

Not a dot of dry land in a flood-hit union

GAIBANDHA, June 27: Not single home has been left habitable in a vast locality in Sadar thana, hardest hit by the flash flood in the northern district, reports UNB.

Maximum houses there damaged while others submerged.

The riverside union's around 15,000 people have taken shelter either on the roofs of their inundated houses or on the Brahmaputra Flood Control Embankment.

The people in utter distress said they lost their household appliances and domestic animals as the entire area is awash with water that poured in through breaches in embankment since June 20.

Not a dot of land is dry in the union, where crops also were washed away by swirling waters.

According to the TNO, flood situation in Haldia and Zumarbari unions has been improving since Monday night. But in Sadar, Sundarjani and Fulchhari thanas, the situation still remained serious.

Our correspondent from Sherpur says: Hundreds of flood affected people are passing days without food, drinking water and medicine in the district.

At least 15 unions of five

Arafat agrees on partial Israeli pullout from WB

JERUSALEM, June 27: PLO chief Yasser Arafat agreed to accept a partial Israeli troop pullback in the West Bank, to be followed by Palestinian elections and a further withdrawal, negotiators on both sides said today, reports AP.

Arafat's decision helped resolve a major sticking point in the Oslo II talks. Until now, it was believed that elections would only be held once troops withdrew from all Palestinian towns and villages in the West Bank.

Negotiators face a Saturday deadline for reaching agreement on a troop withdrawal and elections.

"Some thorny issues are being postponed really for the last minute," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Tuesday. "But I do hope that

Trade delegation Chamber of Commerce at Stockholm

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT STOCKHOLM where a number of industrialists and representatives from the trading houses attended.

During the conference Salman F Rahman audio-visually apprised the audience about the prospect of investment and export from Bangladesh. The participants showed keen interest on Bangladesh.

Bangladesh ambassador emphasised on the purchase of public shares/stocks of big Bangladeshi companies by the expatriate Bangladeshis as "our stock market is doing very well as compared to many developed/developing countries and has shown upward trend during the last one year."

Ambassador Gyasuddin said: "Substantial public offerings are made by the big companies and the demand for those shares are quite high. This could be most lucrative and the easiest way of investment by the expatriate Bangladeshis."

The FBCCI president along with the ambassador and the delegation members also called on Swedish Environment Minister Anna Lindh, who received the delegation on behalf of the Prime Minister, now in France for a meeting.

During the meeting, Salman Rahman informed the Swedish minister about the latest pace of economic development, particularly the GDP growth, trade and industry and also the environmental problem in Bangladesh.

The delegation left Stockholm yesterday for Paris.

2 JCD activists Boalkhali thana on Monday night

Police and JCD sources said a group of miscreants equipped with arms entered the house of Jasimuddin and shot him dead.

The miscreants also beat his father.

Jasimuddin, 27, was an active worker of the JCD Charandeep unit. The body was sent for autopsy. The motive of the killing was not known, the sources said.

Father of Jasimuddin filed a case with Boalkhali police against 19 persons.



The bus rammed an electric pole after the driver lost control of the vehicle when it came under attack by a group of JP supporters during hartal hours at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

JP hartal

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A clash between police and pro-hartal activists took place at Darus Salam Road in Mirpur Section 1 at 11 in the morning. The skirmish lasted for about two hours, leaving several people including two policemen injured.

Five leaders of the Jatiya Chhatra Samaj, including Shamsul Huda, Shamsul Alam and Rafiq were picked from the Purana Paltan area where a powerful bomb went off in the morning leaving a taxi driver injured, according to one report.

An autorickshaw was set on fire at Maghbazar at 7:30 am, while pickets burnt two 'tempoes' and damaged several vehicles at Syedabad between 8:00 and 9:00 am.

Separate processions were brought out in different city areas during the hartal. Party leaders Barrister Moudud Ahmed and Anwar Hossain Manju led a procession at Mahakhali at about 9:00 am.

'Mubarak's assailants are Arabs'

ADDIS ABABA, June 27: Photographs of the two dead men who allegedly tried to assassinate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak showed they were white, reports AFP.

Ethiopian newspapers today printed photographs of the two men killed in a gun-battle with Mubarak's bodyguards and Ethiopian security guards. They are lying on the ground and each has a Kalashnikov at his side.

Ethiopian authorities have identified the assailants as having Arab features, but have not given their names or nationalities.

Meanwhile, Iran today denied Israeli charges that it was behind the bid to assassinate Mubarak, saying the 'big lie' was an attempt to destroy fledgling ties between Tehran and Cairo.

Pak HC official beaten up by Indian police

ISLAMABAD, June 27: Pakistan today expressed its regrets over the physical assault and maltreatment by Indian police on an official of Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi, reports Xinhua.

