

EDITORIAL

PROLONGED PERIOD OF DENGUE SEASON

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As of 10th December 2022, a total of 60,078 laboratory-confirmed dengue cases and 266 related deaths have been reported by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare of Bangladesh since 1 January 2022 with a case fatality rate (CFR) of 0.44%¹. Dengue has a wide spectrum of clinical signs and symptoms, ranging from asymptomatic infection to severe, lethal manifestations. Severe dengue is characterized by at least one of the following: severe plasma leakage leading to shock, with or without fluid accumulation with respiratory distress, and severe bleeding or severe involvement of organs (liver, central nervous system, heart, or other)². Expanded Dengue Syndrome (EDS) is a new category from the WHO classification in 2012. Patients with comorbid condition, pregnancy, infants, elderly, and immunocompromised are more prone to develop EDS conditions^{3,4}.

More than two decades dengue is prevailing in Bangladesh. First outbreak occurred in 2000 with a case incidence of 5591 and death of 93 people. At that time we had no previous experience how to handle dengue situation. But because of new exposure to a disease people were very much concerned. Celebrities demonstrated on street to aware people how we will face the consequences. So that the events went well and the following years the case incidence was very low and case fatality almost negligible. A great job had been done at that time. With the time and years dengue did not create a big problem upto 2018. There were many years like 2007 to 2010 no single death occurred. But different serology types were prevailing in different years.

We had a big outbreak in 2019 when 101354 case were detected and it was spread all over the country with a case fatality of 179. This figure was the highest in the dengue era. This year 2022 we have long course of outbreak which is at peak lasting for more than 6 months with increased number of cases and casualty

in the month of October and November, 2022 which is very unusual in the last twenty-two years.

Even in the year 2021, peak incidence of cases was in the month of August and September.

In other wards it is now clear that though we had previous knowledge that Dengue is a disease of monsoon, it is no more valid. Due to multiple factors, specially climate change is playing an important role for Dengue becoming a disease of the whole year. Dengue is no more a disease of Urban. This year Dhaka city cases are 38,000 and outside capital 22,078.

There might be some reasonable factors for this unexpected long time stay of Dengue incidence and increased number of death.

- a. Global warming / Climate change
- b. Lack of public awareness
- c. Ineffective measure taken by the concerned authorities
- d. Prolonged intermittent rain
- e. Late reporting of patients to hospital at afebrile critical phase.
- f. Second infection by different strain of Dengue causing more fatality
- g. Noncompliance of doctors to national guideline for treating patients
- h. Co morbid conditions of patients.

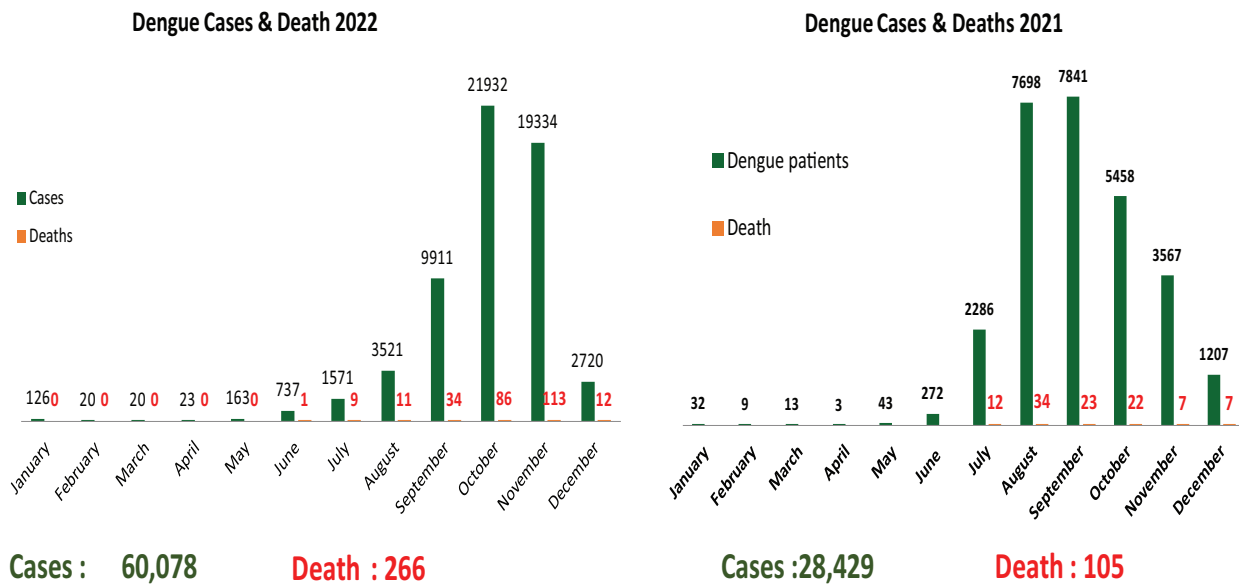
Whatever the factors prevailing we have to face the problem and combat the situation by any means. Inter-ministerial coordination is of utmost importance. When death from COVID is zero at the same time death of 5 to 7 daily from Dengue is really not acceptable. There is no rain for last one month but despite in the middle of December 250 to 300 cases still being reported daily with 1-2 death.

