

Dhaka-Sylhet rail, road links restored

From Our Correspondent

Rail and road links between Sylhet and Dhaka resumed yesterday evening after remaining snapped for two days.

Meanwhile, road communication between Sylhet and the flood affected thanas of Zakiganj, Kanaighat, Zoainghat and Biyanbazar were also restored yesterday.

However, the overall flood situation in Greater Sylhet remained static yesterday.

All the major rivers in districts registered sharp falls but were still flowing above danger levels, causing no significant change in the overall situation, according to the flood forecasting centre here.

The Surma at Sylhet was flowing 10 cm above the danger mark Monday as against 17 cm on Sunday and at Kanaighat it dropped to 76 cm from 89 cm above the red mark.

The Kushiara registered a drastic fall at the Showa point and was now flowing 8 cm above the danger level as against 52 cm on Sunday. At Amalshat point it dropped to 1.31 cm from 1.38 cm.

Low-lying areas of Fenchuganj and Balaganj still remained under water.

State Minister for Relief Lutfar Rahman Khan visited the flood-hit areas of Golapganj, Kanaighat and Sadar thanas of the district and distributed relief among the victims today.

BSS adds: An official of the Moulvibazar control room said that the water-level of the Manu river had receded and was flowing 0.57 metres above the danger mark Monday. The river was flowing at 12.32 metres at Chadinighat at 3 pm.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman today visited the flood affected areas of Moulvibazar district. He went to the Sadar, Rajnagar and Kulaura thanas. A Habiganj official said the

situation in the district had improved with water receding from the low-lying areas. The Khowai has also fallen, he said.

Sherpur
Our Sherpur Correspondent adds: With the onrush of fresh water from across the border the flood situation in Sherpur district has deteriorated.

More than 14 unions of the district have been inundated.

Over 1.50 lakh people have been affected by flash floods in Jhinaigati, Nalitabari and Sreebordi thanas.

Assam flood situation worsens

GUAHATI, June 14: Tens of thousands of people perched atop their homes or in trees today as fierce floods swept main roads, bridges and farms in three northeast Indian states, officials said, reports AFP.

"The situation is grim and the damage is colossal," said Mohit Sharma, the Revenue Minister of Assam, the principal state in the northeast India.

Rich in oil and timber, Assam has been affected worst by the flooding.

So far, seven people have been reported dead since Saturday in flooding in Assam.

Flood waters have engulfed 16 of Assam's 24 districts, sweeping vast stretches of farm and residential areas, Sharma said here in the Assam capital Guwahati.

The minister said an estimated 1.5 million Assam residents have been affected by the flooding, the worst in decades in India's remote northeast.

Flood waters have washed a total of 180,000 hectares (450,000 acres) of crops, he added.



A Bangladesh Krishak Sangram Samity rally proceeding towards the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday to submit a memorandum on its demand for reduction of diesel and pesticide prices. — Star photo

Rally against repression on women

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Mahila Parishad yesterday strongly pleaded for political solution to all sorts of repression on women around the globe.

"It's a direct blow to modern civilisation that women are being repressed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and many other parts of the world", the parishad said in a resolution adopted at a rally in the city Monday afternoon.

The rally was organised in front of the Jatiya Press Club expressing solidarity with the World Conference on Human Rights, which began in Vienna, Austria yesterday.

Chaired by the parishad chief Begum Sufia Kamal, the rally was also addressed, among others, by Bela Nabi, Rakhi Das Purakayasta and Khaleida Salahuddin. Manira Akhter Khatun read out the resolutions at the rally which was conducted by Rekha Choudhury.

The rally, in another resolution, demanded the government's full support to all clauses of the UN Charter regarding removal of discriminatory attitude against women.

It also called on the government to initiate measures for the implementation of the UN declaration in this regard.

The meeting also demanded of the authorities to establish equal rights in the society of people irrespective of gender by amending relevant laws, and even enacting new ones if needed.

The rally sought introduction of a uniform family code in the country and called for a nationwide agitation to establish human rights and stop repression on women.

The parishad leaders observed that repression on women represented the worst instances of the violation of human rights in the modern society and hoped all out success of the Vienna conference.

"Women are also human beings and human rights cannot be protected unless the rights of the females are ensured", said another of a seven-point charter of resolutions.

The rally was followed by a procession that paraded the main city thoroughfares. The processionists carried banners and placards inscribed with the messages concerning the protection of human rights.

Debate ends, voting June 20 Supplementary budget unavoidable: Govt

State Minister for Finance Mujibur Rahman yesterday said that supplementary budgets were required to meet inevitable unforeseen expenses, report UNB, BSS.

