
PLACE: Cox's Bazar

DATE: 19/04/2020

UNHCR provides Personal Protective Equipment and support for intensive care treatment in Cox's Bazar to support Government efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19

UNHCR has provided significant amounts of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as other urgently needed medical supplies to the Government of Bangladesh in Cox's Bazar to support preparedness and response to COVID-19. The donations, which include gowns, masks, goggles, gloves, hand sanitizer and disinfectant equipment, have been made to both the Civil Surgeon's Office and the Sadar Hospital in Cox's Bazar district.

Despite global shortages of PPE due to the unprecedented scale of the COVID-19 pandemic, massive efforts are underway in Bangladesh to provide the necessary protection to front line health workers, who are serving the needs of both local Bangladeshis and Rohingya refugees.

"We are grateful for this timely and critical support from UNHCR, when we need it most," said the Dr. Md Mohiuddin, Medical Superintendent of Sadar Hospital in Cox's Bazar.

UNHCR is also supporting the authorities to increase the intensive care capacity of Sadar Hospital, with 10 ICU beds as well as 8 high dependency beds, and provision of staffing.

The Government of Bangladesh has taken steps to curb the spread of the COVID-19 virus locally and nationally and is engaged in intensive efforts to source and ensure the delivery of PPE, as well as other vital medical supplies. The UN and humanitarian partners are, wherever possible, supporting these efforts and seeking additional resources, including further PPE.

In Cox's Bazar, UNHCR is working in close collaboration with the national authorities in a race against time to prepare medical facilities to respond to those who may be affected by the virus. This includes establishing an Isolation and Treatment Centre, which is currently under construction in Ukhiya, that will serve those who require care among the local Bangladeshis and the Rohingya refugee community. This is one of several facilities being prepared by humanitarian partners and the Government of Bangladesh.

"The outbreak is a global challenge that must be addressed through international solidarity and cooperation. We continue to work hand-in-hand with the Government authorities to ensure the best response possible for all affected communities," said Sandra Harlass, UNHCR's Senior Public Health Officer in Cox's Bazar.

UNHCR and partner agencies have provided additional resources to local health centres in the sub-districts of Ukhiya and Teknaf, as well as to primary health centres within the camps.

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Media contacts

In Cox's Bazar:

Louise Donovan donovan@unhcr.org; +880 18 4732 7279
