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Second-time infection drives up dengue deaths

Show DGHS findings; 1,699 fatalities recorded so far this year

HELEMUL ALAM

One of the main reasons behind dengue deaths this year was second-time infection, while other reasons include late hospitalisation and comorbidity, according to the recent findings of the health directorate's death review committee.

"In our review, we've tried to find the reasons for this year's severity [of the infection]. We found that most of the patients were infected [with dengue] for the second time, which increased the mortality rate," said Prof Ahmedul Kabir, head of the committee and additional director general (administration) of the Directorate General of Health Services.

He said the risk for patients infected with dengue for the first time is far less than those infected for the second time. "And those who are infected for the third time, their condition turns fatal."

The death review committee assessed the background information of patients who have died from dengue so far this year, their medical documents, treatment records and causes of death.

Experts said the changing patterns of the dengue virus, false results in testing kits, and the presence of serotypes DEN-2 and DEN-3 are some other reasons for the staggering number of deaths this year.

The sample size was over half of the total deaths, Kabir said.

According to DGHS data, at least 1,699 dengue patients died, and 3,20,835 others were hospitalised till yesterday (December 27).

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HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, said, "This year we got many patients coming to hospital in critical conditions within just a few days of getting infected. They had conditions like fluid in the abdomen and chest and a drop in blood pressure in a span of two or three days. We also found many patients without rashes [a common dengue symptom]."

In many cases, he said, test kits give false results. "As a result, patients end up coming to hospital only when their condition is already critical."

Nazmul said this year the presence of serotypes DEN-2 and DEN-3 was higher compared to previous years. "Among the four dengue serotypes, 2 and 3 are most dangerous."

The four viruses are called serotypes because each has different interactions with the antibodies in human blood serum.

HOW TO PREVENT DEATHS

Public health expert Mushtaq Hossain said changes in the current treatment management and strategy are necessary in order to bring down the dengue mortality rate in the country.

"If the government classifies dengue treatment and divides it into three parts -- primary, secondary and tertiary -- it would be easier to manage all the patients and the number of deaths would be reduced."

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1



An aerial view shows destroyed buildings in Beit Lahia following Israeli bombardments in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

'Worse than genocide'

Says Palestinian President Abbas as Gaza death toll rises to 21,110; Israel says offensive to last 'many more months'

AGENCIES

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas yesterday said the Israeli offensive in Gaza is worse than genocide as the death toll in the besieged Palestinian territory surged above 21,000.

Israel again pounded Gaza with air strikes and shelling after its armed forces chief warned the offensive will last "many more months".

Explosion lit up the sky over the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis -- a focus of heavy urban combat since the Israeli army said it had largely gained operational control over Gaza's north.

Heavy firefights however also raged again around Gaza City in the north, while an air strike wounded 11 near Rafah, a far-southern city crowded with internally displaced people, witnesses said.

Gaza's spiralling humanitarian crisis has amplified calls for an end to the hostilities.

"Our objectives are essential and not simple to achieve," Israel's armed forces chief Herzi Halevi said Tuesday. "Therefore, the offensive will continue for many more months."

Since October 7, Israel's relentless bombardment has killed at least 21,110 people, according to the latest toll issued by Gaza's health ministry, which added that more than 55,000 people had been wounded.

It said at least 195 people killed were killed and another 325 injured in the past 24 hours in Gaza.

Gaza's 2.4 million people have suffered severe shortages of water, food, fuel and medicines, with only limited aid entering the territory.

An estimated 1.9 million Gazans have been displaced, according to the UN.

The Israel's offensive "goes beyond a catastrophe and a genocide," Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas charged in an interview on Egyptian television.

The Palestinian Authority chief argued the offensive "is much uglier than what happened" during the 1948 war that accompanied Israel's creation when 760,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled from their homes.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Three killed as SUV crashes into passenger shed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people, including a woman and a child, were killed as a Sport Utility Vehicle crashed into a passenger shed near Khilkhet Bazar on the Airport Road last night.

Police said the driver fled the scene after the accident around 9:00pm.

Nine-year-old Yasin died on the spot. Ujjal Pandey, 26, a private company employee from Bhatara, died on the way to a hospital and Armina, 27, at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Yasin's father Sumon, 35, who was injured in the accident, was undergoing treatment at the DMCH.

Yasin's grandfather Md Mofiz said the kid and his father came to Khilkhet from Mohammadpur to visit him.

The white Land Cruiser had a sticker of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh on its windshield, said Enamul Haque Khondoker, officer-in-charge of Khilkhet Police Station.

The OC added they are still verifying the ownership of the vehicle.

Govt to ensure free, fair polls

Says foreign minister

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said Dhaka wants to demonstrate that it can hold a free, fair, and acceptable election.

Speaking to reporters, he said the government never felt any external pressure ahead of the national polls but it wants to make sure the election is free, fair, and peaceful.

