
PLACE: Cox's Bazar

DATE: 19/10/2020

Expansion of COVID-19 Hospital Facilities for Refugees and Local Communities in Cox's Bazar

Today, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in collaboration with Sadar Hospital and the Government of Bangladesh, inaugurated the expansion of medical services for patients with severe forms of COVID-19 in the Cox's Bazar District Sadar Hospital.

The event was attended by the President of the Hospital Management Committee and Honourable Member of Parliament, Mr. Shaimum Sarwar Kamal, the Superintendent and Assistant Director of Sadar Hospital, Dr. Rafik-Us-Saleheen, the Principal Of Cox's Bazar Medical College, a Representative of the Superintendent of the Police, the RRRC Health Sector Coordinator, as well as Ms. Hinako Toki, UNHCR Senior Operations Coordinator, amongst others

In June 2020, the first Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and High Dependency Unit (HDU) were opened in Cox's Bazar, with UNHCR support. The ICU currently has a capacity of 10 beds with 11 ventilators and 2 portable ventilators, and 8 HDU beds available for those with severe symptoms. This expansion will significantly expand the capacity to respond, with 20 additional beds for patients with severe symptoms.

In addition to the 20 extra beds, UNHCR has also provided support for the refurbishment of the new ward, as well human resources support, with 43 new staff who have been recruited, including 10 medical doctors, 15 staff nurses, a Senior Nurse, an Infection Prevention and Control Supervisor, 8 cleaners and 8 ward staff. Furthermore, medication and specialized equipment have also been provided including beds, walled oxygen, oxygen pumps, infusion and syringe pumps and specialized medical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

"We will always remember the support provided by UNHCR and the UN organisations for both refugees and for our people. Nobody can progress without support and the will to work together" said the Honorable MP Mr. Shaimum Sarwar Kamal at today's event.

"At the beginning of the pandemic, when people were panicking and looking for solutions, it was UNHCR who were the first to come forward to provide support. It is a great day to see such amazing services available in the peripheral District of Cox's Bazar" said Dr. Rafik-Us-Saleheen, Superintendent and Assistant Director of Sadar Hospital.

Since the ICU and HDU were opened on June 20th, 124 patients in need of critical care support have been admitted and received care in the Sadar Hospital ICU. This includes both refugees referred from the camps, as well as local Bangladeshi communities.

UNHCR and the entire humanitarian community is continuing to work hand-in-hand with the Government of Bangladesh to both prevent and respond to cases of COVID-19 in Cox's Bazar district. So far, 14 Severe Acute Respiratory Infection Isolation and Treatment

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Centres (SARI ITCs) have also been established for the treatment of those with moderate to severe symptoms.

“The coronavirus pandemic has presented a huge challenge globally. UNHCR is grateful for the strong partnership with the Government of Bangladesh in combatting the virus. We will continue to work together to ensure the best care possible for those who suffer from COVID-19 in Cox’s Bazar District, both refugees and local communities” said Hinako Toki, Senior Operations Coordinator for UNHCR, Cox’s Bazar.

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