

# Tremors rattle Rangamati again

Expert predicts landslide, wants evacuation from banks of Karnaphuli

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Rangamati

Two mild tremors yesterday shook Barkal and areas nearby in Rangamati in the latest of aftershocks from a series of powerful earthquakes that caused no serious damage but raised call for evacuation.

The latest aftershocks rattled Barkal at 4:00am and then at 9:30am, fraying further the nerves of local residents who had been living in a state of panic since the quake first struck on July 27.

Geologists and earthquake

experts visiting the Barkal area termed the train of tremors prologue to a huge disaster and urged the government to start relocating about 40,000 indigenous and non-indigenous residents soon.

After two days of investigation, experts have ascertained the Kolabunia area of Barkal the epicentre of the earthquake.

But Aftab Alam Khan, one of the experts and teacher at the geology department at Dhaka University, told newsmen yesterday he does not see the possibility of any major quake hitting the area soon.

Talking at the office of

Rangamati deputy commissioner, he however predicted few landslides in the area. He also said the government should begin evacuating people living on the banks of the Karnaphuli river at Kolabunia bazaar and suburbs.

Two acres of land at Kolabunia, which was 15 feet above the water level, went down 35 feet beneath the Karnaphuli river over the past 10 days.

The geo-physical observatory recorded 49 tremors between July 27 and August 5 in the Chittagong region. The July 27 quake lasted about 20 seconds and measured

5.6 on the Richter scale. But the series of aftershocks did the most damage in the Barkal area, causing landslide and 'fault line' in the tremor-prone hills district.

Meanwhile, a team from the Bangladesh Power Development Board has been investigating whether the country's biggest dam and hydropower plant in Kaptai is at risk now.

Earlier, geologists warned if the quake had weakened the structure of the dam it might fell apart possibly in the next quake. Thousands of families will become homeless instantly, they said.

# Rankle in admin over retirement package for top notchers

REZAUL KARIM

The government announcement of a package of benefits for only a few top civil servants before and after retirement from service has left the civil administration fuming.

Most junior and mid-level officers came down heavily on the government decision, terming it 'discriminatory' and 'against the interest of 12 lakh serving government employees'.

The official order issued by the

Cabinet Division on August 4 and circulated among only three secretaries yesterday said all secretaries and officials above the post would get transport and housing facilities during the LPR and post-retirement period.

The facilities include fuel and driver during one year Leave Preparatory to Retirement (LPR) and six months' stay at government quarters after retirement.

Secretaries and above officials in contractual service will also enjoy

the transport facility for six months after the termination of contracts.

Under the existing rule, no government official, including a secretary, is entitled to use government vehicle during the LPR and the civil servants are entitled to stay in their official quarters only two months after retirement for shifting purposes.

The government allows them to stay four more months in the quarters if they do not have a son or

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# JS body gets tough on absentee housing secretary

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Aparliamentary standing committee yesterday suspended a meeting an hour after its start without discussing the agenda because of two officials' absence.

The House Committee resented the absence of Housing and Public Works Secretary Aminur Rahman and Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department (PWD) Abul Kasem Chowdhury and decided to serve show-cause notices on the two.

The committee was scheduled to discuss the handover of Non-aligned Movement flats to the parliament secretariat, as the building blocks constructed for the NAM

summit will be allocated to lawmakers.

The secretary and the engineer drew flak from the committee chairman and members alike and will be asked to attend the meeting, now slated for August 11, said meeting sources.

A debate raged over the absence issue between lawmakers of the ruling and opposition parties at the meeting that began at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban with Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain in the chair.

The opposition lawmakers termed it a failure of the government to ensure officials attend the parliamentary committee meeting, but the ruling party denied the allegation.

Tajul Islam Chowdhury, Jatiya Party (Ershad) lawmaker and House Committee member, demanded summoning of the two officials to the committee.

Opposition Chief Whip Abdus Shahid said the absence of the officials despite their invitation to the meeting shows the government's 'failure'.

The ruling BNP whip, Syed Shahidul Haq Jamal, said, "We may have weakness, but we did not fail."

The Awami League lawmaker, Shajahan Khan, quipped that weakness cannot bring success. "If the government is weak, how can it be successful?" asked Shajahan.

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PHOTO: STAR

Dancers of Shupto Bikash Academy pose for photograph before their performance at the Shilpakala Academy yesterday in commemoration of the 62nd death anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore.



PHOTO: STAR

Sapped out by sizzler, day labourers laze out on a line of cool brick paving under the shadow of a tree at the Central Shaheed Minar.

## Abducted schoolboy found at Sylhet mazar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A city schoolboy was reportedly found at a Sylhet mazar (shrine) yesterday after his abduction from the city the day before, police said quoting victim's family members.

Ziaur Rahman Johnny, a class IX student of city's Kadamtola High School, was abducted on his way to school Tuesday morning, according to a case filed by Johnny's father KM Mujibur Rahman with the Sabujbagh Police Station.

Earlier, Rahman received a phone call from an abductor who demanded a ransom of Tk 3 lakh for Johnny's release.

Police arrested Johnny's friend Saiful Islam Akash, a class seven student of the same school, on charge of involvement in the abduction.

Investigation officer of the case said family members of the abducted boy rang him up yesterday to inform that they found Johnny at a mazar in Sylhet.

## 358 more Gram Sarkar units formed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the formation of 358 Gram Sarkar units in 29 districts yesterday, the total now stands at 853.

