

SITUATION REPORT FOR COVID-19 IN BANGLADESH:

--Dr. NHM Abu Bakar, Secretary General, RfP Bangladesh

Although China was the first to be affected by COVID-19, it has reduced its mortality rate to almost zero in a relatively short period of time. But the virus infected the whole world including Bangladesh at a later stage. Primarily, the people of Bangladesh and its government didn't not pay much attention to the harmful aspect of corona virus. At the same time, some misunderstood religious leaders (Molla-Maulvi) started propaganda about this virus and prevented people from becoming aware of proper precaution. But when a meagre percentage of people infected with the virus started dying from mid-March, people started becoming conscious about its symptoms and treatment procedures.

At that time, there was not enough supply of Mask or PPE and other equipments required in the country. Most of the doctors were afraid to treat even common ailments. The COVID test could not be done as per the demand of people in the country. Our leading RfP leaders became afraid to this deadly virus also. No one would leave their residence, although they kept in touch with each other through telephone or zoom meeting. We saw some severe patients who were not infected by COVID-19 also faced the death due to lack of oxygen. The number of death continued to rise due to lack of medical misdirection, insufficient care and facilities lacking in control over people, carelessness of people etc in the country.

At times, we gathered some courage and formed a volunteer group to help the affected poor people in a limited scale. In addition to our own funds, ACRP came forward to provide some fund at that time. Around the same time, the government also managed to arrange supply of oxygen to the pipeline in some public and private hospitals. As a result, lack of oxygen cylinders for the common people reduced. Now there is no shortage of oxygen cylinders in urban areas.

In the meanwhile, many voluntary units have also been set up in the villages. However, the incidence of this disease is less in the villages. People's tendency to disobey the rules has increased after the lockdown. At the same time, people's awareness about COVID19 treatment has also increased. As a result, the number of deaths has come down along with increasing number of infected people. The tendency to test in people has also decreased. However, people's unscientific and superstitious ideas about COVID19 have not decreased much.

More than five thousand people have died in Bangladesh due to COVID-19. The death toll includes a good number of doctors, nurses, technicians, volunteers, age old people, members of law enforcing agency and so on. The death march has not diminished in Bangladesh yet. Add to this, the general people are not so careful yet in their movement due to compulsion of economic crisis. Now, people of Bangladesh are eagerly waiting for COVID-19 Vaccine like people of other parts of the world.

All our ongoing projects are almost postponed for this unwanted situation. Now the second web of COVID19 has started in different parts of the country. We don't know yet what extra-precautions should be taken in future.