

DENGUE OUTBREAK  
9 die, 2,617 get  
hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least nine more people died from dengue in 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday as the country grapples with a record outbreak of the mosquito-borne disease.

Of the nine deaths, five were reported in the capital.

At least 2,617 dengue patients were hospitalised in the 24-hour period, according to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Dengue has so far claimed at least 1,055 lives this year and nearly 2,16,864 were infected, making this the deadliest year since the first recorded epidemic in 2000.

According to DGHS data, 9,265 dengue patients were undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country yesterday morning.

A total of 2,06,544 patients have so far been released from hospitals this year.

‘Ensure quality  
education’  
President urges all  
to shun coaching  
business

BSS, Dhaka

President Mohammed Shahabuddin yesterday asked all concerned to shun coaching business to improve the standard of education in the country.

A section of people along with some teachers are directly or indirectly making profits from coaching centres..., said the president at a programme at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka, marking “World Teachers’ Day”.

He urged the government, ministry, teachers, parents, and all concerned to work together to check question paper leaks. Necessary steps should be taken to make the teaching method compatible with the international standard, the president said.

“We want every student... to become well educated so that they can contribute to the advancement of the country at national and international levels,” he mentioned.

The president said the students are failing to get admission to medical, engineering, or public universities despite securing GPA-5.

He congratulated all the teachers, who were awarded for their contributions to education. A documentary on “World Teachers’ Day 2023” was screened on the occasion. Seven teachers were felicitated on the occasion.

FARMERS BANK  
SCAM  
Verdict on  
October 30

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday fixed October 30 to deliver the judgement against four accused, including Farmers Bank’s former audit committee chairman Mahbubul Haque Chisty alias Babul Chisty, in a case filed over laundering Tk 160 crore from the bank.

The three other accused are Babul Chisty’s wife Ruzi Chisty, son Rashedul Haque Chisty, and Farmers Bank’s former first vice-president Masudur Rahman Khan.

Of them, Babul Chisty and Rashedul Chisty are now in jail while Masudur Rahman and Ruzi Chisty are on bail in the case.

Judge Syed Arafat Hossain of the Special Judge’s Court-4 of Dhaka set the date.



A road on the east side of Ad-Din Hospital in Moghbazar is undergoing drainage system maintenance for a while. However, there seems to be no safety measures in place, and may lead to an accident. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SHISHU BIKASH KENDRA AT DMCH  
Helping children thrive

TAHIRA SHAMSI UTSA

Young parents Parul and Mijan became concerned when their only child, 16-month-old Aytullah, was having trouble standing up or sitting down – activities that kids his age would easily perform.

They later discovered that Aytullah developed motor skills disorder at birth due to inadequate oxygen supply to his brain during delivery, which made it difficult for him to perform age-appropriate activities.

“About 3-4 months ago, we took him to different clinics in Shariatpur, but the doctors couldn’t diagnose the problem. Later, we visited Dhaka Medical College Hospital’s Shishu Bikash Kendra, where the doctors were finally able to identify Aytullah’s case,” said Parul.

Aytullah did not cry for about two hours after birth, an indicator that his parents and doctors had failed to address. This in turn affected his cognitive stimulation and IQ.

“The doctors have instructed us to perform some exercises and drills. We will know more about ways to help him after several other tests and observing his behavioural changes,” she added.

Sheuli Akhter, 27, had a similar experience. Her six-year-old son Ismail’s speech was delayed, which led to poor communication skills. Sheuli took Ismail to the centre and discovered that the boy had oral-motor problems.

Speech delays may lead to many other problems, including poor listening skills. Oftentimes, Ismail

failed to communicate his wishes, which led to aggression towards others, especially family members, mentioned Sheuli.

Ismail is currently under treatment at the Kendra. Meanwhile, his mother has enrolled him in music and recitation classes and is also facilitating oral exercises advised by experts.

**Most parents are mainly concerned about their children’s physical growth and often fail to address lapses in their cognitive development. The situation is prevalent in both marginalised households and high-income families due to a lack of awareness.**

DR TOSHIBA RAHMAN  
In-charge of Shishu Bikash Kendra at DMCH

Active since 2009, the Kendra started its journey as a small centre on the DMCH premises. Currently, 34 such centres are operational around the country. The one at DMCH is open Saturday through Thursday from 8:00am to 2:30pm.

Most parents are mainly concerned about their children’s physical growth and often fail to address lapses in their cognitive

development. The situation is prevalent in both marginalised households and high income families due to a lack of awareness, said Dr Toshiba Rahman, in-charge of Child Development Center and Neurology Clinic at DMCH.

“Children with intellectual disabilities show several symptoms leading to Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, and Hypothyroidism. Some children have seizures that damage nerves immediately, but the parents do not understand it,” she said.

At the Kendra, every child is assessed for a maximum 3-4 hours to evaluate their behaviour to determine and facilitate the treatment they require, she mentioned.

Children’s neurological, cognitive, intellectual, and learning disabilities are thoroughly checked before suggestions and advice on behavioural modification, therapy, and schooling are given to parents, said Afroja Begum, child psychologist at the Kendra in DMCH.

“We not only treat the children but also ensure that they are enrolled into special schools to ensure the care they need. We have a network of such institutions,” she added.

The earlier the problem is identified, the faster efforts can be made to address and solve it, she mentioned.

The Kendra usually serves 10-12 children every day, aged between 45 days and 10-year-old. The services are facilitated free of charge for every child with an entry fee of Tk 10, she added.

