

3 more die of dengue, 250 hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least three dengue patients died, while 250 were admitted to different hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours till yesterday morning.

The death toll has now risen to 220, while total cases are now 51,602, of which 18,171 have been recorded outside Dhaka.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), of the deaths, 131 occurred in Dhaka, 24 in Cox's Bazar, 29 in Chattogram, nine in Barishal, seven in Khulna, five in Mymensingh, two each in Rajshahi and Narail, and one each in Narsingdi, Kushtia, Pabna, Bagerhat, Khagrachhari, Bogura, Madaripur and Feni.

A total of 48,670 patients, 16,908 from outside Dhaka, have already been released from hospitals.

Some 2,712 patients, 1,174 from outside Dhaka, are still undergoing treatment.



Turag river, the stretch from Gabtoli to Nawaberbagh (the eastern shore), has significantly shrunk due to unabated waste dumping by locals and Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC). Even though Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority has verbally and officially requested DNCC authorities to stop dumping waste on the riverbank, DNCC authorities are yet to pay heed to the complaints. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

PM to open 50 industrial units tomorrow

BSS, Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate 50 industrial units, projects and facilities in Economic Zones (EZs) tomorrow, marking 50 years of Bangladesh's independence.

Talking to the news agency, Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) Executive Chairman Shaikh Yusuf Harun said the prime minister will virtually inaugurate 50 industrial units, projects and facilities in the EZs across the country and BEZA will hold the event at eight venues.

"These include commercial operations of four factories at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Shilpa Nagar (BSMSN) in Chattogram and eight factories in different privately-run EZs," he added.

He said these industrial units have already invested over \$967.73 million and will make further investments of nearly \$331.27 million.

He informed that the PM will also lay the foundation stones of 29 industrial units in different EZs, which have so far invested \$610 million and are in the process to invest \$1,922.39 million more.

The EZ facilities, to be inaugurated, include administration buildings of BSMSN, Jamalpur Economic Zone, Srihatta EZ, and Sabrang Tourism Park, Harun added.

Govt to ensure BNP's peaceful rallies: Hasan Mahmud

STAR REPORT

Information Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday said the government has always taken measures so that BNP can organise rallies properly.

"We have instructed party activists to behave with restraint despite BNP's provocative statements. But if BNP creates chaos in Dhaka or any other place in the country, the people will resist them," he said.

The minister made the remarks in response to the questions of journalists on the sideline of a programme, organised at the Chittagong University campus on the occasion of the 57th Chittagong University Day.

The minister was present at the programme as chief guest.

Hasan said the grenade attack on the Awami League rally on August 21, 2004 was "sponsored by the BNP government".

"They [BNP] killed several people by attacking Sheikh Helal MP's rally. BNP repeatedly conducted bomb and grenade attacks on our rallies, including that of Ahsan Ullah Master, SM Kibria and Suranjit Sengupta," he added.

Hasan Mahmud said, "We have never adopted the policy of suppressing BNP. When BNP was in power, we were not allowed to hold any rallies. There used to be a barbed-wire fence on both sides in front of our party's central office. We could not go outside that fence."

"But when we took power, not a single cracker was burst during BNP rallies. The government has always taken measures so that they can organise rallies properly," said the minister.

In the programme, the minister said it was a wrong decision to move the fine arts faculty from the CU campus.

Stating the need to increase cultural practices at CU,



Turag turns into a dumping zone

BIWTA blames DNCC for indiscriminate waste dumping

TARUN SARKAR

Turag river is gradually filling up with the waste industries and residents are dumping onto the eastern shore of the waterbody, which falls under the jurisdiction of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC).

The river channel has significantly shrunk from Gabtoli to Nawaberbagh, as a huge amount of waste is accumulating on the

It appears that state-run organisations are working to ruin the river, instead of protecting it.

SHARIF JAMIL,
General secretary
Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon

manager of the construction company.

BIWTA has verbally and officially requested DNCC authorities to stop dumping waste on the riverbank on multiple occasions. However, the authorities have failed to pay any heed, said construction officials.

An eco-park has been set up in Mirpur Boro Bazar area on the bank of Turag. The park too is not free of the garbage problem, as a huge amount of waste has been piled up near it.

BIWTA superintendent engineer Abu Zafar Mohammad Shahnawaz Kabir on February 14 wrote a letter to DNCC chief waste management officer, requesting to take necessary measures to keep the riverbank free of waste and pollution.

Contacted, Poribesh Bachao Andolon Chairperson Abu Naser Khan said the city corporation is committing two crimes – dumping waste and polluting river water. He mentioned that DNCC has crossed many of the river's boundary-demarcation pillars, which were set up inside the river's territory, to dump waste.

"Not only is this practice narrowing the river, it is also polluting it. And the worst part is that all of it is done by an autonomous government body. It is utterly unacceptable," said Naser.

"It appears that state-run organisations are working to ruin

already been completed. Currently, construction is underway between Borobazar and Diabari areas.

However, the work faced multiple obstacles due to indiscriminate waste dumping, said locals and workers at the construction site. Pedestrians are finding it difficult to walk on the completed parts of the walkway due to garbage dumping.

As per the walkway's design, BIWTA plans to build stairs from the walkway to the part of the river in Mirpur's Borobazar Mosque area. For this purpose, BIWTA-appointed construction company Reve Dredging and Engineering made large holes.

However, the holes have been filled up by DNCC workers with waste.

