

## Cyclone shelters, cross-dams, afforestation needed to save life & property in coastal belt

BSS, Dhaka

The coastal belt is vulnerable to cyclone for shallow waters in the North Bay of Bengal along the southeastern edge of the country.

Besides, northward convergence of the Bay and high astronomical tide, and presence of a large number of rivers/inlets, many islands and low topographies make the coastal area vulnerable.

Prof Masud Kamal of the Geology Department of Dhaka University said this at a meeting organised in memories of the victims of the 1991 cyclone at Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday.

He recommended construction of an adequate number of cyclone shelters at the proper sites of the coastal belt and said now the total number of cyclone centres is much lower than the needed number in any emergency period.

Prof Kamal said the total number of cyclone centres in the coastal belt in the country is now 1,800, which can accommodate only 20 lakh

people. Whereas over 70 lakh people have been living along the coastal line.

After the cyclone of 1985, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society constructed 62 cyclone centres in addition to 24 more by some non-government organisations (NGOs). Except those centres, some small house-based shelters have been constructed on Urir Char with the financial support of Pakistan and India, he said.

After the 1991 cyclone, various international donors constructed some of the cyclone shelters in the coastal area, Prof Kamal said.

He stressed the need for construction of cross-dams in the coastal belt to protect the tidal surge, as the surge accompanied with the cyclone is the major cause for the loss of life.

Construction of the cross dams are not possible at the distant islands and chars. So, it is important to motivate people to build their homesteads on at least 20-foot high and make intense afforestation in the coastal belt, he said.

Former minister Tofail Ahmed, environment scientists Dr Hasan Mahmud and Dr Ansarul Karim, and former member of parliament from Cox's Bazar Mostaq Ahmed took part in the discussion organised by the "April 29 Memorial Council, Bangladesh. Former chairman of Cox's Bazar Pourasabha Nurul Absar was in the chair.

According to Prof Kamal, the Noakhali-Chittagong coast is the most vulnerable for the landfall of cyclones where 33 cyclones out of 82 made landfalls in 1582-1997.

The second vulnerable zone was the Chittagong-Cox's Bazar coast. Khulna-the Sundarbans and Barisal-Patuaakhali coasts are relatively less vulnerable, he said.

The landfall of tropical cyclones occurs at various parts of the coast in October and May, Dr Kamal observed.

After the 1970 cyclone, 238 cyclone shelters were constructed in 1972-73 with the financial support of the World Bank. For long 12 years till 1985 no cyclone shelter was built in the country.

## SCUFFLE WITH SERGEANT Transport workers blockade Rokeya Sarani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transport workers blockaded Rokeya Sarani at Kazipara for about 15 minutes following a scuffle between a traffic sergeant and the transport owners and workers.

Police said the transport owners and workers of buses plying on Pallabi-Gulistan route tried to blockade the road at around 11:00am as sergeant Iqbal filed cases against some buses for violating traffic rules.

However, the transport owners alleged that they took to the street as the sergeant was filing cases against those who were not giving him bribe.

Locals said the angry transport owners and workers also assaulted the sergeant who escaped the wrath of the transport workers by driving away his motorbike. However, Assistant Commissioner (Traffic) of Mirpur Zone of Dhaka Metropolitan Police Fazlur Rob denied that the sergeant was assaulted.

"The sergeant was filing cases against the buses violating traffic rules and not having proper documents which might have angered the transport workers," Rob told The Daily Star. He said cases were filed against around 20 vehicles in the area.

ASM Ahmed Khokon, treasurer of Dhaka Sarak Paribahan Samity, however said the sergeant was forcing drivers to bribe him though they had all documents and licenses.

He said at one stage the transport workers got angry, beat him and blockaded the road.

Transport workers said they withdrew the blockade after senior police officials assured them that the sergeant would be withdrawn from the area.

## Robber beaten to death in Narsingdi

UNB, Narsingdi

An alleged robber was beaten to death by a mob at Algapara village in Sadar upazila early yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mohor Ali, 30.

Local people said a gang of about 10 robbers stormed into the house of Raisuddin breaking open the door at about 2:00am. As the family members raised an alarm, the imam of the local mosque called on the people through the loud-speaker to resist the robbers.

Local people soon rushed there and caught one of the robbers, Mohor Ali. They beat him up, leaving him death on the spot.

However, other members of the gang managed to escape.

The police sent the body to hospital morgue for autopsy. A case was filed.

## Five JCD men acquitted of murder in Kushtia

UNB, Kushtia

A Speedy Trial Tribunal here on Thursday acquitted all the five accused Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) activists of murder.

