

Landslides kill 23 in Chittagong, Khagrachhari

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Landslides triggered by incessant rains and flash floods due to onrush of water from the hills claimed 23 lives in Chittagong and Khagrachhari districts in 24 hours till 06:00 pm yesterday.

Of the victims, a teacher at a private university and a schoolboy drowned in the port city, five people

were buried alive in a landslide at Mirer Sarai in Chittagong and 16 more had the same fate in different areas of Ramgarh upazila in Khagrachhari.

Besides, many others are feared trapped under chunks of land that slid in areas where rescue operation was yet to start.

Communication between Chittagong and the three hill dis-

tricts of Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban remained snapped due to landslides and inundation of roads at different points.

Torrential rain also disrupted activities at Chittagong port and loading and unloading of 16 vessels remained suspended.

Flash floods washed away gravels

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PHOTO: STAR

The sidewalk beside the Gulistan Mahanagar Natya Mancha has a mockery of the word as illegal vendors have grabbed it, forcing pedestrians to walk on the road.

Toxic fertiliser recycling Dutch firm comes to the rescue

REAZ AHMAD

Bangladesh has finally found a way to get rid of the toxic fertiliser bulk stored by the state-run Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation (BADC) at two of its warehouses in Chittagong and Khulna for the last 12 years.

A Dutch company recently signed a contract with the BADC to transport 2,764 tonnes of toxic zinc oxysulfate (ZOS) from Bangladesh to the Netherlands and destroy the same after recycling.

Official sources said the recycling and destruction of the toxic element with high concentration of

lead-cadium will cost \$1.8 million. The entire bill will be met from a Dutch grant.

AVR Industrial Waste Services - the Dutch company to carry out the job -- will have to get no-objection certificates from all the sea ports its carrier would touch during its voyage from Chittagong Port to Rotterdam. This will prolong the transportation time.

"First, we've to collect a huge quantity of United Nations-approved hazard-free packaging bags to carry the highly toxic fertiliser," Hasan Khaled, managing director of Chemico Bangladesh,

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AL declares indefinite boycott of JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The main opposition party Awami League declared an indefinite boycott of the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, saying its lawmakers would not return to parliament until a state minister apologised and the speaker expunged his remarks and upheld relevant rules in running the House.

The Awami League said State Minister for Housing Alamgir Kabir must apologise on the floor of parliament for his Wednesday's remarks against Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina.

The speaker will have to clearly expunge the state minister's his remarks from the proceedings of the House and strictly follow the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure, it demanded.

From a meeting of party lawmakers at the Sangsad Bhaban, the AL also hinted vigorous street agitation if the three demands went unmet and the speaker did not allow AL deputies to speak in parliament.

The AL lawmakers stormed out of the Jatiya Sangsad on Wednesday night following Kabir's alleged aspersion on Hasina and did not join the budget session

yesterday.

At the AL Parliamentary Party (ALPP) meeting, party deputies said Kabir's statement was beyond the purview of Rules of Procedure.

Spelling out the demands in a memorandum, signed by Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid, the AL handed it over to Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui last night.

Unless the demands were met, the memorandum said, the House would not only become ineffective but also turn out to be a farce. "It is

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Two US soldiers, Iraqis killed in ambushes

AP, Baghdad

Assailants launched a wave of ambushes against US forces in Iraq, dropping grenades from an overpass, blowing up a vehicle with a roadside bomb and destroying a civilian SUV traveling with US troops, soldiers and Iraqi police said Thursday. Two US soldiers and two Iraqi civilians were killed.

The onslaught was part of a spiraling series of attacks on

coalition forces despite assurances that the troops are mopping up resistance. On Tuesday, six British soldiers were killed in a southern town, underlining the spread of anti-coalition violence.

In latest wave of attacks, a bomb exploded Thursday by a US military vehicle on the road leading to Baghdad's airport, killing one US soldier and injuring another.

The airport road, heavily used by

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3 incidents in 2 days Robbers loot goods worth Tk 27 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed robbers looted cash and gold ornaments worth Tk 27.39 lakh from different parts of the city yesterday and day before.

A gang of nine robbers entered Syed Barkatullah Mahmood's house at East Rajabazar at 4:15am yesterday by cutting the grill of drawing room, police said quoting the house owner.

The robbers made all inmates hostage at gunpoint and took away

Tk 4.5 lakh in cash and gold ornaments from the almirah.

The owner of the house filed a case with the Tejgaon Police Station. However, police could not arrest anyone till 10pm last night.

Robbers looted gold ornaments and other valuables worth about Tk 6 lakh from a house at Dinonath Sen Road, Sutrapur yesterday noon.

A gang of six went to one Moshin Sikder's residence yesterday noon and pressed the bell. When the

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Speaker finds comment by minister on Hasina indecent

UNB, Dhaka

Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui yesterday gave a ruling to expunge from the Jatiya Sangsad proceedings all unparliamentary words, which were used on Wednesday.

"I checked the proceedings and asked for expunging Wednesday's offensive, indecent (*katu*), libellous and unparliamentary words from the proceedings," he said.

The deputy speaker gave the ruling in the absence of main oppo-

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UN not ready to send troops to Iraq: Annan

AFP, London

The United Nations does not currently have the capacity to send a security force into Iraq, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said Wednesday after talks in London with British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

"Until the (UN Security) Council gives us a new mandate, we are not really talking of a UN force and, quite frankly, I doubt that we will have the capacity to take over that responsibility at this stage," Annan said.

"If we don't have the capacity, I wouldn't want to take on the addi-

tional role and more responsibility."

Speaking in the wake of the killing of six British troops in southern Iraq Tuesday, Annan said the "occupying powers" had the responsibility to provide security and effective administration to the people of Iraq.

This should continue to be delivered by the multinational coalition led by the United States and Britain, he added.

Asked by reporters whether he wanted a greater security role for the UN, Annan said: "We are guided by

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