According to an announcement of the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi Monday, Ibrahim Awan was physically assaulted and beaten up by Indian police while travelling from Amritsar to New Delhi by train Sunday.

When contacted over telephone, the BNP Secretary General would only say that the present political situation and other related issues were discussed with the Prime Minister.

He, however, admitted that they had failed to reach any decision on the main topic of discussion, namely, the question of the boycotting Opposition MPs.

After yesterday's meeting, a senior BNP leader hinted that Speaker Razzak Ali is likely to make his long overdue statement informing the House about the position of the absenting MPs following the passage of the 1995-96 budget, expected tomorrow.

The Speaker was unavailable for comment last night.

Speaker partisan politics, especially since he comes from one of them

Already, through the decision on the resignation of the Opposition MPs, the Speaker has subject himself to considerable controversy. Now with this inordinate delay in informing the House about the 90 days' absence, the Speaker is clearly exposing himself to claims of succumbing to party pressure.

The apparent gain from his ill-advised action is that the current budget will appear to have passed in so-called 'full House'. But nothing could be more ill-conceived than this. For whenever the Speaker chooses to 'inform', the day of 'vacation of seats' will be from the date when 90 days will have been completed. This will obviously be before the budget will have passed. So the Speaker should realise that there is nothing really to be gained from delaying his action. It is only creating suspicion about the Speaker's 'political agenda'. Once this suspicion grows, his considerable achievements in many other fields will also come under shadow of questions.

So we strongly urge the Speaker to do what he has been hinting to the press all these days that he will. He should not let any consideration to force him to desist from doing what he knows to be his duty.

Ten more killed in Karachi violence

KARACHI, June 27: At least 10 people were killed in Karachi today as Pakistan's southern port city struggled back to normality after a three-day strike called by an ethnic faction, reports Reuter.

The opposition Mohajir Quami Movement (MQM) called off the strike on Monday night, saying it would stage regular protests every Friday and Saturday until its demands were met.

Police said the tortured bodies of two men had been found in the Gulbahar district with their hands bound behind them.

The corpse of a young man who had been treated in a similar way was dumped in a graveyard in the Azizabad area. Two chopped-up bodies were found in sacks early on Tuesday with notes accusing them of being informers.

A retired policeman was shot dead in district west and four other people, including a woman, were killed in various incidents in district central, a police spokesman said.

The latest killings brought the death toll for June to 287, the highest monthly figure for several years.

AIP adds: Karachi snipers silenced their guns today long enough for the population to form long queues outside food shops after four days of rampant violence that left at least 90 dead.

The respite came after the main party representing Karachi's Urdu-speaking community of several million people halted three days of protests.

Following the MQM's announcement late Monday, markets and shops reopened.

BNP stalwarts

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Constitution the President may request for such interpretation.

Meeting sources said the BNP is preparing for elections in November. Party leaders suggested that the date for the next general elections would be declared well before it becomes mandatory for the Election Commission to announce the schedule for by-elections to the seats falling vacant because of the disqualification of the Opposition MPs.

Party Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder, Deputy Leader of the House Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Chief Whip Khandaker Dewar Hossain, Communications Minister Oli Ahmed, Commerce and Information Minister Shamsul Islam, Food and Agriculture Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and Education Minister Jamrudin Sircar attended the meeting.

One meeting source said that Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali who was invited was present at the meeting which lasted for more than three hours beginning at 4:30 pm.

Barrister Salam Talukder, however, said that he did not see the Speaker in the meeting.

No firm decision was taken at the meeting, one source said, adding that the Prime Minister may hold a similar meeting within the next couple of days.

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Arafat's child to be born in Paris

PARIS, June 27: PLO chief Yasser Arafat's wife Soha is expecting the couple's first child, due in the coming weeks, to be born in Paris, her family said today, reports AFP.

But preparations for a family celebration have been marred by the death of her father here on Monday after a long illness.

"If the child is a boy, it will be called 'Ammar' after his father," said a sister of the mother-to-be referring to Yasser Arafat's nom de guerre Abu Ammar. "If it is a girl, she will be called 'Zahwa' (after Arafat's mother)."

Soha Arafat, 33, has already written a book — published Wednesday — about her own childhood, called "Child of Palestine."

In a simple, straightforward style, it tells the story of her own childhood, her family's life in British-ruled Palestine before 1948, and the forthcoming Israeli occupation.

Son ousts Emir of Qatar

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the seat of power in Doha which Sheikh Hamad had taken over some weeks ago, leaving his father to operate from his residence at the Rayyan Palace.

First among the well-wishers shown was his brother and Interior Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al-Thani. Other senior members of the ruling family came to pledge allegiance, greeting Sheikh Hamad with a kiss on the nose or hand. The new Emir, who was army chief, was flanked by army officers and residents' said security in Doha was tight today a few hours after the news broke.