The court also dismissed the case due to lack of enough evidence.

The acquitted -- Mahmudur Rahman, Masum, Chanchal, Jaher and Sourav -- are activists of Islami University unit of the JCD.

According to the prosecution, Hafizur Rahman, a JCD activist, was killed in a gun battle between two factions of Islami University JCD over establishing supremacy on the campus on April 26 in 2003.

During the incident, the police arrested JCD cadre Mahmudur Rahman with arms from the spot.

A murder case was filed in this connection and the police submitted charge sheet against the five activists.

After examining the records and witnesses, Judge Abdur Rashed Mia pronounced the verdict.

## Obituary



Rezipunnessa Hossain, wife of Mosharrif Hossain, managing director of Mutual Trust Bank, passed away at her residence on Wednesday at the age of 58, says a press release.

She left behind her husband, one son, one daughter, two grandsons, relatives and admirers.

She was buried at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals' Graveyard. Her qulkhani will be held at Property Crown, Flat No. B/2, House No. 251, Road No. 121, Gulshan-1 after Asr prayers today. Relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the qulkhani.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) forms a human chain in front of the National Museum in the city yesterday demanding demolition of illegal structures along the rivers of Buriganga, Shitalakkha and other rivers.

## DU student bodies to resist Shibir activities

DU CORRESPONDENT

All the student bodies are organising themselves to resist activities of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) on Dhaka University (DU) campus.

The high command of Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student front of ruling BNP, has directed its leaders and activists to resist all Shibir activities on the campus.

The high command of Bangladesh Chhatra league (BCL), student wing of main opposition Awami League, has also issued similar directives to its leaders and activists.

BCL President Mahmud Hasan

Ripon at a rally on Tuesday declared that no Shibir activities will be allowed on the campus.

One JCD top leader requesting anonymity told The Daily Star that JCD would not mind if BCL and other student organisations resist Shibir activities.

In last few days, JCD, BCL, Chhatra Sangram Parishad and other student organisations beat at least 20-25 Shibir activists on the campus.

Besides, at least 4-5 Shibir men were beaten up at every residential hall.

On Thursday night, general students including junior leaders of BCL and JCD beat at least five ICS

activists at Mohsin Hall and forced them out of the hall.

They also recovered some books written by Moududi and Golam Azam from rooms 451, 439, 437 and 28 of the hall.

Earlier on the same night, three JCD leaders of DU unit visited 12 residential halls and directed their activists not to tolerate any Shibir activities.

Meanwhile, Shibir men have threatened Prothom Alo DU Correspondent Mir Mokarram Hossain over mobile phone and burned some copies of The Daily Star and Prothom Alo at Curzon Hall area in last three days.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangabandhu Shishu Kishore Parishad forms a human chain in front of Chittagong Press Club in the port city yesterday protesting police action on photojournalists in Chittagong stadium.

## Blast provides free legal aid to garment workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) organised a workshop as part of its awareness-raising programme among garment workers in the city on Thursday.

Around 85 workers from Mirpur and Narayanganj who had received training from BLAST under a project styled 'Legal services for garment workers' took part in the workshop.

Explaining the project, Farida Yasmin, deputy director (law) of BLAST, said of the total 4000 cases filed with BLAST, 1100 were disposed off in last three years.

As a result, hundreds of workers got back their jobs along with their outstanding dues worth TK 50,66,127, she added.

BLAST Director (Administration) AN Nasiruddin Mahmud delivered the welcome address at the workshop presided over by Justice Naimuddin Ahmed.

The participating workers spoke to how they were benefited by the training received from the BLAST that also provides free legal aid to workers since 1994.

## 'Stop looting money in the name of protecting Kutubdia'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday called for constructing an embankment bigger than the one built in 1961 before the onset of rainy season to save Kutubdia Island.

They also called for rebuilding 16-kilometre-long damaged embankment immediately under the direct supervision of the Armed Force's Engineering Core.

The press conference was organised by the leaders of Save Kutubdia Movement at the National Press Club in the city.

The speakers said crores of taka are allocated every year to protect the island, but influential quarters including ruling BNP leaders grab the money.

They demanded formation of an investigation commission led by a judge and a public hearing after

identifying the vested quarters to help stop looting of money.

The speakers said erosion takes place every year at Kutubdia leaving the life of coastal people at stake.

Unplanned shrimp and salt cultivation have also threatened the existence of the Island as these are damaging the sluice gates making the embankments more vulnerable.