Winding up the two-day discussion on the Tk 2,237 crore supplementary budget for 1992-93 in Parliament last night, the state minister attributed the additional expenses also to the devaluation of the currency and price fluctuation in the international market.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, who took over the chair after the Magreb prayers, told the House that the supplementary budget for the current fiscal year would be placed for voting on June 20.

Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni earlier presided over the House for about six hours in two sittings.

Besides the acting leader of the opposition Abdus Samad Azad, 29 others including Deputy Minister for Shipping ABM Zahidul Huq took part in yesterday's discussions.

State Minister Mujibur Rahman refuted opposition charges that the supplementary budget is a consequence of extravagant and unplanned expenditure of the government.

"This was necessary for the welfare of the economy and the people", he said.

The minister said a supplementary budget is an inevitable matter in the financial management of the government.

Castigating the opposition's "traditionally styled" criticism of the budget, Rahman said even the Constitution permitted the practice. He suggested the opposition to be "practical".

One by one, the minister made efforts to justify the additional allocations in the supplementary budget.

Of the nearly Tk 2,237 crore supplementary budget, the demand for non-development heads was Tk 1,246 crore and the rest Tk 991 crore was for development heads.

Referring to the opposition objection to the supplementary budget for the police, the State Minister for Finance said that Taka 13.46 crore as supplementary sanction was moved in the House for expanding the strength of the police force in proportion to the population and making it more effective to deal with the law and order situation.

Referring to the observation made by Awami League member Sheikh Selim on the BDR, Rahman said that when the government had been contemplating to further strengthen the Rifles to guard the 1,700 miles long border, the Awami League wanted to make the force weaker. This may be because they want to keep the border open or to abolish it altogether for reasons best known to themselves.

He said adding: But the people in general want a more strengthened sentinel along the border.

Turning to remarks made by JSD leader Shajahan Siraj on supplementary allocation for defence, the state minister said this was necessitated for implementing the new pay scale, pension of the personnel, recruiting of new manpower and creating residential and office buildings for the officers and men.

Participating in the discussion, acting opposition leader Abdus Samad Azad said the huge size of the supplementary budget is a manifestation of the government's weak and indiscipline financial management.

He alleged that the economy of the country has been constantly suffering from stagnation.

Despite the government's campaign, Azad said, there has not been much investment from local and foreign entrepreneurs.

Criticising the Tk 130 crore additional allocation on defence head, the opposition leader said it is unfortunate that the government gave additional money to defence while withdrawing subsidies from agriculture.

Azad expressed concern at the depleting prices of food grain and cautioned that farmers would soon lose interest in farming unless they are given fair prices and other supports.

Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed, taking part in the discussions, criticised the government for what he complained keeping the various parliamentary standing committees on economic issues ineffective.

He said that expenditures in the education sector were being misused.

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury of the NDP said because of poor planning, huge expenditures in the education sector were not yielding any significant output. He criticised the government for making poor allocation for scientific research.

The other participants of the budget discussion yesterday included Shajahan Siraj (JSD), Maulana Matfur Rahman Nizami (Jamaat), Sarder Amjad Hossain (JP), Shahjahan Omar (BNP), Begum Lutfunnessa Hossain (BNP) Rashid Khan Menon (WP), Begum Khurshed Jahan Huq (BNP), Mrs S Bant Ashraf (BNP) Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim (AL), M. Nasim, opposition chief Whip, Whip Abdul Karim (BNP), and advocate Jubed Ali (AL).

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Govt clarification 'Golden handshake scheme' in rly to continue

The government in a clarification in Dhaka yesterday said it was not true that "golden handshake scheme" in the railway had stopped for shortage of funds or "train communication might face closure following voluntary retirement of skilled manpower," reports BSS.

The clarification was issued to remove confusion which might have been created by baseless and meaningless reports published in a section of the press recently.

The clarification said there is an allocation of Tk 160 crore during the current financial year of which Tk 150 crore has already been spent for settlement of dues of officials and employees of railway seeking voluntary retirement. It further stated under the scheme 8336 officials and employees had applied in the first phase, of whom the dues of 1094, have been fully settled while 80 per cent dues of 7000 others have been met. The settlement of dues of the rest is in process.

Besides, in the second phase of voluntary retirement adequate allocation has been made in the next financial year to settle the dues of 2750 officials and employees by December next, the clarification mentioned.

The clarification further said that the voluntary retirement scheme had been initiated under the recently launched railway rehabilitation programme to free the sector from deficits.

It is clearly evident, the clarification said, the surplus manpower in the railway sector is not commensurate with its income and expenditure. The voluntary retirement scheme has been introduced to overcome the situation.

Under this scheme a plan has been undertaken for phase-wise voluntary retirement of 10 thousand officials and employees from the railway. There has been spontaneous response from the officials and employees to this scheme.