Earlier, 21, 105, 152 and 218 units were formed on the first, second, third and fourth day. The formation of Gram Sarkar units started on August 2.

According to the monitoring cell at the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, the units formed yesterday include 223 in Chittagong division, 45 in Dhaka division, 31 in Khulna division, 16 in Barisal division, five in Sylhet division and 38 in Rajshahi division.

Official sources said full-scale formation of Gram Sarkar units are expected to start from the next week and the entire process would be complete within the stipulated 45 days.

A total of 40,392 Gram Sarkar units will be formed.

## Raozan monk murder

# Charges pressed against seven

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The chargesheet in the sensational murder case of Buddhist monk Gyanijyoti Mohasthabir at Raozan was submitted yesterday.

Dispute over authority, fund and possession of Hingala Owara Puinya Boudha Bihar, a temple cum orphanage at Hingala in Dabua, led to the gruesome murder, the chargesheet, submitted after more than fifteen months of the murder, said.

ANM Mohiuddin, investigation officer (IO) of the case, accused seven persons under 302/342/120(Kha) of Section 34.

Putul Barua, a teacher of Hingala Owara Puinya Boudha Bihar, Alaichh Mohammad, Azizul Huq, Nurul Islam, Gias, Manik and Zahur are the accused in the case.

Thirty-seven were made witnesses in the case.

Alaichh Mohammad and Nurul Islam were arrested but the others are absconding since the incident.

Alaichh confessed he and six others of Aziz Bahini were involved in the murder and he himself slaughtered the monk with a sword.

Putul Barua and Aziz Bahini leader Azizul Huq masterminded the killing, he also said.

Locals at Sultanpur in Raozan caught Nurul Islam and handed him to police on February 2 this year.

Gyanijyoti was brutally murdered at his bedroom in the monastery on April 21 night last year.

The district monitoring cell decided to send the case to the Speedy Trial Tribunal Court.

# Parki sea beach to be developed as tourist spot

UNB, Dhaka

Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry has taken measures to develop the Parki sea beach near Chittagong City in Anwara upazila as a tourist spot already popular with visitors.

This was disclosed at an inter-ministerial meeting chaired by State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin at the ministry conference room yesterday.

The meeting directed the Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) to take immediate steps to widen and develop the seven-km road from the main road to Parki beach.

It also directed the Power Development Board (PDB) to

provide necessary lights, Water Development Board (WDB) to construct about three-km kutcha (unpaved) road and preserve a cross dam and the Forest Department to plant saplings on both sides of the road.

The state minister told the meeting that necessary steps would be taken to build Chittagong as a city of tourism. Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) will meet the demand of tourists through infrastructure development in the area.

He said the ministry had already taken measures to develop the Foy's Lake in Chittagong as an attractive tourist centre after it was handed over to the ministry.

Civil Aviation and Tourism

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## Cops yet to make any headway in Ctg kidnapping

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Fourteen days after the abduction, the joint rescue team of police and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) failed to locate abducted business magnate and Bangladesh Nationalist Party leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury till yesterday.

In vain did the police and BDR raid remote areas of Kanchannagar union in Fatikchhari Tuesday night.

The abductors, led by prime suspect Gittu Nasir, were sighted with the kidnapped businessman in a remote village at Raozan, local sources claimed.

Heading for inaccessible Brindaban jungle area, the kidnappers passed through Janipath in Raozan, the source said.

Police yesterday morning arrested Ziauddin Chowdhury alias Zia, brother of top-notch criminal Shibir Nasir, from Parade Corner under the Kotoali Police Station. Zia is an accused in 30 criminal cases with different police stations.

Earlier, police remanded Gittu Nasir's brother Abul Hossain and BDR Selim's brother Habb Ullah.

Police also seized movable properties of Gittu Nasir and another suspect Abul Kashem Chowdhury alias Kashem Chairman, chairman of Kanchannagar union parishad.

Jamal Chowdhury was abducted from near his residence at Chandgaon Residential Area at around 11pm on July 24.

The kidnappers demanded Tk 50 lakh ransom over phone the following night.

## Robbers loot Tejgunipara residence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed robbers looted gold ornaments, cash and other valuables worth Tk 1.5 lakh from a residence at Tejgunipara in Tejgaon Wednesday.

About 10 robbers entered the first floor of the residence of one Montajul Islam Chowdhury at 192, Tejgunipara at about 3:30am by cutting the grill of a latrine.

They looted the house by holding the family members hostage at gunpoint and after an hour of looting, they decamped with 20 tolas of gold ornaments, Tk 7,000 and some prize bonds worth Tk 3000.

Later, the house owner filed a case with the Tejgaon Police Station.

## Russia wants to join OIC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President of the Russian Federation Vladimir V. Putin has declared that Russia intends to join the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).

At first stages Russia may participate in the OIC as an observer, he said.

While talking to the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia Abdullah Badawi, Putin requested him to support this initiative, as Malaysia will chair the OIC from this October, according to a press release issued in Dhaka by the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Bangladesh yesterday.

The Russian president pointed out that Muslim population in Russia exceeds 20 million, which is more than that in many Muslim countries and members of the OIC.

Now six countries, which emerged after the break-up of the Soviet Union, are among the 57 members of the OIC.

The Russian Council of Muftis in a statement Tuesday welcomed the initiative of the Russian president.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Aug 07		6-38 pm
Aug 08	5-31 am	
Prayer Timings		
August 7		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-46	6-50
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		