Rangpur City BNP Convener Shamsuzzaman Shamui. The event started around noon and ended around 5:30pm.

Forty-five-year-old Mustafizur Rahman, joint convener of Kaharol Upazila Jubo Dal in Dinajpur, died at the venue after suffering a heart attack.

The BNP has plans for rallies in other cities to garner public support in the run-up to the next election. It will conclude the series of rallies in Dhaka city on December 10.

The rallies are being held to protest the rising prices of essentials.

ARSA behind the recent murders

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criminals prowl the camps at night."

A high official of the APBn said some eight to 10 ARSA men were leading the criminal activities.

"We have the details of their identity, but failed to track them down because they went into hiding in the hilly and remote areas," said the official, requesting anonymity.

Contacted, Lt Col Foyezur Rahman, director (operations) of Border Guard Bangladesh, did not directly say anything about the illegal entry through the borders.

The force responsible to ensure

security at refugee camps will be able to say, he added.

The main target of the criminal groups are the people who support Rohingya repatriation, sources said.

The presence of Islamic Mahaj members first came into discussions on September 28 after a Rohingya man on Facebook live said he was an activist of the outfit and that he killed four people, including three community leaders (Mahji).

However, law enforcers later said they found no evidence supporting the claim.

2 ministers, 3 MPs blamed for defeat

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accused of staying inactive, sources said.

In the polls, Mukut defeated AL candidate Enamul Kabir Emon, also general secretary of Sunamganj district AL.

Mukut had also defeated Emon in the first zilla parishad polls in 2016.

The meeting held Mojibur Rahman Nixon, Jubo League presidium member, who won from Faridpur-4 as a party dissident, responsible for AL's defeat in Faridpur.

He backed Shahadat Hossain, also a central Jubo League leader, for the chairman post there. Shahadat won against AL-sponsored candidate Faruk Hossain.

Central committee members at the meeting blasted some party leaders for supporting the rebels and sought the AL president's directives to this end.

However, Hasina has remained quiet in this regard so far, sources said.

The ruling AL-backed chairman candidates lost in the zilla parishad polls in 11 districts, which were held on October 17, while they won the chairman posts in 48 out of 61 zilla parishads. Of them, 27 AL candidates were elected unopposed.

A Rohingya community leader, requesting anonymity, said he was aware of the presence of Islamic Mahaj operatives, but they did not have as many firearms as ARSA operatives do.

"They are now trying to gather weapons and funds," he said.

The combined operation brings some relief to the Rohingya people, he added.

Sayed Harun Or Rashid, additional deputy inspector general of APBn-14, said the special operation will continue based on information on criminal activities.

Unite to resist BNP-Jamaat

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in Dhaka over the next two months to counter the BNP "generating heat" in the country's politics ahead of the next national election, slated for January 2024.

The BNP, on the other hand, announced it would hold rallies in 10 divisional cities to protest the ongoing power crisis, price hikes of daily essentials and the killing of five of its activists in police firing in Bhola, Narayanganj, Munshiganj and Jashore during anti-government protests.

The party plans to wrap up its divisional rallies through a huge gathering in Dhaka city on December 10.

In his speech, Quader said people will stand by the AL and resist the communal forces backed by the BNP.

He claimed AL's rally yesterday was much bigger than BNP's in Rangpur.

The minister also alleged that Mirza Fakhrul Alamgir, secretary general of the BNP, is receiving funds from foreign countries to launch movements against the government.

"We have received information

that Fakhrul is receiving money from Dubai."

Pointing to BNP's main demand for the restoration of the caretaker government, Quader said, "Get rid of the ghost of the caretaker government from your head. The High Court has sent it to the museum. Time will tell whether you [BNP] will join the election.

"How many people attended the Rangpur rally? 50 to 60 thousand? Lakhs have gathered here at the Awami League rally."

He urged the BNP to hold rallies in a peaceful manner.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal said, "We have been hearing for the last few days that they [BNP] will occupy Dhaka on December 10 and oust us. We even heard they formed a [shadow] cabinet. How could they do so?"

He added, "The huge gathering at our rally today proves we will form the next government."

Kamal then called for unity among all AL leaders and workers, saying, "We will walk together. We want

to see Sheikh Hasina as the prime minister again."

Education Minister Dipu Moni, also AL's joint general secretary, said the "evil design to ruin peace and discipline" will be resisted.

"The people do not like anarchy. We will march forward to build a developed country by 2041 under Sheikh Hasina's leadership. The BNP is a party of murderers. We have to resist this evil force."

Bahauddin Nasim, AL joint general secretary, said, "When the country is marching forward, the BNP-Jamaat is trying to destroy it in the name of protests. They want to turn Bangladesh into Pakistan."

He also vowed to resist the BNP-led "evil and communal" forces.

NEWLY FORMED COMMITTEE

At the council, Benjir Ahmed, lawmaker from Dhaka-20 (Dhamrai), was made president of Dhaka district AL for the third consecutive time, while Paniruzzaman Tarun was made the general secretary.

Dhaka District AL triennial council was last held in September 2016.

6 injured as AL men clash in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Six people were injured in a clash between a lawmaker and an Awami League leader during an extended meeting in the AL party office in Tangail's Bhuanpur upazila yesterday.

According to sources, the clash broke out between the supporters of local lawmaker Tanvir Hasan Soto Monir, and those of Masudul Haque Masud, president of Bhuanpur AL and the municipality mayor.

Police rushed to the spot to bring the situation under control, while additional law enforcers were also deployed to avert further violence, said Faridul Islam, OC of Bhuanpur police.

Speaking to reporters, Masudul said, "MP Monir's men attacked my supporters and left six of them injured." However, Monir blamed a district council member, who supports Masud, for the clash.

No complaint has been filed in this regard till the filing of this report at 9:10pm.

Teen gang-raped in Narayanganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

A soap factory worker was gang-raped in Narayanganj's Rupganj upazila on Friday.

"The 16-year-old girl was called to a quiet place in the upazila's Nalpathar area by one of her acquaintances named Sabbir, where he and four others raped her," said Abir Hossain, senior assistant superintendent of Narayanganj police.

The police rescued the girl and sent her to a hospital after the locals found her abandoned at the spot.

"The victim's mother has filed a case, accusing five of rape," the OC added.

VP Harris to replace Biden at last of three Asia summits

AFP, Washington

Vice President Kamala Harris will represent the United States next month in Bangkok in the third in a trio of Asian summits, the White House confirmed Friday, as President Joe Biden returns for his granddaughter's wedding.

Biden will travel on November 11 to the annual UN climate conference in Egypt before heading to the East Asia Summit in Cambodia and the Group of 20 in Bali, the White House said.

But he will not attend the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum taking place in the Thai capital on November 18-19.

Harris will attend instead and travel afterward to the Philippines, a longtime US ally, with her husband, Doug Emhoff.

The White House said in a statement that her visit would "re-affirm and strengthen the US-Philippines Alliance and underscore the breadth of our cooperation as friends, partners and allies."