The Daily Star

DHAKA SUNDAY, AUGUST 13, 1995

Flash floods hit four thanas in Sylhet

By Staff Correspondent

Flash food triggered by downpour and onrush of upstream waters have inundated vast low-lying areas of Gowainghat, Jaintapur, Kanaighat and Companyganj thanas of Sylhet district, according to reports reaching here yesterday.

Our Staff Correspondent from Sylhet reports: The direct road communication between Sylhet and Gowainghat thanas and Tamabil has been snapped as flood waters submerged roads near Jafflong since yesterday morning. Earlier about 200 dwelling houses were devoured due to the severe erosion by the river Jafflong and Plain.

Transplanted Aman paddy and seedbed on several thousand acres of land has already gone under water, source said.

The badly affected areas are Rustampur, Purba Jafflong, Pashchim Jafflong, Alirgaon, Nandirgaon, Toakul, Lengura and Fatehpur unions of Gowainghat thana.

More than five thousand stone quarry labourers have become unemployed as stone collection had already been suspended for the last two days in Ballaghat, Bichhnakandi and Sripur Stone Quarry in Gowainghat and Jaintapur thanas.

Our Staff Correspondent reports from Chittagong: Incessant rainfall has swamped low-lying areas and some city streets paralysing normal life.

Low-lying areas in Chawkbazar, Katalganj, Agrabad, Chaktai, Bakalia, Bibirhat, Raozan, Fatikchhari, Anwara and Banghkhali — have gone under water. Met office recorded 147 mm rainfall during the last 27 hours ending out 9 pm yesterday.

Traffic was thin on the roads and highways while people were forced to stay indoors.

Supply of essentials to the city's markets were also affected, traders said.

Hasina

From Page 1

legitimacy after resignation of 142 opposition MPs. But the BNP is not dissolving Parliament despite demands from the opposition, only to cling to power, Hasina said.

Habibur Rahman Azad, a JP leader and former chairman of Kalkini Upazila in Madaripur formally joined the AL at the rally.

Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to go back to the capital tomorrow (Sunday).

Chinese Vice FM due Tuesday

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan arrives here August 15 on a three-day official visit, officials said yesterday, reports UNB.

He will hold talks with Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan, which will cover bilateral matters and regional and international problems.

Foreign Office sources said the main purpose of his visit is to review Dhaka-Beijing ties as well as regional and international issues of common concern.

The Chinese Vice Minister is expected to call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia. He will also meet Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister.

A new alliance emerges Aug 23

By Staff Correspondent

A new political alliance comprising Ganotantri Party, Communist Kendra and Gano Azadi League will emerge on August 23 with the objective of forging unity amongst the democratic and progressive political parties, says a press release.

The manifesto of the proposed alliance will be announced today at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club at 11 in the morning.

AL warns of hartals

From Page 1

government." "The last misdeed was done by the present CEC by deferring by-elections," he said.

"We have nothing to demand from the government of Khaleda Zia. We will announce the next course of movement on August 16 to unseat the government and to establish people's franchise," he added.

Abdul Mannan said the country was facing calamity caused by this government not by nature. He called for toppling the government through a massive movement as was done in the past.

Abdur Razzak said the BNP government has set an unique example of using the Election Commission to prolong its power.

Tofael Ahmed said the country had been plunged into a deep crisis by the government. The Speaker violated the Constitution by rejecting the resignations of Opposition MPs and the CEC acted at the will of the government by deferring by-elections, he said. "We can not participate in any election under the present Chief Election Commissioner because he may declare BNP men elected in as many seats as the government would want."

Abdul Jalil called for intensifying the movement for resignation of the Prime Minister and elections under a non-party caretaker administration.

Mohammad Nasim called upon the people to prepare for a relentless movement. "We will call continuous hartals in coming days. It will be our final programme to topple the government," he said.

Suranjit Sengupta demanded appointment of a new CEC in consultation with the Opposition. Awami League will not participate in any election under the present Chief Election Commissioner.

Mohammad Hanif said the Parliament had become ineffective, but the government was staging a drama the last episode of which was "natural calamity," he said.

The rally over, a procession was brought out which paraded different city streets defying inclement weather. The procession ended in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

8 killed in road mishaps

From Page 1

Of the injured, Abdul Latif, 25, Neel Komol, 32, Anwar, 35, Rabiul, 18, Ahsan, 28, Osman Gani, 40, Shafiqul, 62, Anil Chandro, 48, Noor Jahan, 35, Majeda, 37, and Bhobesh Chandra, 35, were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

UNB adds, an activist of the Awami League backed Chhatra League was killed in a road accident at Islampur in Dhamrai thana.

Witnesses said a Dhaka-bound bus from Aricha ran over Jahangir, 20, when he was crossing the Dhaka-Aricha highway at about 8:30 am.

Police said angry students put barricades on the highway following the accident, blocking movement of vehicular traffic till 12 noon.

In another accident, an unidentified man aged about 40 was crushed under the wheels of a truck at Chakrabarti on Nabiganj-Kaliakoir road this afternoon.

The two bodies were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

BSS adds: Abdullah-Al-Harun Chowdhury, president of the board of editors of the Dainik Bangladesher Swadhinata, his son, daughter and driver were seriously injured in a road accident at Mirersarai on Dhaka-Chittagong highway, his family and hospital source said.

