

“Pandemic of COVID – 19 Infections in Bangladesh”

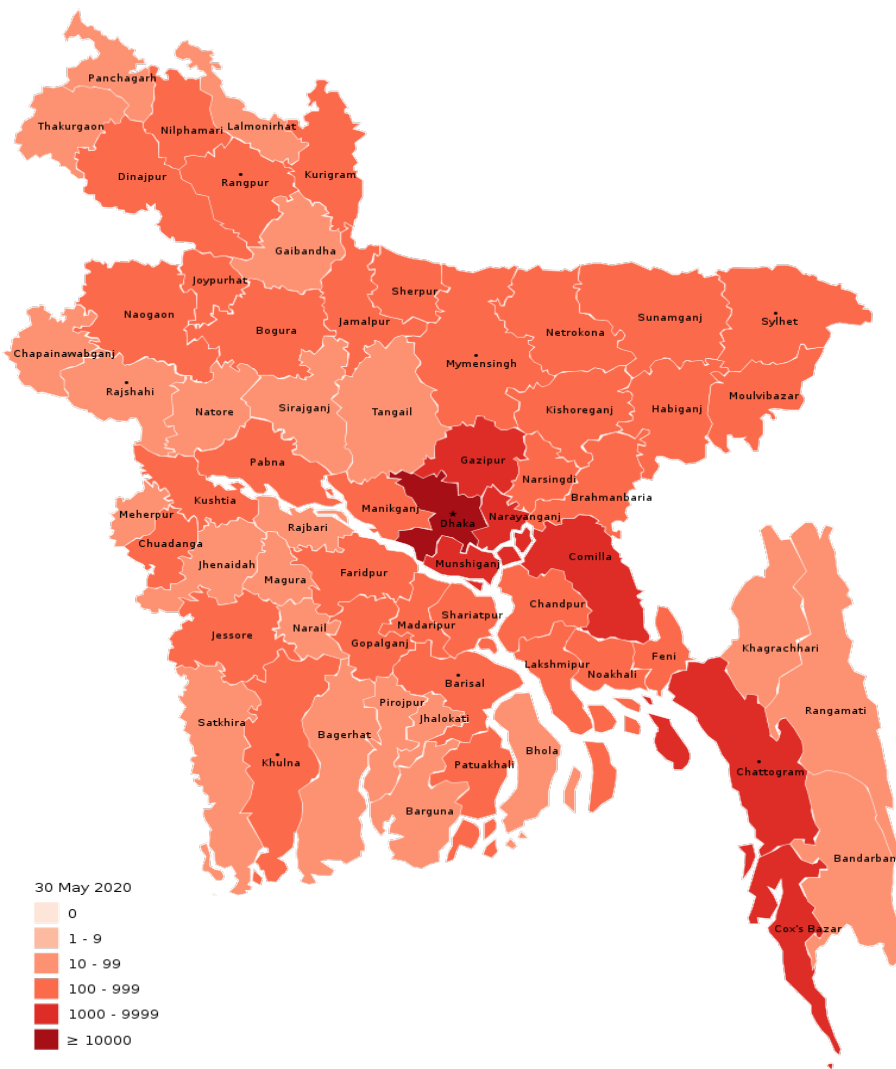
--Our experience and challenge to this serious condition in Okamoto Medical Center.

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Introduction:

The **COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh** is part of the worldwide pandemic of corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The virus was confirmed to have spread to Bangladesh in March 2020. The first three known cases were reported on 8 March 2020 by the country's epidemiology institute, IEDCR. Since then, the pandemic has spread day by day over the whole nation and the number of affected people has been increasing.