Supported by the Coastal Association for Social Transformation (COAST), the press conference was addressed by the members of Save Kutubdia Movement Prof Nazuillah, Shamsul Huda Siddiqui, Ismail Kutubi and local correspondent of the Prothom Alo SK Liton Kutubi.

Convener of the movement ASM Shahriar Chowdhury read out a keynote paper at the conference.

## Manarat wins championship in Nat'l TV debate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Manarat International School became the champion in the National Television English Parliamentary Debate Competition defeating SFX Green Herald International School.

Bangladesh Television organised the programme at the BTV Bhaban at Rampura in the city on Thursday.

Team leader Sohara Mehroz, Mehedi Bin Samad and Hasanul Kaiser of Manarat spoke from winning side while team leader Saminur Majumdar, Asnia Iqbal and Faria Khan of Green Herald were the speakers of losing side.

Eminent educationist Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury acted as the speaker while Prof ASM Atikur Rahman, the Daily Amar Desh Chief Reporter Syed Abdal Ahmed, Dr Obaidur Rab, Sheba Tasnim Huq, Shabnam Silvia Khan and Prof Jahudul Huq were the judges in the final competition.



## Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong, Sylhet and Barisal divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 36.8 degree Celsius was recorded at Rangamati and the lowest of 20.5 degrees at Rangpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:26pm today and rises at 5:25am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	35.2	24.8	63	57
Chittagong	35.0	26.6	63	71
Rajshahi	35.6	22.8	65	50
Khulna	36.6	25.6	75	53
Barisal	34.8	25.5	79	64
Sylhet	34.5	21.5	53	43
Cox's Bazar	34.7	25.8	63	52

## Global Fund backs new funding for deadly diseases

REUTERS, Geneva

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria agreed yesterday to give millions of dollars in new grants, dispelling activists' fears that its support for the fight against the deadly diseases could dry up.

Health advocates including the Global AIDS Alliance and ActionAid had worried that lack of money could force the fund to delay help to countries battling the illnesses that kill more than 6 million people a year.

The Global Fund's board voted in favour of launching a new round of grants, to cost up to \$1 billion in their first two years, even though the cash had not yet been pledged by governments and other donors.

"There was a strong agreement that given the commitments made to reach global health targets, and given the urgent needs out there, it would be ethically impossible to not launch round six," spokesman Jon Liden told Reuters.

The final amount of the new tranche of grants will depend on which specific project proposals the Global Fund board agrees to at a meeting in November, he added.

Launched with the backing of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2002 to boost funding for neglected diseases, the Global Fund has become the largest global supporter of malaria and tuberculosis projects and among the top three AIDS funders.

"Already, millions of people have benefited from the programmes the

Global Fund is financing around the world and hundreds of thousands of people are alive today who otherwise might not have been," Executive Director Richard Feachem said.

He said the new grants should allow the Geneva-based fund "to maintain this vital momentum to win the battle against these three pandemics."

Unlike more established institutions like the World Bank, the fund has struggled to win long-term financial backing from its donors, the largest of which are Europe, the United States and Japan.

It has already approved grants worth \$5 billion to improve antiretroviral and anti-malarial drug access, distribute bed nets and expand testing to stop the spread of tuberculosis.

Programmes currently supported by the agency are now fully funded, though its initial five-year grants will run out soon and will require substantial funds to be continued.

Carol Jacobs, chairwoman of the Global Fund's board, said the agency was seeking multi-year commitments from governments and increasing ties with the private sector to boost donations to cover long-term funding needs for its programmes.

"We know that countries and vulnerable populations are depending on it and we must not fail them," she said.