The clarification said there will be 30 per cent surplus officials and employees in some areas of the railway even after settlement of dues of all those who have applied for voluntary retirement. Besides, in the event of shortage of skilled manpower in any particular field, following voluntary retirement, surplus employees from other departments will be utilised after necessary training. The clarification said there was no reason of apprehension that the train communication would face closure following voluntary retirement.

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The Midnight File

Serbs launch artillery assault on Gorazde

SARAJEVO, June 14: Bosnian Serb forces launched fierce artillery and infantry assaults on the Muslim enclave of Gorazde in eastern Bosnia on Monday and set up a fortified checkpoint on the road to Sarajevo airport, reports Reuters.

Angolan govt asks parliament to declare emergency

SAO TOME June 14: Angola's government asked parliament to declare a state of emergency today to help it deal with UNITA rebels, Angolan state radio said. The radio monitored in nearby Sao Tome and Principe, quoted Prime Minister Marcelino Moco as telling parliament his government was no longer bound by agreements made in talks with UNITA and planned to drive the rebels out of occupied cities, reports Reuters.

Killing of Somalis by UN troops regretted

MOGADISHU, June 14: The United Nations attacked on two fronts in Somalia today, launching more air strikes on suspected militia targets and hitting back against accusations Pakistani peacekeepers gunned down innocent civilians, reports Reuters.

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, addressing a human rights conference in Vienna, expressed regret over the incident but said the UN operation against the militias was nearing success.

"I believe we are reaching now... the destruction of heavy weapons of these gangs as a prerequisite to... the reconstruction of this country which has suffered so much," he said.

The UN tried to stem a rising tide of criticism over the conduct of the Pakistani troops.

A UN spokesman said gunmen loyal to Aided fired the first shots at Pakistani peacekeepers from behind a screen of women and children. Witnesses had said the Pakistanis fired first.

"Such episodes — which are not all planned — discredit the very image of the United Nations and their role and could in the long run jeopardise current peace efforts," Italian Defence Minister Fabio Fabri was quoted by Italian media as saying.

The American-based World Vision charity, Britain's Save the Children Fund and Medicines Sans Frontieres of Belgium have all voiced concern at the effect the killings will have on future relief work.

In Nairobi, a major relief agency called on the United Nations to stop killing Somali civilians or risk alienating the people it aims to help.

The international charity CARE, saying publicly what many relief workers say only in private, condemned air raids in Mogadishu and shooting by peacekeepers during anti-UN protests.

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Akhtaruzzaman

From Page 1 Col 8

June 12. Babu did not surrender but instead sought bail which was rejected.

Leading businessman Humayun Zahir was shot to death at his Dhanmondi residence in the city on April 8 last.

Meanwhile, our Chittagong Correspondent says: Chittagong police yesterday, in a bid to arrest Babu, launched a drive both at his village and city homes, but could not locate him.

Police said during the drive the movable property of the accused were attached on orders issued by Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court, Dhaka.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police, aided by a Magistrate, raided the city residence of Akhtaruzzaman at Sarson Road under Kotwali PS Monday evening while Anwana thana police went to his village home at Hafidar.

Chittagong police received both the warrants of arrest for Babu and the court order for attachment of his property yesterday but could not implement it the same day in the absence of a Magistrate.

Meanwhile UNB reports: Akhtaruzzaman Babu has transferred all his property through registered deeds to his family members ostensibly to avoid attachment by the government, police said.

Police Monday raided the Awami League leader's hill top house in the city but found all his property transferred in the name of his family members.

ECNEC may

From Page 1 Col 7

medical colleges from which about 1000 doctors pass out every year.

But the total strength of 22 thousand doctors in the country is still inadequate for the enormous needs of the country in the health sector.

At present only one doctor is available for every 5000 people.

Health Ministry sources said the Director (Health Education) has been assigned to coordinate and implement the project for setting up of the five new medical colleges.

The BNP government, back in the early 1980s, had decided to establish three more medical colleges — in Dhaka, Bogra and Khulna — which were later shelved by the Ershad government.

Initially, MBBS classes at the Comilla, Bogra and Faridpur medical colleges are planned at the local Medical Assistant Training Schools (MATS) while the Dinajpur and Khulna colleges will start functioning in rented buildings, the sources said.

The government has also decided to install one nurses training centre at Khulna on an emergency basis for increasing the number of trained nurses. Health Ministry sources added.



Minor boy recovered

By Staff Correspondent

A minor was recovered by police Monday from the sidewalk along the National Press Club in the city.

Witnesses said, the boy Ataul, 8, was crying when a person handed him over to a police officer on-duty.

Ramna Police, when contacted, said that Ataul could only say that he hailed from Rangpur. A kidnapping case was lodged with Ramna Police Station.

Ataul was reportedly kidnapped from Rangpur ten days back, sources said.