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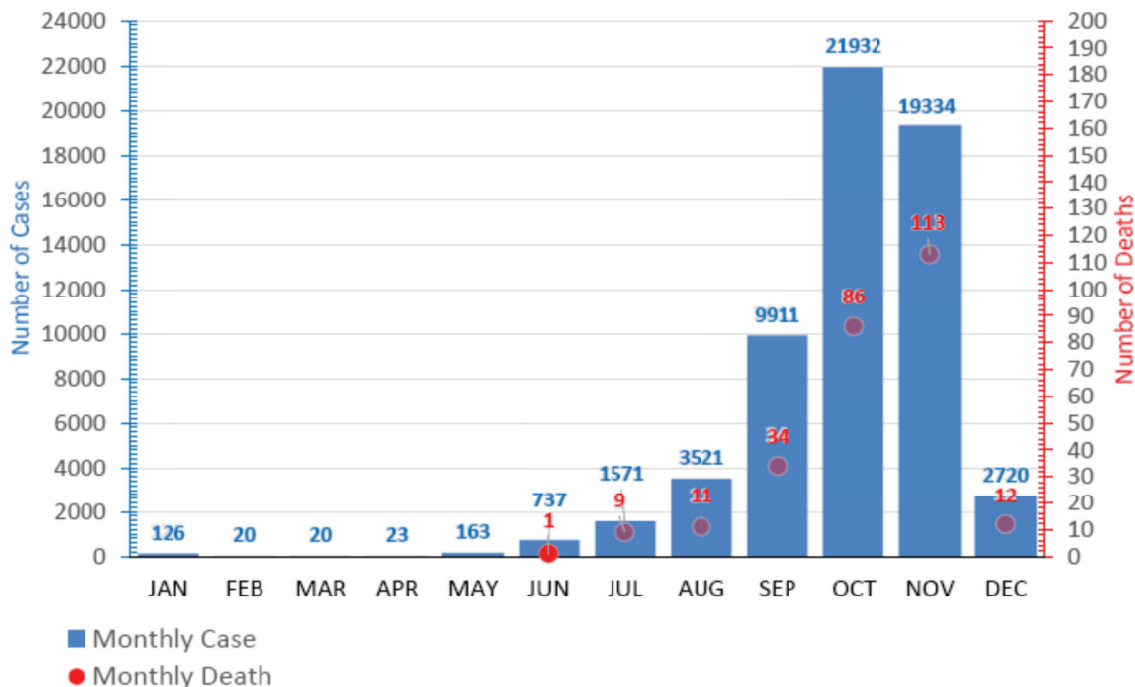
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Comparison of monthly Dengue cases and deaths 2022 vs 2021



Courtesy: Dr.Asim, CDC, DGHS

Health Emergency Operation Center and Control Room, DGHS
 Reported Monthly Dengue cases & Deaths in Bangladesh
 Date of Reporting: 10 December 2022



Yearly Cases & Deaths 2000 – 2021



We should sort out the cause of increased number of death in 2022. May be it is multifactorial but we have to prevent it and take proper action to combat the situation.

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