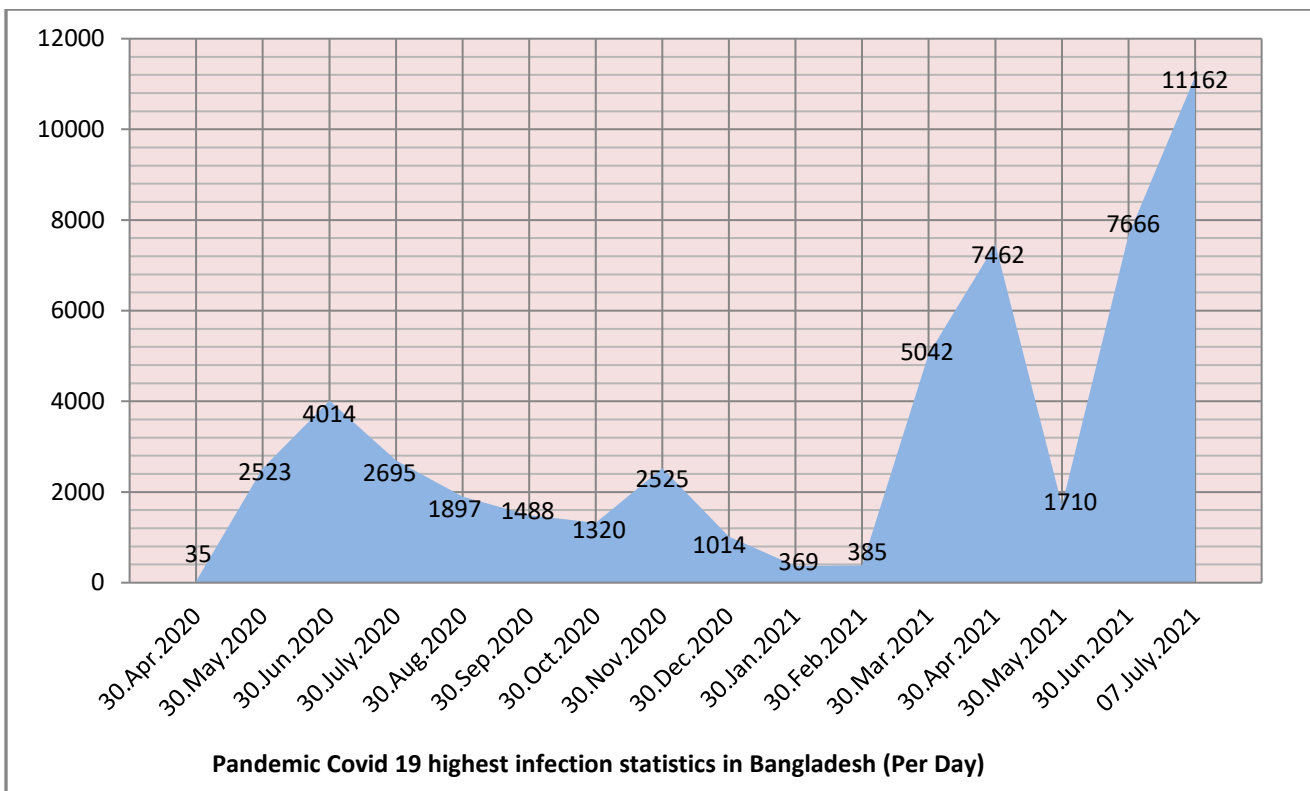


District wise Covid-19 Epidemiological Map
Of Confirmed cases. (As of 03 October 2020)

Disease	COVID-19
Virus strain	SARS-CoV-2
Location	Bangladesh
First outbreak	Wuhan , Hubei, China
Arrival date	8 March 2020
Confirmed cases	9,77,568 (8 July 2021)
Recovered	8,50,502 (8 July 2021)
Deaths	15,593
Fatality rate	2%

Government website

corona.gov.bd



In order to protect the population, the government declared "lockdown" throughout the nation from 23 March to 30 May 2020. The infection remained low until the end of March. But saw steep rise in April and highest infection was June 2020. Since then the infection was low & minimum was January 2021. In March 2021 the infection was gradually increased and it was called second wave of Covid-19 infection in Bangladesh. Maximum infection was in July 2021.

❖ Government Response

On 23 March 2020, when Bangladesh had 33 confirmed cases, the government declared a ten day nationwide holiday. People have been asked to practice social distance and stay at home. Public & private offices will be closed with the exception for emergency. Public transport would be limited & advice was given to avoid them. This measure is described as lockdown.



- **Most crowded road & highway during lockdown.**

The lockdown was extended nationwide and regionally many times in this Covid-19 infection time. Lockdown has severe economic impact. Bangladesh is economically poor country. Most of the people live from hand to mouth. So during lockdown people lost their source of income. They cannot buy food and essential goods for their daily living

❖ Testing and Monitoring

Bangladesh has consistently shown one of the lowest test rates per capita in the world. So the level of testing is insufficient to understand the spread of infection. Bangladesh is doing on an average 12,000 to 15,000 Covid-19 test per day for a population of 168 million. Public health expert in Bangladesh have expressed concern about the government decision to charge people for Covid-19 test. After taking the charge for test suddenly decreased the number of test being done.



Patients are waiting for covid-19 test

In June-2020 Government decided to charge 200 TK (£1.80) for testing done at government facilities and 3500 TK (£32) for private facilities. The government facility is limited and not available. Almost one in four Bangladeshi live in below the national poverty line. Charging people for the test is really creating

problem. It is creating barriers, especially for the poor. During the pandemic people don't have work, they don't have money. They don't have enough food, how they will do test. There is also lack of confidence of our health care system. People don't want to get tested because they don't trust the result of testing. Another problem is delay in getting the test result. It takes a week. Sometimes people don't get the result at all. In Bangladesh people are 168 million. That is performing a maximum 15,000 test per day. This number of test is nothing for this huge population. So we must have to increase the number of test everyday in the whole countrywide.

❖ Vaccine Trial & Vaccination

On 5th November 2020, a agreement was signed between the government of Bangladesh and Serum Institute of India. Under the agreement Bangladesh order 30 million doses of Oxford-Astrazeneca vaccine form Serum institute. On the other hand Indian government has given 3.2 million doses to Bangladesh as a gift which was also produced by Serum institute. But Serum Institute supplied only 7 million doses in the first two months of the year. Bangladesh was supposed to receive 5 million doses per month but not received shipment in March and April 2021, due to severe covid-19 infection in India.



