

Rain triggers flash flood in Netrakona, Sylhet

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Downpour in last three days and onrush of water from across the border has triggered flash flood in four upazilas in Netrakona and three in Sylhet.

The flood waters have inundated vast crop lands in bordering Kalmakanda, Durgapur, Khaliajuri and Madan upazilas in Netrakona and

Jaintapur, Gowainghat and Companyganj upazilas in Sylhet. Road links have been snapped in certain areas.

About one lakh people are marooned Kalmakanda and Durgapur upazilas. Our Netrakona Correspondent reports.

Sumeshwary, Magra, Kongsha and Dhanu rivers in the district are still in

spate. Road links from Netrakona to Kalmakanda, Durgapur and Kendua upazila headquarters remained snapped till yesterday. About one kilometre road to Durgapur in Suknakuri area has been damaged, district administration officials said.

Netrakona-Kendua road link is snapped as three bridges have been damaged at Madanpur in Netrakona

Sadar and Bharapara and Basurbazar in Kendua upazila.

At least 500 thatched houses have been washed away and about 80 per cent of Aman fields with newly transplanted seedling have gone under water. Fishes worth about Tk 5 crore have been washed away from at least 1000 ponds, district fishery officials said.

The flood situation in Jaintapur, Gowainghat and Companyganj upazilas deteriorated in last 24 hours with rise in level of river waters.

Road link between Gowainghat the upazila headquarters and the district town snapped yesterday afternoon as the Sari-Gowainghat road went under water following swelling of Gowain and Sari rivers.

Stone extraction from all the four quarries remained suspended for the 3rd day yesterday, keeping about 30,000 labourers without work.

Seven unions out of the 8 in Goanghat have been inundated. Parts of Goanghat upazila headquarters including the upazila health complex premises are under water.

The Upazila Nirbahi Officer distributed two metric tons of rice among the affected people yesterday and urged the Sylhet Deputy Commissioner for more help.

In Jaintapur and Companyganj upazilas, collection of stones and sand remained suspended while most of the roads have gone under water.



Flooded Shokunakuri area of Durgapur upazila in Netrakona district.

PHOTO: STAR



The four cadres of Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), given life term for August 17 bomb blasts in Patuakhali, being taken out of court in the coastal town yesterday after the verdict (Stroy on Page 1).

PHOTO: STAR

2 trains derail within a span of one hour

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Train movement on Sylhet-Dhaka and Sylhet-Chittagang routes was disrupted for about 11 hours from 1am to 12 noon yesterday after two trains derailed at Maijgaon and Baramchal stations in Akhaura-Sylhet section within a span of one hour.

Railway sources said last compartment of Chittagang bound Jalalabad Express from Sylhet derailed near the home signal of Baramchal railway station at about 1 am. Within an hour, a Sylhet bound engine derailed near Maijgaon station. None was injured in the accidents.

Movement of trains resumed at about noon yesterday when the derailed compartment and the engine were salvaged by a relief train from Sylhet.

The accidents caused sufferings to long to thousands of passengers as Sylhet bound Inter-City Udayan from Chittagang and Inter-City Upaban from Dhaka were stranded at Bhatara station and Kulaura junction respectively. Some local passenger trains were also stranded at Kulaura.

Besides, passengers who came to avail trains in different stations had to wait for several hours.

The source said, Upaban changed its route and resumed its journey from Kulaura towards Dhaka as Inter-City Jayantika in 9am.

The Jalalabad Express resumed its journey from Baramchal keeping its derailed compartment there.

INTELLIGENCE FEARS SABOTAGE

Power station, oil depots in Khulna on alert

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Goalpara power station at Khalishpur; Padma, Meghna and Jamuna oil depots at Daulatpur and Khanjahan Ali Bridge (Rupsha Bridge) at Labonchora in Khulna city have been put on 'red alert' fearing sabotage in the installations.

It followed intelligence reports in the wake of a sharp rise in crimes in the area.

According to sources in Special Branch of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP), security measures have been beefed up in and around the installations. Armed policemen in large numbers have been deployed at the sites and special check posts set up at all key points in the city.

The sources said 22 special teams are on patrol in the city's vulnerable points. They are keeping watch particularly on movement of leaders of opposition labour organisations in Khalishpur and Atrai industrial belts.

The Assistant Police Commissioner of KMP's North Zone said 10 armed policemen are guarding each of the power sub stations. In addition, a large number of security forces have been deployed at Goalpara power station and at the three oil depots.

"We do not rule out possibility of sabotage in oil depots", said area sales manager Md Samiul Huq of Padma oil company.

According to sources in Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC), there are 42,94,000 litres of diesel and 11 lakh litres of petrol in Padma oil depot; 35,15,000 litres of diesel and 5,93,000 litres of petrol in Meghna oil depot and 26,00,000 litres diesel and 2,00,000 litres of petrol in Jamuna oil depot at Daulatpur.

Assistant Commissioner of Police Abdur Razzak told this correspondent that surveillance in all these three oil depots is being monitored round the clock.

The oil depots are situated in the industrial belt where jute mill workers and employees are on agitation to realise their demands. "So, we have ensured top security in those areas", said KMP Commissioner Khan Saeed Hasan, expressing his determination to check any sabotage.