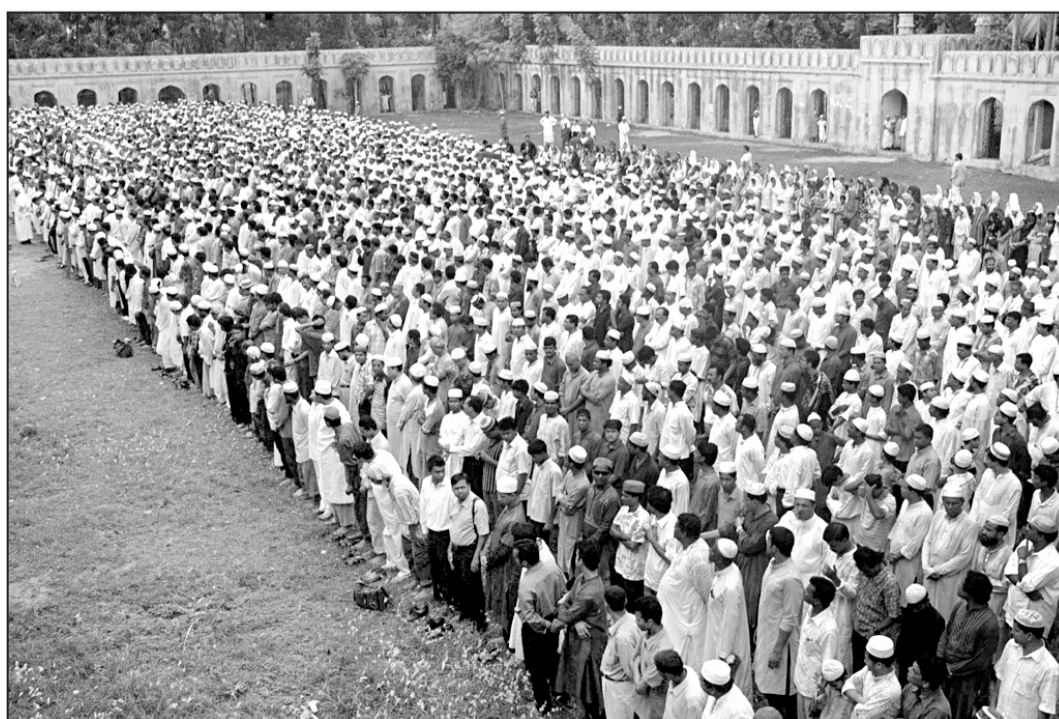


PHOTO: STAR

Namaz-e-jezana of Nasreen Pervin Huq, country director of ActionAid, was held at Dhanmondi Eidgah masjid in the city yesterday.

## Demolition of illegal structures along riverbanks demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally demanded demolition of all illegal structures including brickfields along the rivers of Buriganga-Shitalakkha-Turag-Balu-Devdhotai and Atir Khal.

They also urged the government to implement the 'wetland law 2000' and form a task force to launch drive against illegal encroachments along the riversides.

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) organised the rally and formed a human chain in front of National Museum in the city yesterday.

They criticised the authorities for not taking immediate actions to stop construction of illegal structures.

Bapa Vice President ANM Wahed presided over the rally while its General Secretary Mohiudul Haque Khan and Joint Secretary Mihir Bishwas, Alamgir Kabir of Green Voice, Sharifuzzaman of Nagonik Sanghota, Dr Abdul Hi Mojumdar of Peace spoke.

## Museum guides people to build better future

Says Liz Sevckenko

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A museum is a place where people from all walks of life come to visit and commemorate the contributions of the martyrs and share memories that make them aware of their glorious past and inspire to build a better future, said Liz Sevckenko in a speech at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.

Liberation War Museum organises a yearlong programme to celebrate its 10th anniversary where renowned personalities from home and abroad will deliver speech.

As part of the yearlong programme, Liz Sevckenko, secretary general of International Coalition of Historic Site Museum of Conscience (ICHSMC), is the second person who delivered the speech. Earlier, Rehman Sobhan, a prominent economist of the country, delivered the first one.

The Museum authorities said the Liberation War Museum is a part of the ICHSMC as it joined the coalition in 1999.

Sevckenko in her speech said ICHSMC was founded to establish a new role for historic sites in the world, as open forums for citizen engagement on pressing social issues.

She also said, "We all have something to learn, we all have something to teach and by sharing all this things we can raise awareness about the human rights".

Describing various activities of ICHSMC, she said museum played an important role in raising awareness about the human rights among the young generation.

Trustees of the Liberation War Museum, students and teachers of different schools and colleges were also present at the programme.

## Two die in rooftop fall in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people including a construction worker died after falling from the rooftop of two separate buildings in the city on Thursday.

Habibur Rahman, 22, a tenant of a five-storey house at East Nakhlaipara in Tejgaon, fell from the rooftop while he was walking in the morning.

In the other incident, Sumon, 28, slipped off the top floor of an eight-storey under-construction building in Gulshan at around 10:30am.

Two UD cases were filed with the police stations concerned in this connection.

## DHAKA TODAY

### Talk

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh organises a talk on 'Black holes: Do they exist?' by Latif Chowdhury, Prof of physics, Elizabeth City State University, USA. Venue: Society seminar room. Time: 4:30pm.

### Memorial meeting

Comrade Mofazzar Sangsad will hold a meeting in memory of the victims of 1991 devastating cyclone. Venue: Tajul Auditorium, Purana Paltan. Time: 5:00pm.

### Rotary Dhaka Central

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30pm.