

DENGUE OUTBREAK 13 more die, 2,344 get hospitalised

UNB, Dhaka

Thirteen more dengue deaths were reported in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease to 1,135 this year.

During the period, 2,344 more patients were hospitalised, according to DGHS. Of the new patients, 537 were admitted to hospitals in Dhaka and the rest outside the capital, indicating a worsening situation across the country, DGHS said.

A total of 8,617 dengue patients, including 2,638 in the capital, are now receiving treatment at hospitals across the country.

So far, DGHS has recorded 233,531 dengue cases and 223,779 recoveries this year.

September has so far been the deadliest month for the dengue outbreak this year with 396 fatalities.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaking at the premiere of "Mujib: The Making of a Nation", the much-anticipated biopic of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, yesterday. From left, Information Minister Hasan Mahmud, actors Arifin Shuvoo, Nusraat Faria and Dilara Zaman and co-writer of the movie screenplay Atul Tiwari.

PHOTO: PTD

NEW NAT'L CURRICULUM Teachers' role vital for its implementation

Speakers tell event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new national curriculum will enhance creativity among students, and teachers have a vital role in its implementation, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) organised the views-exchange programme on new National Curriculum Framework 2021 at a Dhaka hotel.

The new curriculum was introduced in grades one, two, six, and seven this year, while it will take effect for students of other grades in 2024.

"It's been a long journey since 2017 to bring this curriculum. So, its implementation will face obstacles initially, but the curriculum will eventually act as a bridge between all sectors of education – including mainstream, madrasa, and technical education – and would transform the entire education system," said Education Minister Dipu Moni.

Prof Md Abdul Halim of Institute of Education and Research at Dhaka University said teachers are the ones who can help transform the entire system.

National University Vice Chancellor Mashiur Rahman said teachers will have to play a crucial role to implement the new curriculum, and called upon the authorities concerned to formulate a masterplan for teachers.

Prof Mashiur also recommended implementing a blended education masterplan, as well as producing an independent salary structure for teachers.

NCTB member (curriculum) Prof Md Masihuzzaman said the new curriculum would help enhance creativity among students.

Prof Mohammad Tariq Ahsan of DU's IER, who presented a detailed overview of the new curriculum, said six researches – two on primary, three on secondary, and one on madrasa educations – were conducted while the curricula of 102 countries were studied for formulating the new curriculum.

Author, journalist Mustafa Mollick expressed concern that the new curriculum would increase the cost of education, which would place a burden on many families.

Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, deputy education minister, also spoke at the event.

Wildlife trafficking puts national security at risk

Speakers call for capacity building to ensure CITES compliance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday opined that illegal wildlife trade poses a serious threat to national security and regional stability.

"Illegal wildlife trade needs to be recognised as a serious crime in our legislation," said Iqbal Abdullah Harun, additional secretary to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) aims to help countries ensure that trade does not put wild populations



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at risk and remains sustainable, he said.

Also known as the Washington Convention, CITES is a multilateral treaty designed to protect endangered plants and animals from the threats of international trade.

Iqbal said this while addressing the fifth national seminar titled "Strengthening Compliance with CITES in Bangladesh" as the chief guest, held at a city hotel.

The environment ministry and the forest department jointly organised the seminar in association with Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). Senior

representatives from different ministries, departments, and law enforcement agencies participated at the event.

The seminar was arranged to enhance understanding of CITES, recognise progress made regarding the issue, and decide on the steps needed to improve compliance with CITES obligations.

As a party to CITES since 1981, Bangladesh has made commendable progress in addressing its requirements, particularly by aligning national protection for threatened sharks and rays, and training law enforcers in identifying protected species or their parts valued in international markets.

Imran Ahmed, conservator at Forests, Wildlife and Nature Conservation Circle, Department of Forest, said, "We must pursue CITES compliance to safeguard our biodiversity and ecosystems as those are essential for our food security, livelihoods, and economic growth."

SM Zobaidul Kabir, joint

secretary to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, said, "Ensuring sustainability of the country's vital fisheries is among our key mandates. We are committed to working with other departments to improve CITES compliance in fisheries and fish trade."

Luke Warwick, director of WCS Global Shark and Ray Conservation Programme, said, "Bangladesh has made impressive progress towards implementing CITES shark and ray listings through an amendment to the Wildlife Act, interagency technical training, and improved public awareness."

