

# Expanded dengue syndrome a growing concern

Doctors urge early hospitalisation as cases spike

Early treatment crucial for vulnerable patients

Watch for warning signs: severe abdominal pain, breathing difficulty, bleeding, extreme weakness, low urination, or dropping platelet count

Patients with kidney or lung complications can recover if treated promptly

People with hypertension, diabetes, or chronic organ diseases are at higher risk

HELEMUL ALAM

Mohammadpur resident Hujaila Tanveer, 28, who has been receiving treatment at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, was due to be discharged on Thursday, but doctors postponed it after tests revealed that dengue had partially damaged his kidneys and lungs.

His mother, anxiously moving around arranging more tests, said through tears, “My son was infected by dengue, but why is he now suffering from kidney and lung diseases?”

Tanveer said this was his second dengue infection in just six weeks. “I came to the

hospital with high fever, mouth sores, diarrhoea, and body pain,” he recalled.

Other families expressed similar worries. Rashida Begum, wife of Habibur Rahman, was busy packing after her husband was discharged following a week of treatment. But Rokeya was tense, as doctors had for the first time detected kidney disease and diabetes in her husband while treating him for dengue.

“We will have to come back in 15 days for a kidney follow-up. I also have to take

measures for diabetes,” she said. “He never had kidney problems before, but after he complained of leg pain, tests revealed

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Students under the banner of ‘Engineers’ Rights Movement’ brought out a torch procession in front of the Buet campus in Dhaka yesterday, protesting police action against students during their demonstration on Wednesday.

PHOTO: STAR

## INT’L DAY OF VICTIMS OF ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES

### Disband Rab, ensure justice for victim families

Demand speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The interim government must immediately disband the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), which has been accused of carrying out enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.

They also called for prosecuting those involved in destroying evidence of disappearances, enacting a victim and witness protection law, and ensuring independent and transparent investigations into every case.

The programme, titled “International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappearances”, was organised by rights organisation Odhikar at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

At the discussion, Tasneem Arefa Siddiqui, professor of political science at Dhaka University, said, “We must now raise a question — do we need Rab or not? What are we actually getting from this force? It is easier to speak against a government or a political leader, but when it comes to a powerful group, we remain silent. Evidence of disappearances has been destroyed, and that must be investigated.”

Speaking as the chief guest, Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan said, “On behalf of

the government, I assure you there is no lack of goodwill in ensuring justice.”

She added that once a new law is passed and a fund is created, victims and their families will receive support.

“We must remain united. If division grows among us, if hopelessness takes over, then the group actually responsible for these crimes will become stronger,” she said.

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TASNEEM AREFA SIDDIQUI  
Professor of political science at DU

Taskin Fahmina, senior researcher at Odhikar, said their organisation has documented 745 cases of enforced disappearance.

She highlighted the need for trauma counselling for victims and financial support for their families.

“In the draft Ordinance-2025,

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## Waiting for a country without enforced disappearances

Salahuddin tells Mayer Daak event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP standing committee member Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said they are waiting for a Bangladesh where no one will ever fall victim to enforced disappearances again.

“As a political worker, I can say that if people give us their mandate, we will take all necessary steps to prevent enforced disappearances — from enacting laws to ensuring their implementation,” he said.

“We are waiting for a Bangladesh where no one will fall victim to enforced disappearance. We want a country where the family members of such victims will never have to stand on the street,” he added.

Salahuddin made the remarks at a seminar organised by Mayer Daak at the Bangla Academy auditorium in the capital, marking the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances.

Recalling his own ordeal after being picked up in 2015, the BNP leader said he was held in a small, suffocating cell for 61 days. “I could not believe they would let me go alive. At



that time, I told them to at least send my body to my family. They gave no answer,” he said.

“My photo was supposed to be there today, with family members sitting with the photos of their loved ones. I am very fortunate,” he said.

The victims’ families hope future politicians will ensure that no one ever has to attend such an event again, he said, adding, “That is why we continue our struggle.”

The fascist Awami League government has harmed the country a lot only to stay in power, yet they still have no regret, said Salahuddin.