Sheikh Khalifa's fourth son, Sheikh Mohammad who is also Finance Minister, is believed to be with him in Geneva. He has three other sons, but they are all youngsters.

Residents said troops ringed Rayyan Palace today and Doha Airport was closed for a few hours but reopened as calm was reported in the city.

The new Emir is credited with leading Qatar's ambitious industrial modernisation but the independent foreign policies he has inspired have made him enemies within the Arab world.

Qatar has befriended radical Iran across the Gulf, re-stored ties with Gulf war foe Iraq, signed a defence pact with the United States, and gone further than any other Gulf state in normalising relations with Israel — policies largely at odds with those of Saudi Arabia, the dominant Gulf Arab state.

Saudi officials have privately long blamed the former Crown Prince for the tense Doha-Riyadh ties, especially since a bloody border clash three years ago.

AFP says, Qatar placed its troops on maximum alert along the border with Saudi Arabia today, Arab diplomatic sources said.

The measure was taken shortly before the coup.

Meanwhile, the Arab League said today the ouster of the Emir of Qatar by his son was an 'internal matter' and the League would not intervene.

"This is an internal matter and the League's charter says it does not intervene in member countries' internal affairs," a League official said here.

Medicine traders put off strikes

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists Samity (BCDS) has put off its planned strikes today and on July 2, 3 in the wake of an ad-interim injunction ordered earlier by a court.

In an executive committee meeting of the association yesterday the BCDS took decision to suspend their strike programmes for the time being, the association president Md Sadequr Rahman said.

Earlier, BCDS observed a half-day strike in medicine stores throughout the country on June 26 protesting a government order postponing the biennial election of the association.

Shovan class of train upgraded

Railway authorities have abolished the 'Shovan' class of the Dhaka-Chittagong inter-city train upgrading it to the 'Shulav' class with immediate effect. The fare of the 'Shulav' class will, however, remain unchanged at Tk 100.

The system will also be introduced in other inter-city routes in phases after procurement of more bogies, reports UNB.

BCTA concerned at govt decision

Leaders of Bangladesh College Teachers' Association (BCTA) yesterday expressed their concern over the government decision to send teachers to "distant" colleges to conduct forthcoming HSC examinations, reports UNB.

"It will rather complicate the situation further," BCTA president Zahurul Islam and general secretary Kazi Faruq Ahmed said in a statement issued here yesterday.

They also called upon the government not to engage teachers of one college in another one, during the examination scheduled to begin on July 6.

Four die

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galal, 50, and Shankar, 30.

Another MMCH employee, Narayan, was admitted to the same hospital in critical condition.

According to police, all of them heavily took fermented wine at the SK Hospital premises in the small hours today and fell seriously sick.

They were rushed to the SK Hospital where two of them expired. After being taken to MMCH, another two breathed their last.

A UD case has been filed in this connection.

Taslima's trial

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Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, A K M Kamaluddin postponed the hearing of the case for a third time yesterday after Taslima's lawyer Barrister Sara Hossain prayed for an adjournment on the ground that a petition is lying with the High Court. The CMM's court fixed July 4 for the next hearing.

The High Court ruling came after Taslima Nasrin disputed a government permission that allows a lower court to try her on a charge of blasphemy.

The government must grant a special permission for prosecution because Taslima's alleged offence was committed in a foreign country where she made her remarks on the Quran, Barrister Amirul Islam told the High Court yesterday.

The permission was invalid because it was signed by a low-ranking official of the Ministry of Home, Islam submitted.

"The permission was not signed by a duly authorised officer and the official of the Home Ministry who issued the permission was not entitled to do so," Barrister Islam argued.

The Midnight File

2 Qatari ministers to meet deposed Emir in S Arabia

DUBAI, June 27: Qatar's interior and foreign ministers are expected to meet their deposed Emir, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad al-Thani, in Saudi Arabia at the request of Riyadh, Gulf diplomats said today. They said Interior Minister Sheikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa al-Thani — brother of the new Emir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani and Foreign Minister Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr al-Thani were asked by Saudi Arabia to go there to meet the ousted Emir, who is now in Geneva. The two ministers left for Jeddah with a message from the new Emir to Saudi King Fahd, reports Reuter.

Move to avert confidence vote in Russia

MOSCOW, June 27: Russian politicians said today that a face-saving compromise was taking shape to avert a parliamentary confidence vote in the government that could lead to early elections. Yegor Gaider, head of the liberal Russia's choice faction, told reporters a deal was being studied for the lower house to hold a vote of no-confidence on Saturday — as opposed to a confidence motion, reports Reuter.

Growth in Industrial sector

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per cent from 2.4 and other services to 10 per cent from 6.2.

National savings as a percentage of GDP rose to 15.8 in 94-95 from 90-91's 10.9.