Indian government is not allowing export vaccine for their crisis. As a result rollout of vaccine has been disrupted by supply short fall. Most people who have received the 1st dose are not getting the 2nd dose on time. Not getting the 2nd dose at the right time is likely to reduce the effectiveness of the vaccination program. Bangladesh is looking for alternative vaccine source. Because India isn't supplying the vaccine according to the agreement.

❖ Medical Facility for Covid-19 Patient

In our country there are no proper medical facilities for a lot of patient. After pandemic of covid-19, a lot of covid-19 patients were crowding in every private & government hospital. Hospital & management was not prepared for management of the huge patients of covid-19 at the first wave. Some private hospital was closed for fearing the covid-19 infection for few days. All the patients were crowding in the government hospital only. It was very difficult to manage covid-19 & non-Covid-19 patients in the same hospital separately. Many Doctors & staffs were affected by covid-19. Then the government declared some hospital only for covid-19 patients. Bangladesh has only 1,169 ICU (Intensive care Unit) beds in government & private Hospital. On an average 0.72 beds per 100,000 citizen.



Among the beds only 432 beds are in the government hospital and 737 in private hospital. About 5% of covid-19 patients required ICU & mechanical ventilators. Bangladesh has managed to secure only 1267 ventilator machines for its population. There is one ventilator for every 317300 people of the country. We also need covid-19 dedicated hospital. Bangladesh must increase the ICU bed and ventilator very soon. Many Covid-19 patients are not getting ICU bed and ventilator support.

❖ Socio-Economic Impact



People are waiting & receiving relief from government & Organization.

The Covid-19 pandemic has heavily impacted household & individual level of earning. In Bangladesh around 13 % people have become unemployed. Due to several time lockdown many people have lost their work. People don't have enough money to buy food & essentials. A lot of people of our country work in the foreign country especially in the Middle East, Europe & America. Many of them have lost their job because of pandemic covid-19. Most of the country don't allow Bangladeshi worker to enter their country after covid-19 infection. So Bangladesh is not getting proper remittance. Government support for the people isn't sufficient. Some rich citizen & non-governmental organization is supporting the poor people.

❖ Death by Covid-19



Janaza Salah & burial process

At the end of the June 2021 total about 15,000 deaths by covid-19 infection. On an average 30 to 35 people are dying per day after the infection. After passed away, victim family is facing the crisis of Islamic Funeral (Janaza Salah Prayer). Chief of mosque we called Imam is not willing to perform the Janaza Salah. Family members & community members are also not willing to attend in Janaza Salah due to fear of infection. A few charitable organizations along with the international committee of Red Cross are taking measure for proper handling dead body in Bangladesh. All families want to bury their loves one. The Charitable Organizations collect the body from the hospital and other place & bury them in the cemetery. It was challenging at first because the volunteers feared to bury the dead body for covid-19 infection. Though, the dead body was safely covered.

❖ Okamoto Medical Center is serving the village people in this pandemic



In this pandemic of covid-19, it is very risk to visit patients. In our center we have no proper personal protective equipments. So our staff's are in very dangerous situation. Every day we have to face many patients suffering from fever, cough & cold. Those kinds of patients are very suspicious of covid-19. All patients are first time come to us before going to government central hospital. As a doctor we can't refuse the patients to give treatment. We maintained physical distance, wear mask-hand gloves & frequently hand wash. In last march I was suffering from fever, head ache & malaise. My mother was also suffering from the same symptoms along with dry cough. We suffered fever for about 10 days. After subsiding fever I was suffering from fatigue, weakness & anorexia. My mother was also suffering from vertigo, fatigue & dizziness. I & my mother suffered about 1 month with fever complication. Definitely we were infected by covid-19. Almighty God saved us with the prayer of Dr. Okamoto & other kind contributors along with our relatives and village people. Thanks a lot to professor Okamoto & other contributors for their kinds support.

❖ Present Situation of Covid-19 (Indian variant)



Now in July 2021, the covid-19 situation is getting worse. Indian variant of covid-19 infection is rapidly spreading in our country. Bangladesh surrounded by Indian borders. So this virus can easily spread here. Now more than ten thousand people are infecting every day. The infection is increasing every day. Death is also highest about 165 per day by this Indian type corona virus. The health specialists are worried that the infection and death will much more in coming day. Now in our government & private hospital fulfill by covid-19 patients. There is no extra bed for new covid-19 patients, also shortage of oxygen supply. Our hospital service management will breakdown, if covid-19 infection increasing in this way.

❖ Conclusion

Covid-19 pandemic is a global problem. Only one country by itself will not be able to control it. World leaders will have to work together. Every day we are losing precious live. Every people have responsibility from his position to do something for this pandemic. Bangladesh is developing country. We have no proper healthcare system. I hope co-operation & support from the developed countries; Bangladesh will overcome this serious covid-19 infection. In our village where Okamoto Medical Center is situated, a lot of people are infecting & passing away by this pandemic. I want to help the poor infected people of our village through Okamoto Medical Center. I hope Japanese contributors will support us.