Intelligence sources said the red alert has been declared in the wake of deterioration in the law and order in some south-western districts including

Khulna.

Five murders took place in Kushtia from Monday till Thursday, allegedly by outlaws. An increase in criminal activities including murder and robbery marker the last week.

Law enforcers apprehended further

deterioration in law and order in the south-western districts as outlaws are active to avenge the crossfire deaths of their party men. They may also do sabotage to create anarchy in the area, an intelligence official said seeking anonymity.

Protests on against attack on newsmen

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Journalists, joined by civil society members, yesterday continued protests against attacks on media men by political cadres and terrorists.

They held rallies and brought out processions in districts, saying these are part of a plan to gag the media and thwart the nascent democracy.

In Mymensingh, a scheduled formal ceremony to hand over charges to the new office bearers of BFUJ (Bangladesh federal Union of Journalists) turned into protest programmes after the attack in Kushtia on a journalists' convention a day before in which former BJUF

president and Observer editor Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and 20 others were injured.

At a meeting held at Mymensingh Press Club auditorium, journalist leaders from different parts of the country condemned the attacks and said they are becoming prime targets of political cadres because they reveal their misdeeds.

They strongly condemned the attack in Kushtia, saying journalists will not be cowed down by attack of musclemen let loose by a ruling party lawmaker. They called upon journalists to forge unity to face the situation.

They demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the attackers.

Some 40 journalists from Chittagang, Rajshahi, Bogra, Dinajpur and newly elected executive body of BFUJ and local journalists of different organizations attended the meeting with Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury in the chair.

At a simple function in the meeting, charged were handed over to the newly elected executive body of BFUJ.

The meeting over, journalists brought out a procession in the town. The processionists chanted slogans demanding punishment to Shahidul Islam, MP, the alleged mastermind of Monday's attack in Kushtia.

The procession terminated in

front of the press club with a rally, where it was announced that June 6 will be observed across the country as a 'day to protect journalists from oppression'.

In the afternoon, a seminar on "Obstacles in Fair Journalism" was held at the press club.

Protests were also held in Rajshahi, Satkhira, Rangpur, Kurigram and some mother districts.

In Satkhira, a meeting was held at Satkhira Reporters' Club. Chaired by Kalyan Banerjee (Prothom Alo), speakers at the meeting demanded arrest and punishment to the attackers including lawmaker Shahidul Islam.

Rajshahi University (RU), the Rajshahi Union of Journalists (RUJ) held a meeting in front of the central library.

Earlier, journalists paraded the city streets and held a rally at Shaheb Bazer zero point, where speakers called upon the government and police administration to ensure safety and security of journalists.

They also threatened to launch a tougher agitation if the culprits are not punished.

Rajshahi Metropolitan Press Club, Rajshahi Press Club, Rajshahi Reporters' Unity and Rajshahi City Press Club also staged protests against the attack.

In Rangpur, members of the Reporters' Club brought out a procession and held a rally at the Court Square with its president Rafique Sarker in the chair. The rally was addressed by local leaders of Awami League and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD).



Journalists marching streets in Rangpur town yesterday protesting Monday's attack on a convention of newsmen in Kushtia.

PHOTO: STAR

ALLEGED ABUSE OF STUDENT

Defamation suit by RU teacher against VC, four others

RU CORRESPONDENT

A court in Rajshahi has issued show cause notices on Rajshahi University vice-chancellor and four others following filing of a Tk 45 lakh defamation suit by a teacher.

Sociology teacher Sabyasachi Saha filed the suit on May 24 after the university authorities temporarily suspended him on an allegation of sexual abuse of a student. The notices are returnable by June 21.

The Rajshahi Joint Judge Court on Sunday issued show cause notices on Vice-chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain, Registrar Prof Abdus Salam, Sociology departmental chairman Prof Faizar Rahman, Arts Faculty Dean Prof Muhammad Shafi and another teacher.

Sources said, a second year student of Sociology on May 7 submitted a written complaint to the department chairman Prof Faizar Rahman that she was abused by Sabyasachi Saha.

The university Syndicate at a meeting on May 10 formed a six-member committee headed by Arts Faculty Dean Prof Muhammad Shafi to probe the allegation. The authorities temporarily suspended Sabyasachi before submission of the report, the sources said.

Sabyasachi filed the defamation suit, claiming that the action was illegal.

In the suit he claimed that the allegation and action against him was part of a conspiracy by some vested quarters, who were zealous of his reputation as a good teacher.

When contacted, Prof Mohammad Shafi said the defamation suit and show cause notices will not hamper the ongoing investigation because the court has not stopped its work.

Folk singer abducted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

A folk singer was abducted from the local bus stand Monday night.

Manikganj unit president of Baul Shilpi Kalyan Samity Jalal Sarker who went to Dhamrai to perform at a folk musical programme was kidnapped on his return near Nabin Cinema Hall in Manikganj.

An unidentified youth called him at the bus stand at about 8:15 pm while others waiting in a microbus forcibly took him inside the vehicle and sped away at about 8:30 pm, family sources said.

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