Total investment as a percentage of GDP rose to 15 per cent from 11.5 in 90-91. Private sector investment, which was at public sector's level in 90-91 increased by over 20 per cent in 94-95.

Inflation came down significantly over the year. It is now 4.0 per cent from 8.9 in 90-91.

The Review pointed out, in recent times the price of food grains rose as agriculture output declined due to drought in the northern regions last year.

The general wage index in 1990-91 was 4 per cent which rose to 4.8 during the first eight months of the 94-95 fiscal. The accumulated growth rate was 20 per cent. In the manufacturing sector the wage grew to 7.7 per cent in 94-95 from 4.9 in 90-91 but in the agriculture sector it decreased to 3.7 from 6.1 in 90-91.

The Review said 66 per cent of the total labour force were engaged in agriculture, 13 per cent in industries and the rest in other sectors.

The revenue GDP ratio rose to 12 per cent in 1993-94 from 9.6 in 90-91. This ratio is estimated to rise to 13 per cent in 94-95.

The fiscal deficit to GDP ratio declined to 5.9 in 93-94 from 90-91's 7.2.

The total debt repayment declined by 13 per cent. In 90-91 the country paid back US dollar 586.8 million. In 93-94 it declined to 512.4 million.

The total foreign debt of the country rose by 21 per cent to 15373.4 million dollar in 93-94 from 12713.8 million in 90-91.

Hasina

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Hasina said the Prime Minister, burning, expensive fuel, flew to some flood-hit places by helicopter to 'show the people'. The cost of the fuel could have been spent for the flood victims to mitigate their sufferings, she said.

She alleged that the ruling party does not care for the welfare of the people, it is always busy with protecting its own interest.

The BNP has established a 'one-party Parliament' to protect its chair, she said, adding "there is no Parliament in the world which is run without the opposition."

Hasina said this government did not allow them to speak of the people's problems in Parliament and so the opposition quit the House and embarked on a movement to establish the rights of the people.

The opposition leader asked the government to send adequate relief goods and provide short term loans for the people of the flood affected areas. She suggested that preventive measures be taken before the outbreak of any epidemic. She also urged the government to provide sufficient pure drinking water and medicine to the affected people.

Awami League leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mannan, Zillur Rahman, Dewan Farid Gazi, Suranjit Sen-gupta, Nurul Islam Nahid and Humayun Rashid Chowdhury accompanied the AL chief during the visit.

Earlier on her arrival here, Hasina visited the mazar of Hazrat Shah Jalal (RA) in the town and offered فاتھا there. Her sister Sheikh Rehana, Rehana's son Rezwan Mujib Siddiqi and daughter Rupanti were present.

Tk 13.11 cr B'baria poura budget

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, June 27: The Brahmanbaria pourasava has approved a Tk 13,10,73,565 budget with an expenditure of Tk 12,62,37,816 for the fiscal year 1995-96.

The budget shows a surplus in total resources including government grants and aid to the tune of Tk 3835433.

Pourasava chairman Al Mamun Sarkar announced the budget here today.

Col Kamaluddin

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maluddin arrested in connection with the sensational Manzur Murder Case.

In his prayer, the investigating officer informed the court that substantial evidence existed implicating Kamaluddin in the unexplained death of General Manzur inside the Chittagong cantonment on the night of June 2, 1981 while in army custody following his arrest after a failed coup in which the then president Ziaur Rahman was assassinated.

Following his arrest by the CID investigators on June 18 Kamaluddin was placed in police remand for questioning.

With the naming of Kamaluddin the number of accused in the case now rises to five. The other accused are jailed former president H M Ershad, ex-army intelligence chief Maj Gen Abdul Latif, Col (ret'd) Shamsur Rahman and Maj (ret'd) Kazi Emdadul Haque.

The hearing of the case is scheduled to resume on July 1 in the court of the CMM, Chittagong.

The accused are expected to be produced in court on that day.

BCS (Rly) criticises ADB-funded restructure plan

By Staff Correspondent

The BCS Railway Engineers' Association has criticised the proposed Railway Restructure Programme saying "it will weaken the organisation and put it backward."

The proposed ADB-funded programme which involves five tiers instead of three will pose enormous barriers in the restructure process. It will not benefit the system, the association has said.

The present 'wrecked' condition of the railway is due to inadequate injection of funds in comparison to the private road transport sector, the Association said after a review meeting here recently.

The association called upon the authorities to revive the Railway Board in line with the main infrastructure proposed by railway officials in April this year.

Revised MOU

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bers objected to the involvement of NGOs in the monitoring role.

Immediately after the rejection, the US-based Child Labour Coalition threatened to launch a boycott campaign against Bangladeshi garments in the American market. But it later agreed to postpone the campaign after the BGMEA agreed to negotiate for a revised MOU.