He added that WCS is committed to continuing to support Bangladesh in implementing CITES commitments in this regard.

"We have agreed to institutionalise capacity building and initiate collaborations to develop a national strategy for improving CITES compliance and combating illegal wildlife trade," said Amir Hosain Chowdhury, chief conservator at the forest department.

Hospitals must follow guideline for C-sections

SC directs govt to take steps

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to take steps to make it compulsory for all hospitals and clinics to follow the relevant guidelines for cesarean sections to prevent unnecessary operations.

It also directed the government to widely circulate the guidelines within six months.

The HC bench of Justice Naima Haider and Justice Kazi Zinat Hoque delivered the verdict after holding the hearing on a petition filed by Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) in 2019.

The court said the guideline formulated by the health ministry in November 2019 under the title "Bangladesh National Guidelines and Technical Standards and Operating Procedure for Promotion of Normal Vaginal Delivery (NVD), Prevention of Unnecessary Cesarean Section, Creating Awareness about Necessity and Justification of Cesarean Section" has become a part of its judgement.

Full text of the verdict is yet to be released. The guidelines recommended to develop and launch a campaign to raise awareness on harmful effects of unnecessary C-section and importance of necessary C-section.

It suggested to enhance NVD skills and competencies of delivery care practitioners and to review existing law, rules, and procedures to identify weaknesses and propose modification to ensure rights of patients, care seekers,

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I cannot guard your house from here: CEC

Habibul Awal tells parties to appoint 'brave, obedient' polling agents; holds meeting with Trinamool BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal yesterday urged political parties to appoint "brave and obedient" polling agents at all voting centres to reduce chances of irregularities.

He said this during a meeting with Trinamool Bangladesh National Party (BNP).

Candidates should report to the presiding and returning officers with evidence if the polling agents are driven out of the polling stations, he said.



Election is a game. If you do not play it well, it is tough to expect a win. You should contest it. You must have your election agents at polling stations. I cannot guard your house from here. It is not possible.

"Election is a game. If you do not play it well, it is tough to expect a win. You should contest it. You must have your election agents at polling stations. I cannot guard your house from here. It is not possible," Habibul Awal said.

"During our talks, almost every party asked about the army. We also noticed that the presence of army during polls is desirable," said CEC said about army deployment.

A Trinamool BNP delegation, led by its chairperson Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury and secretary general Taimur Alam Khandaker, held a meeting with the CEC and other commissioners at the EC office.

They also handed over a memorandum with several demands to the CEC, including deployment of army during the next parliamentary election. The party is preparing to contest the election in all 300 constituencies.

Commuters suffer for hours

VIP movement, construction works cause traffic chaos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commuters in Dhaka suffered immensely yesterday due to massive traffic congestion across the city. Huge tailbacks, stretching several kilometres, were seen on the streets.

Office-goers, students, and people from various walks of life failed to reach their destinations on time, with many reporting being stuck for several hours.

Mirpur Road saw bumper-to-bumper traffic from Kalyanpur to Shyamoli, resulting from the VIP movement in Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Construction materials blocking Moghbazar road added to the mess, said traffic police.

Major gridlocks were also seen in Farmgate, Banglamotor, Shahbagh, Karwan Bazar, Asad Gate, Bangabandhu Avenue, Agargaon, Mohakhali, Bijoy Sarani, and Shyamoli areas.

Awami League's afternoon rally at Bangabandhu Avenue also led to bottlenecks in Shahbagh, Ramna and adjoining areas, worsening the issue.

Traveling from Gabtoli to Shyamoli, Sohel Rana, a banker, said, "It took me over two hours to reach office today, almost double my regular commute time."

Awlad Hossain, a passenger of Shahbagh-bound BRTC bus, said, "I was stuck for almost 40 minutes at Bijoy Sarani intersection. Afterwards, I got stuck in Farmgate for 20 more minutes."

This was a common scenario amongst commuters, with many being forced to traverse long distances on foot, abandoning their vehicles midway.



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON, PRABIR DAS, PALASH KHAN

People found themselves trapped in traffic yesterday for several hours. (Clockwise) Farmgate, Paribagh and Mirpur Road saw massive tailbacks, stretching several kilometres. Commute times were nearly doubled for most, with many being forced to step out of their vehicles and traverse on foot to save time.