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## Potato, papaya now only choice for many families



SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MD ABBAS

More and more people are now relying on potatoes and papaya to feed their families as the prices of other vegetables continue to rise in Dhaka’s kitchen markets.

At Karwan Bazar yesterday afternoon, Kamala Begum, 50, was seen buying only these two items. She runs a small catering service on the Gulistan footpath, selling meals for low-income people at Tk 50 each.

“I used to serve good vegetables along with a small piece of fish for each meal. But for the last month, I can only afford to give potatoes and papaya because other vegetables are out of reach,” she told The Daily Star.

She said she cannot raise the price of her meals, so she has no choice but to replace better vegetables with cheaper ones.

Feeding her six-member family has now become a major struggle.

Potatoes now sell for Tk 20–25 a kg and papaya for Tk 20–30 — the cheapest options available at the kitchen markets.

Munni Begum, a resident of Moghbazar who works at a private firm, said her family is also depending on these two items.

“We used to eat different vegetables every day. Now it’s only potatoes and papaya,” she said.

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## July uprising paved way for welfare state

Speakers tell discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is at a “critical juncture”, with the July uprising opening up new political possibilities to rebuild the country as a welfare state, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

They said the youths who led the uprising must now prepare to translate those possibilities into public well-being in the long run and remain cautious so that their aspirations are not undermined.

The discussion, titled “July Revolution: Critical Juncture or Another Historical Loop”, was part of the two-day Bengal Delta Conference 2025, which began yesterday. The conference is organised by the Dacca Institute of Research and Analytics under the theme “Bangladesh at the Crossroads: Rethinking Politics, Economy, and Geopolitical Strategy” at a city hotel.

“The politics that Bangladesh gave birth to on August 5 is a historically new type of politics,” author and philosopher Farhad Mazhar told the discussion.

He said it was the first time that this “new politics” opened up possibilities for structural reforms of state organs.

“The July uprising also created scope for the nation to fight against imperialism and colonialism and to prepare for a long struggle,” he added.

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## KURIGRAM’S FORGOTTEN JEWEL

Naodanga Zamindar Palace in ruins

S DILIP ROY

On the northern border with India, in Kurigram’s Phulbari upazila, stands the decaying Naodanga Zamindar Palace, once a hub of aristocratic power and cultural celebration, now abandoned to neglect and ruin.

Built by Zamindar Bahadur Sri Promadaranjan Bakshi, the palace was the nerve centre of Naodanga Pargana, covering several adjoining areas.

Bakshi was known for philanthropy and support for education. He was also a patron of the arts. He entrusted the estate to his middle son, Bishweshwar Prasad Bakshi, who later migrated with the family to Cooch Behar in India.

The 200-year-old palace is now under the custody of the district administration.

At its height, the palace boasted a bathing area, prayer chambers, guest quarters, and detention cells. Today, only traces of that splendour survive. A nearly 100-foot-high arched gateway still rises as a reminder of its lost glory.

Three temples — dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu, and Durga — stand beside the ruins. Locals have helped keep them alive, with partial repairs to the Shiva



temple and annual pujas continuing at the Durga temple.

The estate’s cultural crown jewel was the Dol Utsab, a festival of colours on Dol Purnima initiated by Bishweshwar Prasad Bakshi. At its peak, it drew visitors from Rangpur, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, and even across the border in Cooch Behar.

“Naodanga’s Dol Utsab was the biggest cultural event in the region,” recalled

local journalist Anil Chandra Roy. “It was a carnival of colour, music, and devotion. Now it is symbolic at best.” The field that once hosted the fair is now crowded with over 50 makeshift shops, a shadow of its past grandeur.

Time and neglect have left the palace crumbling. Built using lime, brick, and mortar, much of its structure has collapsed. A two-storey building on the western end is gone, while roofs and



beams have caved in elsewhere. Vandals have stripped away bricks and wood, and thick vegetation has swallowed the estate.

Shailan Chandra Barman and Bijoy Chandra Roy, grandsons of the estate’s former manager, still hold oral histories of the zamindars. “We grew up hearing stories of their generosity and discipline,” Bijoy said. “It hurts to see the palace die like this.”

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