



GENEVA CAMP

Drug trade thrives despite crackdowns

Ringleaders still at large

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* MUNTAKIM SAAD

A few yards away from the rear gate of Geneva Camp in Mohammadpur, several men were selling heroin, cannabis and yaba in broad daylight. Holding polybags full of narcotics, they called out to potential buyers as pedestrians walked past.

This was the scene at midday in the

law enforcement following the July mass uprising, say camp residents. At least 10 people have been killed in clashes over the last 19 months, according to media reports.

Despite frequent raids and installation of police checkpoints in Mohammadpur area, the drug trade continues almost uninterrupted.

Inside the camp, many believe that information

Narco trade has spread to roads outside the camp

Drugs worth over Tk 1.5cr sold daily

Rival gangs fight for control of lucrative spots

At least **10** killed in clashes over the last 19 months

Around **500** people inside the camp directly involved in the trade

Info on raids leaked to kingpins in advance, allege locals



neighbourhood on April 20.

For decades, Geneva Camp has been known as one of Dhaka's most notorious drug hubs, with the illegal trade surviving successive governments and countless "special drives."

Residents say the scenario changed after August 2024. The narcotics trade, which was mostly confined to the camp's narrow alleys, has spilled onto the main streets. And it has become more organised.

To control lucrative spots, rival groups get locked in clashes, which have intensified amid lax

on raids is leaked to the kingpins beforehand. Only drug carriers, sellers and buyers are frequently arrested, while those controlling the flow of narcotics remain untouched.

Camp sources said a section of law enforcers and their informants have helped the ringleaders evade arrest in exchange for money. This is why the drug network could not be dismantled.

Some people who once struggled to make ends meet have amassed huge wealth, thanks to the illegal trade. For them, punishment or

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Nazmul and Fatema are overwhelmed with grief after their seven-month-old son Nafiz passed away due to post-measles pneumonia at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in the capital's Mohakhali on Thursday afternoon. Three more patients died of measles in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, raising this year's death toll to 42.



Bangladesh remains at high risks from measles

Says WHO, calls for urgent action, 95% vaccine coverage, stronger surveillance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Health Organization has assessed the national risk of the ongoing measles outbreak as high, citing continued transmission, a large pool of susceptible children, immunity gaps, and suspected measles-related deaths.

Continued spread of the disease is likely unless urgent measures are taken to strengthen surveillance, rapidly detect and respond to cases, and close immunity gaps through an integrated vaccination campaign, WHO said in a report on Thursday.

"Despite Bangladesh's progress towards measles elimination, the current outbreak highlights the vulnerability of the population and underscores the fragility of immunisation gains," it said.

WHO says high transmission rate, number of susceptible children worrying

The UN body issued several recommendations, including maintaining at least 95 percent coverage of target children with both doses of the measles vaccine across all municipalities and strengthening integrated epidemiological surveillance to bring the situation under control.

The observations came as the country continued to see a rise in measles cases and deaths, with hospitals overwhelmed by patients.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