EC secretary  
‘misbehaves’  
with journos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Election Commission Secretary Jahangir Alam allegedly misbehaved with journalists when the latter were performing their duties at the commission yesterday.

The EC secretariat officials held a meeting with all election commissioners to brief the status of preparation for the 12th national polls.

Before the meeting, television journalists went to collect footage and Jahangir misbehaved with them, said reporters present there.

Saidur Rahman, president of Reporters Forum for Election and Democracy, said, “This is an obstacle to independent journalism.”

He said CEC Kazi Habibul Awal telephoned the secretary and told him to brief journalists after the meeting but he did not.

Jahangir refuted the allegations and said he was not rude to journalists. Asked about not holding a briefing, Jahangir said, “This was a matter between me and the CEC.”

PRAYER TIMING		OCTOBER 6			
Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4-45	12-30	4-15	5-53	7-30	
JAMAAT 5-20	1-15	4-30	5-56	8-00	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

Law’s there, proper  
implementation not

TIB on Bangladesh’s progress in ‘second cycle’ of UN treaty against corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite having strong laws in place, Bangladesh’s progress has been unsatisfactory in implementing the “second cycle” of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) treaty.

Transparency International Bangladesh said this yesterday while sharing a report titled “Civil Society Report on the Implementation of Chapter II (Prevention) and Chapter V (Asset Recovery) of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in Bangladesh” at a press conference at its Dhanmondi office.

TIB said Bangladesh has a strong legal and institutional framework and an independent Anti-Corruption Commission to fight graft.

However, the provision requiring government approval in filing cases against public officials stated in the “Government Employment Act-2018” has compromised the ACC’s operational autonomy, it said.

Reviewing 14 articles and 11 sub-articles among the 19 articles of UNCAC chapters, TIB said those are “largely implemented” when formulating laws, rules, and regulations.

However, only three articles and three sub-articles scored “moderate,” and the rest scored “low” when implementing and enforcing the laws.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said ACC falls under UNCAC’s article-6 (preventive anti-corruption body or bodies) because it fights corruption and receives sufficient budget.

However, many ACC commissioners and top officials have political and bureaucratic biases and lack proper skills and training to investigate financial corruption, he said.

The report also noted progress in developing public sector employment laws, including codes of conduct, conflicts of interest, and asset declaration. However, public officials’ assets are not

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Top narco, arms  
dealer held in  
Teknaf: Rab

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One of the top drug and arms dealers in Cox’s Bazar, Zafrul Islam Prakash used to smuggle 40 to 45 lakh pieces of yaba pills every month from a neighbouring country.

Zafrul, who also goes by the name Babul Member, has a gang of 20 to 25 armed persons who assist him in his criminal activities, which include extortion, gold smuggling, illegal sand extraction, cattle smuggling, and razing hills.

He is accused in at least nine cases, including some for murder and smuggling.

The Rapid Action Battalion said this after his arrest. The Rab-15 arrested Zafrul, 42, from the Katakhal area in Teknaf with 55,000 pieces of yaba, two firearms, and ammunition in the early hours of yesterday.

“In primary interrogation, Zafrul admitted that he has several fish projects and has amassed huge assets, including luxury flats, trucks, and land worth around Tk 50 crore in Cox’s Bazar,” Khandaker Al Moin, Rab’s legal and media wing director, told a press conference in Dhaka.

The Rab official said Zafrul is a close aide of notorious Rohingya criminal Nabi Hossain, who operates a gang in refugee camps and Cox’s Bazar and is involved in extortion and smuggling.

Zafrul became involved in smuggling in 2005. He used to bring in drugs from Myanmar and supply them to different parts of the country.

In 2017, he met Nabi and became more involved in drug, arms, and gold smuggling. Nabi’s syndicate members assisted Zafrul in smuggling products through the Naf river. In return, Zafrul used to supply food and arms to Nabi, who used to remain hidden on floating boats in the river.

In 2001, Zafrul got admitted to the chemistry department at Chittagong University but stopped studying there after a year. He completed his BA degree from a local college in 2003.

In 2021, he became a union parishad member.



ATTACK ON BERNICAT’S CONVOY  
Prime accused  
gets bail a day  
after arrest

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted bail to Mohammad Ishtiaque Mahmud, the prime accused in a case filed over the attack on former US ambassador Marcia Bernicat’s convoy in August 2018.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Nurul Huda Chowdhury passed the order after detectives produced Ishtiaque, brother-in-law of Sujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumder, also the case’s complainant, before the court with a forwarding report.

In the report, police said they arrested Ishtiaque following an order from the court on Wednesday. So, police appealed to the court to confine him to jail until the trial is completed.

The defence lawyer told the court that their client did not know about the case while eight other accused secured bail from different courts earlier.

On Wednesday, another Dhaka court accepted a supplementary charge sheet against nine people in the case.

The nine include Ishtiaque and Naimul Hasan Rasel, president of Mohammadpur unit of BCL. Now, all nine accused – Ishtiaque, Rasel, Firoz Mahmud, Mir Amad Hossain Akash, Sazu Islam, Razibul Islam Razu, Shahidul Alam Khan Kajol, Siam and Oli Ahmed Jony – are on bail.



RMG workers of JK Fashion block Begum Rokeya Sarani in Shewrapara area of Mirpur yesterday morning, protesting the factory’s closure and demanding two months’ unpaid wages. The blockade resulted in severe traffic congestion in nearby areas, affecting offices and schoolgoers. Additional police were deployed at the spot to bring the situation under control. The workers left the area following police assurance to look into the issue.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS