

Ebola risk 'very high' in DR Congo: WHO

AFP, Geneva

The public health risk from the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been upgraded from high to very high, the World Health Organization said yesterday.

The risk level remains high at the regional level and low worldwide, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a press conference.

He said there were now nearly 750 suspected cases in the DR Congo and 177 suspected deaths.

"The Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is spreading rapidly," Tedros said.

8 Chhatra Dal

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Patwary and attempted to attack him.

NCP leaders and activists then surrounded him, placed a helmet on his head and protected Patwary from the attack.

The situation later escalated into clashes involving the use of brick chunks and sticks by both sides.

Jhenaidah district NCP Joint Coordinator Hamid Parvez said Patwary had arrived in the town as part of a scheduled programme. He alleged that Chhatra Dal activists carried out the planned attack.

District Chhatra Dal President Md Imran Hossain, at a rally, refuted the allegations.

He alleged that two associates of Patwary brandished firearms during the incident. "We demand that the administration take swift action against the armed individuals," he said.

Meanwhile, leaders and activists of NCP demonstrated in front of the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday, protesting the attack on Patwary in Jhenaidah.

Witnesses said the party's leaders and activists brought out a procession from in front of the press club around 5:00pm, which moved through various roads in the area. Later, they held a brief rally there.

NCP spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, the party's joint convener Ali Hasan Junayed and leaders and activists of Dhaka North and South units were present at the rally.

In Jhenaidah town, Chhatra Dal activists brought out a protest march after learning about the case. The procession moved through several roads before reaching the gates of the police station, where tension flared.

The protesters demanded that Patwary, who was inside the station, be handed over. Unable to enter, they hurled bricks and stones at the building. Later, the activists gathered at the town's Payera Chattar, where senior Chhatra Dal leaders addressed a rally.



Farmers remove husks from maize before separating the kernels from the cobs using a machine in Chhabishnagar village of Rajshahi's Godagari upazila yesterday. The scene has become a regular sight in the region, where Paba and Godagari upazilas recorded a bumper maize harvest this season, and farmers are getting good prices for their produce.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

'50-50' chance of a deal

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A senior Iranian source told Reuters on Thursday that gaps had narrowed, although uranium enrichment and the Strait of Hormuz remained key sticking points.

Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsen Naqvi yesterday met Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi for the second time in two days in a bid to secure a breakthrough. A delayed visit to Tehran by Pakistani army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir may also signal progress in the talks.

During the meeting, the two officials reviewed the latest proposals to end the war and resolve remaining disagreements between the US and Iran, Tasnim news agency reported.

Munir had been due in Tehran on Thursday, but his visit was postponed because of a lack of progress in the talks. Pakistan may also seek to involve China as a mediator. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is due in Beijing today.

Oil prices and stock markets rose yesterday as traders tracked developments in the Middle East, alongside mixed corporate earnings and positive economic data.

Despite the cautiously positive tone, future control of the Strait of Hormuz and Washington's demand that Tehran export its stockpile of highly enriched uranium remain major obstacles.

On Thursday, President Donald Trump said the US would eventually take control of Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium, which Washington believes is intended for nuclear weapons, although Tehran says it is for peaceful purposes.

"We will get it. We don't need it, we don't want it. We'll probably destroy it after we get it, but we're not going to let them have it," Trump told reporters at the White House.

Two senior Iranian sources told Reuters before Trump's remarks that Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei had ordered that the uranium not be sent abroad.

Trump also criticised Tehran's reported plan to charge fees on ships using the Strait of Hormuz.

"We want it open, we want it free. We don't want tolls," Trump said. "It's an international waterway."

Rubio likewise accused Iran of "trying to create a tolling system" and

persuade Oman to join it.

"There is not a country in the world that should accept that," Rubio said.

In April, Pakistan hosted the only direct negotiations between US and Iranian officials since the war began, with Munir helping mediate the talks.

But the negotiations ultimately failed, with Tehran accusing Washington of making "excessive demands". Since then, the two sides have exchanged multiple proposals while the threat of renewed conflict has persisted.

"It's right on the borderline, believe me," Trump told reporters on Wednesday. "If we don't get the right answers, it goes very quickly. We're all ready to go."

Al Jazeera yesterday reported, citing the US military's Central Command (Centcom), that the USS Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group is "maintaining peak readiness" in the Arabian Sea.

Trump also faces domestic pressure ahead of the November midterm elections, with Americans angered by rising fuel prices and his approval rating near its lowest point since returning to the

White House last year.

Tehran submitted its latest proposal to the US earlier this week.

Iranian descriptions of the proposal suggest it largely repeats terms Trump has previously rejected, including demands for control of the Strait of Hormuz, compensation for war damage, sanctions relief, the release of frozen assets and the withdrawal of US troops.

Meanwhile, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy said 35 ships, including oil tankers and container vessels, transited the Strait of Hormuz in the past 24 hours.

The IRGC said the movements took place with its permission and coordination.

Meanwhile, Republican leaders in the US House of Representatives unexpectedly cancelled a Thursday vote on a resolution seeking to end the Iran war unless Trump obtained congressional authorisation, two days after a similar measure advanced in the Senate.

The vote had been scheduled for late Thursday, just before lawmakers left Washington for the Memorial Day recess.

Unresolved murders

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"We identified the culprits within 48 hours of the incident, but mark my words, the Sagar-Runi murder mystery will never be solved," Rabbi quoted the Rab official as saying.

He further alleged that the Osman family was allowed to flee the country in exchange for Tk 3.5 crore with the help of the administration and various forces. Ajmeri Osman, an accused in the Taqi murder case, was not arrested despite remaining in the country for months

after the August 5 political changeover, he added.

Bureaucrats from the Sheikh Hasina-led regime are still running the administration, which is why there has been no real change in the judicial process, Rabbi observed.

Jamshed Anwar Tapan, convener of Ganatantrik Sangskritik Oikya, expressed concern over the rising trend of "instant justice" or mob killings by capitalising on the public hopelessness that stems from the lack of justice.

Professor Samina Luthfa

according to the report.

A team of eight police members later reached the scene, but Asadul ignored repeated requests to surrender, Kotwali Model Police Station officials said. He allegedly continued threatening to slit the child's throat.

At one stage, a police member quietly struck the hand holding the knife with a stick. Asadul then released the child, allowing police to quickly rescue the toddler and arrest him.

Police said several cops were injured during a scuffle while detaining the suspect. Asadul was also injured. All received first aid.

Police said Asadul would be produced before a court today.

Emon's body has been kept at the mortuary of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital. After an autopsy, the body will be handed over to his family.

Manzurul said a case would be filed over the killing.

of Dhaka University said the society has failed to establish the rule of law and ensure a safe environment for its children.

At the rally, protest art was created on an open canvas.

Different cultural troupes and artists, including Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, Samageet Sangskritik Prangan, BotTala, Prachyanat, music band Kora, Wardah Ashraf, and Armeen Musa, performed at the event, moderated by Samageet president Rebeka Nila.

Kool-BSPA celebrates excellence

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Amirul Islam to secure the prestigious Sportsperson of the Year title. He also defeated the same duo along with cricketer Tanzid Hasan Tamim to claim the Popular Choice Award, which was determined through online voting by fans.

Adding to his remarkable afternoon, Hamza was jointly named Footballer of the Year alongside Ritu Porna, completing a memorable hat-trick of honours.

"I'm truly honoured to receive this award. The Kool-BSPA Award is one of the most prestigious honours in the country. I would like to thank my family, my coaches, my teammates, my friends, and the fans for their unwavering support for me and the national team throughout this amazing year. Inshallah, we will continue to achieve great things for Bangladesh in the days to come," Hamza said in a video message.

The ceremony was presided over by Bangladesh Sports Press Association (BSPA) President Rejwan

Uz Zaman Rajib. State Minister for Youth and Sports Aminul Haque attended as the chief guest. Malik Mohammed Sayeed, chief executive officer (CEO) of Square Toiletries Limited, was present as the guest of honour.

A total of 15 current and former athletes, organisers and organisations were recognised across 16 categories at this year's award ceremony, with cash prizes also awarded alongside the prestigious trophies.

This marks the 11th consecutive year that Kool, one of the flagship brands of Square Toiletries Limited, has sponsored the event.

The 2025 edition of the awards brought together hundreds of current and former athletes, coaches, administrators and organisers to celebrate excellence in Bangladesh sports.

The awardees are Sportsperson of the Year: Hamza Choudhury (Football); Popular Choice Award: Hamza Choudhury (Football); Footballer of the

Year: Hamza Choudhury and Ritu Porna Chakma; Cricketer of the Year: Rishad Hossain; Hockey Player of the Year: Amirul Islam; Archer of the Year: Abdur Rahman Ali; Table Tennis Player of the Year: Khoi Khoi Sai Marma; Badminton Player of the Year: Al-Amin Jumar; Emerging Athlete: Ripon Mondol (Cricket); Coach of the Year: Peter Butler (Women's Football); Best Umpire: Selim Lucky (Hockey); Best Organiser: Kazi Rajib Uddin Ahmed Chapal (Archery); Grassroots Sports Personality: Alamgir Kabir (Cricket Coach); Special Recognition Award: Shahnaz Parvin Maleka (Kabaddi Coach); Best Sponsor: Prime Bank PLC; Active Federation: Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation.

Meanwhile, during the same programme, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) introduced their newly appointed head coach, Thomas Dooley, who arrived in the country earlier that morning.

Ctg rape suspect sent to jail

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Meanwhile, police yesterday arrested two men in the port city on charges of attempting to rape two minor girls.

The incidents occurred in Hajipara under Double Mooring Police Station and Mandatila under Bayezid Bostami Police Station.

The arrestees were Md Ehsan, 45, a security guard of Jalal Colony in Hajipara, and Md Hasan, 40, another security guard of Mandatila.

Police said locals caught Ehsan when he allegedly tried to rape a 10-year-old child in the Hajipara area.

OC Jamal Uddin Khan of Double Mooring Police Station said police later detained Ehsan.

In Mandatila, security guard Hasan tried to rape a five-year-old girl, locals alleged.

OC Abdul Karim of Bayezid Bostami Police Station said police rushed to the spot after receiving

information and arrested the suspect.

Police said both the victims were admitted to the One-Stop Crisis Centre at Chattogram Medical College Hospital.

Cases were filed with the respective police stations, police added.

In separate other incidents, police arrested two people on charges of sexually assaulting two minors in Savar's Aminbazar and Habiganj Sadar upazila.

Sub-Inspector Zakir Hossain, in charge of Aminbazar Police Outpost, told this newspaper that the accused is a neighbour to the seven-year-old girl.

According to the case statement, 69-year-old Razzak took the child to his room on Thursday afternoon and attempted to rape her.

When the allegation spread, locals confined Razzak to his house. Police then detained him and

took him to Savar Model Police Station.

The child's father filed an attempted rape case, and the police officer confirmed the accused has been shown arrested.

In Habiganj Sadar upazila, a man was arrested on charges of attempting to rape a four-year-old girl yesterday.

Police held suspect Bijoy Mia from the Durlavpur locality.

The incident took place on Thursday evening when the child was playing near the house. The girl was admitted to Habiganj Sadar Hospital.

OC Zahidul Haque of Habiganj Police Station said police visited the hospital and recorded a statement. An attempt was made to rape the child.

The child's mother filed a case with Sadar Police Station.

Bijoy was produced before a court that sent him to jail yesterday.



Saudi security forces parade in Makkah ahead of Hajj, as over a million pilgrims gather amid Middle East war and fragile ceasefire. PHOTO: AFP