

UNHCR and Sadar District Hospital reach key milestone

UNHCR handed over the management of the first Intensive Care Unit in Cox's Bazar to the Sadar District Hospital.

PLACE

Cox's Bazar,
Bangladesh

DATE

30 December 2021

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency funded and established the first Intensive Care Unit (ICU) in Cox's Bazar to provide lifesaving services during the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 1 January, Sadar District Hospital will take on the management of the ICU set up by UNHCR.

"The pandemic was a great challenge for all of us and we managed to serve the people due to a successful coordination and cooperation with UNHCR. The ICU beds have helped to save many lives. We appreciate all the support from UNHCR to set up the facility. It has helped us to improve the health support system towards the people in Cox's Bazar", said Dr. Md. Mominur Rahman, Superintendent, Sadar District Hospital.

UNHCR procured medical equipment, installed oxygen delivery systems, provided medical supplies including medicine, personal protective equipment and financed the facility from June 2020 to December 2021. UNHCR also funded the positions of 115 medical staff, and UNHCR partners – Relief International and Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK) provided additional staff and meals for patients.

Service capacities were expanded with the provision of 38 beds for the intensive care unit (ICU), high dependency unit (HDU) and patients with severe COVID-19 symptoms. UNHCR with WHO's technical support, also established a laboratory within the ICU to ensure rapid turn-around of results, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We are handing over the management of the ICU to the Sadar District Hospital, but it does not mean the end of our friendship and collaboration. We will continue our support to improve health services in this city by constructing an outpatient department that will soon allow access to a number of specialized services", shared Ita Schuette, Head of UNHCR's Suboffice in Cox's Bazar, reiterating the organization's commitment to support the health response in the district.

Since the ICU started operating, 1,137 patients have been treated. The majority, over 80%, were Bangladeshi citizens residing in Cox's Bazar district and nearby areas. Rohingya refugees who were referred from the camps also benefitted from the services.

The success of the ICU is a result of the strong partnership between UNHCR and the Sadar District Hospital, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the office of the Cox's Bazar Civil Surgeon, and the RRRC – Refugee Health Unit. The rapid response was made possible by generous donations of countries such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom, among others.

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