"We construct the holes, but DNCC fills those with waste. This has been going on repeatedly. We filed multiple complaints but to no avail," said Md Hemayetuddin,

BIWTA has verbally and officially requested DNCC authorities to stop dumping waste on the riverbank on multiple occasions.

banks of both sides of the river.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw that a significant part of the shore is full of garbage.

A similar situation was also noticed at Bisil and Mirpur zoo areas, where the office of a truck drivers' association stands on the riverbank.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) has taken the initiative to construct a walkway along Turag. The path from Bosila to Borobazar has

Dhaka, Seoul to explore untapped potential

UNB, Dhaka

South Korean Ambassador to Bangladesh Lee Jang-keun has said Bangladesh and South Korea will celebrate 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties together next year and head for a brighter future.

"I have many plans and ideas to make it happen. But it requires support and participation of all important stakeholders," he said while speaking at KOICA Alumni Night-2022 at a hotel in Dhaka on Thursday.

Though the two countries have enjoyed close and strong ties, the ambassador said there is still huge untapped potential.

"Our relations can surpass the level of Korea's relations with other regional partner countries such as Vietnam and India, the third and eighth major trading partners of Korea," he said.

The ambassador said KOICA Bangladesh Alumni Association (KBAA) can be and should be the leading agent and facilitator in this regard.

This year, the Korean government decided to significantly increase the amount of the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) for Bangladesh, from USD 0.7 billion to USD 3 billion over the next five years.

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in collaboration with KBAA hosted the annual event known as "KOICA Alumni Night", strengthening friendly ties between Bangladesh and South Korea. State Minister for ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak spoke as chief guest.

Nasima Begum, member (secretary) of Planning Commission and president of KBAA; ABM Amin Ullah Nuri, secretary of Road Transport and Highways Division; Young Ah Doh, country director of KOICA Bangladesh Office; and Shahriar Kader Siddiky, additional secretary, wing chief (Asia, JEC and F and F), Economic Relations Division, also spoke.

Speaking on the occasion, Palak emphasised on KOICA's continued support in the ICT sector, which remarkably contributed in building "Digital Bangladesh".

BLUE ECONOMY

Bangladesh seeks Portugal's investment

UNB, Dhaka

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam yesterday said Bangladesh would welcome Portuguese investments and its expertise in the blue economy, which would encompass exploring offshore wind power generation.

Portugal's large-scale, judicious investment in renewable energy over the past years has largely cushioned it from the present energy crisis around the world, he said while speaking at a seminar as chief guest.

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) organised the seminar titled "Bangladesh-Portugal Relations: Quest for Deeper Bilateral Cooperation" at its premises, as part of its Eminent Person Lecture Series.

Dr Francisco Andre, secretary of state for foreign affairs and cooperation, Republic of Portugal, attended the seminar as a guest speaker, and Shabbir Ahmad Chowdhury, secretary (west), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was present as a discussant.

BISS Chairperson Ambassador Kazi Imtiaz Hossain chaired the programme and its director General Major General Sheikh Pasha Habib Uddin delivered the welcome remarks.

"It is reassuring for us that Portugal is favourably disposed to Bangladesh obtaining the GSP+ facility in the EU market beyond 2029. I am certain that Portugal will also play a catalytic role over time in realising our efforts to take our engagements with the EU towards a more strategic direction," said the state minister.

The two countries will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2024.

A 150-YEAR-OLD LEGACY

With its scrumptious pastries, Prince of Wales bakery bringing smiles to people for more than a century

DIPAN NANDY

Located in a narrow alley of Lakshmi Bazar, near the famous St Gregory church, stands Dhaka's oldest bakery (at least according to the current owners and some historians).

For over 150 years, Prince of Wales bakery has been serving mouth-watering pastries and cakes to thousands of customers.

The premium offerings of the place include fruit cakes, cream rolls, cheese cakes, and many other sweet goodies. The bakery is also touted as one of the firsts to have baked wedding and Christmas cakes in Dhaka.

WHAT'S WITH THE NAME? Ever since its establishment in 1870, the bakery received immediate traction among locals for its unique name. But no, the original owner of the place was



not related in any capacity with the British royal family.

According to historians, a British gentleman hailing from Wales, whose name has been lost from history books, came to Dhaka from Great Britain. He earned a bit of a reputation as "Mr Wales" in the city, and decided to permanently seal his legacy in the town by establishing Prince of Wales.

One Sheikh Badruddin Mia, popularly known as Buddha Mia, started working at the place from the age of 12. Before

the partition, Mr Wales handed over the bakery's responsibilities to Buddha Mia, before leaving Dhaka permanently for his home country.

Buddhu later bought the establishment from the landlord and his family, and has owned this bakery ever since. Aftab Uddin Ahmed, Nuruddin Ahmed, Shahabuddin Ahmed, Abdul Quader and Manzoor Ahmed became the owners of Prince of Wales, respectively. Md Babul, Buddhu's nephew, is currently managing the establishment.

OLD IS GOLD

At first glance, the place will look like an ordinary bakery, as the new generations did not change the original set-up much.

Babul said they still bake the way his uncle and father used to. Some of the kitchen equipment are centuries old.

"We still light the furnaces with wood. We use long steel sleeves to move trays in or out. We run this bakery for its legacy, not for profit," he said.

Babul proudly said they add a personal touch while baking, which makes their customers come back for more.

Till date, the place is popular among the students of St. Gregory's High School and College and nearby institutions.

"I like the cream roll from this bakery. It tastes different from other ones," said Fahim Mahmud, a student at St. Gregory's.

Moumita Rahman, a student of St. Francis Xavier's Girls' School, echoed the same. "It's really delicious! One would fall in love with just one bite."

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