

Padma, Mahananda on rise

# 80000 marooned in Chapainawabganj

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Aug 17: Flood situation worsened further with some 80,000 people marooned in the district as the Padma and the Mahananda continued to rise in last 24 hours till 6 pm today (Wednesday), reports UNB.

Officials said the Padma was flowing 200 cm above its danger mark while the Mahananda was 23 cm over its danger level. In last 24 hours, water level in Padma rose by 18 cm at Shubganj point while the Mohananda 13 cm at Nawabganj point.

They said 223 square km in five wards of the municipal area of Chapainawabganj town and Sadar Shubganj thana went under water during the period. Flood water also washed away some 3541 thatched houses and partially damaged

nearly 5,587 others. Standing crops on about 1,000 hectares of land were submerged raising the total to 12,000 hectares since flooding swept through the district.

Three primary schools in the two thanas, where some affected people had taken shelter, also were submerged in water, compounding people's sufferings.

Meanwhile, to make the situation further worse, diarrhoea broke out in parts of the flood-hit area where some 22 people were reportedly infected in last 24 hours.

LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukder today (Wednesday) visited the flood affected areas and talked to the people. He assured them of all possible help in facing the calamity.

Writ against JS boycotters

## HC rejects Maudud's plea

A petition of Jatiya Party leader Barrister Maudud Ahmed seeking issuance of rule upon the Speaker and the Secretary of Parliament in the writ against the Opposition's boycott of Parliament was rejected yesterday by the High Court, reports UNB.

The division bench of the High Court comprising Justice Kazi Shafuddin and Justice Kazi A T Manwar Uddin also rejected the prayer for two weeks extension for hearing of the original writ and set August 23 for the hearing.

While rejecting Maudud's petition, the court observed that the Speaker is immune from any court of law.

The learned court had issued rule upon the Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina, MP. Jatiya Party leader Barrister Maudud Ahmed, MP and Jamaat-e-Islami leader Matiur Rahman Nizami, MP, upon a writ filed by Advocate Anwar Hossain Khan on June 26.

The petitioner said the opposition leaders, by boycotting Parliament since March 1, had been violating their constitutional obligations. The Speaker

and the Secretary of Parliament were also made parties in the writ for giving unopposed and other benefits to the boycotting Opposition MPs.

The court rejected Maudud's plea that the presence of the Speaker and the Parliament Secretary was needed for proper adjudication of the case.

The JP leader had contended that there was no bar in issuing a rule on the Speaker. The issue raised in the writ is not a legal or constitutional one, rather it is a political issue and should be resolved politically, he argued.

Maudud expressed his suspicion that the writ petition might have been filed on instigation from the ruling party and said the Opposition, too, might be tempted to take a similar move against the Prime Minister for her absence from most of the sittings of parliament.

BSS adds: Later, in reply to a question from journalists, Maudud Ahmed said he would file an application for leave to appeal before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the judgement of the High Court.

## Trial of Ershad in JP Office Case

### Cross-examination of PW-2 completed

The Special Judge's Court trying deposed President Hussain Muhammad Ershad in a corruption case was told yesterday that repair and renovation works of House No 104 in Road No 3 of Dhamondi Residential Area, which was used as the Jatiya Party office, was done prior to completion of official formalities, reports BSS.

Shahiduddin Ahmed, Superintendent Engineer, Housing and Settlement Directorate and a prosecution witness, said during cross-examination yesterday that the works done with government money were taken up in March 1990 and completed by August that year. The tenders for the works were, however, passed only in January 1991, he told the court.

Zinat Ara, First Additional District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka who was presiding over the court, adjourned the hearing till September 7 on completion of the cross-examination of Ahmed, an Executive Engineer of the PWD during the renovation work of the JP office.

Former Works Minister Mostafa Jamal Haider and former acting Works Secretary Abdur Rouf are co-accused in this case. Special Case No 50 of 1993, better known as the Jatiya Party Office Case.

Ershad has been charged with abusing his official position in ordering the renovation and refurbishing of the house in question (an abandoned property), causing a loss of nearly Taka 83 lakh to the state exchequer.

During cross-examination, conducted by ATM Akbar, defence counsel for accused Rouf, the PW-2 admitted to inviting a tender for the work as the then Executive Engineer. But he added that the same was approved by the duly constituted committee. He also admitted accepting one signature. There was no mention of Rouf's name in the documents submitted before the court.

Before the actual business of the court could start, defence lawyers raised some objections relating to change of premises of the Special Court and alleged harassment of the de-

From Our Correspondent SYLHET, Aug 17: The flash flood situation in four thanas of Sylhet has further improved with the recession of waters from the affected areas.

Water has also started receding from the crop lands in Gowainghat, Karimghat, Jaintpur, Companiganj and Beaniabazar thanas.

However, the river Surma at Karimghat was flowing 44 cm above the danger-level while the Kushiyara river at Amolshid was flowing 56 cm above the danger-level. At Sheola Ghat, it was flowing 24 cm above the danger-level today.

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A helpless mother with her critically injured child waits for doctors at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday, the first day of a two-day doctors strike. — Star photo

## Doctors' strike

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At the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, an unidentified male patient was seen screaming in pain with his badly cut ankle dangling loosely.

Run over by a train, the man was brought to the DMCH at about 4 pm but there was none to provide him urgent medical care.

Our Sir Salimullah Medical College Hospital correspondent reports that only seven emergency patients were treated on the first day of the doctors' strike.

Besides, more than a hundred patients returned from the outdoor of the SSMCH, the report said.

Meanwhile, the striking doctors yesterday held a demonstration in front of the Health Directorate at Mohakhali to force the government to accept their demands.

### 23 injured in Sirajganj clash

SIRAJGANJ, Aug 17: At least 23 people were injured in a clash between students and bus workers over bus fair at Meghali bus stand on the Kazipur-Sirajganj Road today (Wednesday), reports UNB.

The clash occurred after some students allegedly refused to pay fair and the bus workers forcibly took the students to Meghali bus stand instead of allowing them to get down at Kazipur Munsur Ali College bus stand.

The Attorney General's office has refuted a report published in a section of the press Wednesday that the Attorney General has been refrained from conducting cases against deposed President Hussain Muhammad Ershad, reports UNB.

Clarifying the position, a press release last night said the circular of the Law Ministry quoted in the report was issued in September last year. The circular was neither executed nor the question of its execution ever arose because it was considered illegal by the office of the Attorney General.

More than a dozen leaders including Moudud Ahmed MP, Kazi Zafar Ahmed MP, Monirul Huq Chowdhury MP, and Fazle Rabbi MP spoke at the meeting, party sources said.

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