Talking about Bangladesh's relations with India, the US and the European Union, Momen said they are Dhaka's friends and development partners. "We have a long-standing relationship with them."

He said the US stood against Bangladesh during the Liberation War in 1971, but it started supporting Bangladesh since the country achieved its independence.

"We have been maintaining very good relations with India since the independence. The relations are in 'golden chapter'. The European Union is a big market for us," the minister said.

Highlighting the importance of peace and stability in the region for greater development, Momen said Dhaka do not want to see any proxy war here.

"Problems remain wherever there are proxy wars. Europe has fallen into a proxy war and is facing challenges," he said, adding that there might be efforts to



AK Abdul Momen

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



With the January 7 polls drawing closer, campaigning is going on in full swing across the country. Many streets and alleys in Dhaka city have already been covered in posters and banners seeking votes for aspirants. Candidates are also using loudspeakers on vehicles for campaigning. The photo was taken in Battala area of the city's Rayerbazar yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Attack, threat in Faridpur-3

Independent candidate brings allegations against AL pick

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

AK Azad, a local Awami League leader running for parliament as an independent in Faridpur-3, yesterday alleged that 20 of his supporters were assaulted and his makeshift campaign offices were vandalised by his party nominee Shamim Haque's men.

"They attacked my activists at least 19 times in the last nine days," he told reporters at a press conference at his home in Faridpur town, adding that law enforcers were reluctant to do anything about it.

"So far, five cases and 13 general diaries have been filed with Kotwali Police Station over the incidents... But they are going to the houses of my supporters and threatening them."

If the attacks don't stop, Azad said he and his supporters will take to the streets.

"The workers of boat [the ruling party's symbol] have been unleashing terror."

The attacks took place in Ishan Gopalpur, Gerda, Mahmudpur, Pashchim Gangabardi Sarkar Primary School and Tepakhola areas

of Faridpur town, he said.

Azad added that his key campaigner, Abdur Rahman Jhanak, who was stabbed on Tuesday in Mahmudpur area, has been fighting for life.

"But the authorities are silent. Proper action has not been taken against the criminals. Even the higher authorities' intervention was needed just to make the police register cases."

Azad demanded immediate arrest of the attackers for the sake of a fair election.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

বিস্মিল্লাহির রাহমানির রাহিম

আজও আমরা আপনাকে স্মরণ করি গভীর
ভালবাসা ও বিন্দ্র শ্রদ্ধায়

প্রকৌশলী মোঃ রিয়াজত আলী বাচ্চু
জন্ম: ১ জানুয়ারী ১৯৪৯, মৃত্যু: ২৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৩

আপনার বর্ণাঢ্য কর্মময় জীবন এবং সকল ক্ষেত্রে আপনার সফলতা আমাদের এগিয়ে যাওয়ার প্রেরণা। প্রতিশ্রুতি প্রকৌশলী এবং বিশিষ্ট শিল্পপতি, সমাজ সেবক ও শিক্ষানুরাগী আউটরাইট গ্রুপ, আউটপেস স্পিনিং মিলস্ লিমিটেড এবং আর. এ. স্পিনিং মিলস্ লিমিটেড এর মাননীয় চেয়ারম্যান, অস্ট্রেলিয়ান ইন্টারন্যাশনাল স্কুল ও ইস্টার্ন ইউনিভার্সিটির পরিচালনা পরিষদের সম্মানিত পরিচালক, ফ্রীডাঙ্গনের মোহামেডান ক্লাবের প্রাক্তন একনিষ্ঠ সংগঠক প্রকৌশলী মরহুম মোঃ রিয়াজত আলী বাচ্চু সাহেবের তৃতীয় মৃত্যু বার্ষিকী ছিল গত ২৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৩। আগামী ২৯ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৩ রোজ শুক্রবার বাদ আছর খিলগাঁও বটতলা বায়তুল ফালাহ্ জামে মসজিদে (খিলগাঁও চৌরাস্তা, ঢাকা-১২১৯) দোয়া মাহফিলের ব্যবস্থা করা হয়েছে। সকল আত্মীয়-স্বজন, সহকর্মী ও শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের উক্ত দোয়া মাহফিলে যোগদান করে মহান আল্লাহর দরবারে তাঁর আত্মার শান্তির জন্য দোয়া করতে সনির্বন্ধ অনুরোধ জানাচ্ছি।

পরিবারের পক্ষে- ডাঃ রেহানা খানম (স্ত্রী), প্রকৌশলী রাজীব হায়দার (বড় পুত্র), রেজওয়ানা সিলভী (কন্যা), প্রকৌশলী রুবায়ত হায়দার (ছোট পুত্র), রুবাবা কাওসার (বড় পুত্রবধূ), প্রকৌশলী তওহীদ এজাজ (জামাতা), রাহীফ হায়দার (নাতি) ও রিদওয়ান তওহীদ আহমেদ (নাতি) এবং
প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের পক্ষে সকল কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীবৃন্দ।