Abdullah-Al-Harun Chowdhury and his family members met with the accident when their private car bound for Dhaka was hit by a speeding truck coming from opposite direction.

They were critically injured and rushed to the Holy Crescent Hospital at Foy's Lake. His son and daughter received serious head injuries while the right hand of Abdullah-Al-Harun Chowdhury was almost broken, hospital sources said.

Chowdhury, who is also an Awami League leader, was going to Tungipara to attend the programme in connection with the death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15.

Meanwhile, Abdullah Al-Noman, Minister for Fisheries and Livestock and younger brother of Abdullah Al Harun Chowdhury visited the injured persons at the hospital.

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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Maleka Begum addressing a press conference on the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. (From L-R) Professor Nazma Chowdhury, Ayesha Khanom and Shaheen Anam are also seen. — Star photo

Govt urged to fully endorse UN convention on women

By Staff Correspondent

Leading women activists yesterday urged the government to endorse all clauses of the UN Convention for Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) before the next World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Briefing newsmen about the National Convention of the CEDAW sub-committee in Bangladesh starting today, the sub-committee joint convenor Jahanara Haq said the Bangladesh government is one of the signatories of the CEDAW except clauses 2, 13(A), 16(A) and (F).

"We want the government to endorse all the clauses before the Beijing conference for ensuring equality of women in our country," said the joint convenor of the CEDAW sub-committee for National Preparatory Committee of the Beijing NGO Forum '95 at a press conference at the National Press Club auditorium. "If necessary the laws must be reformed or changed to ensure women's equality," she added.

Other members of the CEDAW sub-committee present at the press briefing at the National Press Club, were chairperson Prof Nazma Chowdhury, Rasheda K Chowdhury, Maleka Begum, Ayesha Khanam and Shaheen Anam. They asked for the "spirit of the Constitution to be reflected in the treatment of women in this country," and termed today's conference a "Conference of Commitment."

Foreign Minister ASM Mustafizur Rahman will attend the concluding session of today's conference, when recommendations of the CEDAW sub-committee will be presented. Grameen Bank founder Prof Muhammad Yunus will inaugurate the opening session this morning.

Dr Kamal

From Page 1

election and then a government be formed through national consensus like South Africa.

Dr Kamal said the government has failed to resolve various problems, like Farakka, campus terrorism, drought and flood.

The Gano Forum president said election under a neutral caretaker government will be acceptable to all democratic forces and this is the only way to resolve the present political crisis.

Jamaat

From Page 1

manded that the 'ineffective parliament' be dissolved and the government resign to pave the way for general elections under a caretaker government.

"The agitation will continue until our demand for a caretaker government to conduct free and fair polls is realised," he said.

Presided over by city Jamaat Ameer ATM Azharul Islam, the rally was also addressed by Ali Ahsan M Mujahid, Maulana Abu Taher Mohammad Masum, Mohammad Aminul Islam and Masiul Alam.

The rally was followed by a procession.

BCL calls strike

From Page 1

alleged that the history of liberation war was being distorted in some programmes in Radio and TV.

Meanwhile, the Ganotantrik Chhatra Oikya, a front of eight left-leaning student organisations at a rally on the Dhaka University campus urged the students to observe a two-day strike at DU on August 13 and 14 demanding repeal of the "discriminatory" admission rule.

Under the rule, wards of teachers, officers and employees of Dhaka University become eligible for admission into the university by just appearing at the admission test.

'Wait and see' policy

BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukdar told reporters at his Baily Road residence yesterday that the standing committee would meet soon to discuss the latest political development and the party's next course of action.

Asked about the opposition parties' threat for launching a fresh agitation, he said they were always carrying an anti-government agitations and are now speaking of the same once again. "We'll also take up programmes to inform the people of our stand."

A source in the BNP told this correspondent the next meeting of the party's standing committee would concentrate on the Opposition's fresh agitation and the party's strategy to face it. It might also discuss the possibility of fresh talks with the Opposition parties, particularly the AL, he added.

It may be recalled that the executive committee of the BNP, which met earlier this month, had authorised the standing committee to decide on the party's next course of action in the present context. Although various party sources said that the standing committee would meet soon, no date has yet been fixed for the meeting.

Meanwhile, after yesterday's 'demonstration day' rally, the designated leaders of the AL met at the Kalabagan residence of party's presidium member Abdus Samad Azad to discus the fresh programmes.

According to meeting sources, the programmes include a series of hartals later this month and also other forms of agitations like blockades next months.

A leader, who attended the meeting, told The Daily Star last night that the details of the programmes would be finalised in consultation with the other two opposition parties, after AL chief Sheikh Hasina's return to the capital. Hasina is expected to return from Tungipara today.

The designated leaders of the AL, JP and Jamaat are scheduled to meet again today, Opposition sources said.

Restaurant ransacked

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Aug 12: A group of youths ransacked a restaurant, beat up its manager and snatched away Tk 6,500 late last night.

The youths went on rampage when the manager asked for the payment of their bills.

DU dean polls tomorrow

By DU Correspondent

The election of deans of the seven faculties of Dhaka University for a two-year term will be held tomorrow.

As usual, three panels — Blue, White and Pink — will contest the polls.

The pro-Awami League Blue panel has nominated Prof Rajeeb Humayun of Linguistics department for the post of dean of Arts Faculty while Prof Abul Kalam Manjur Morshed of Bengali department has been nominated by the pro-BNP White panel. Prof Aminul Islam of Philosophy department is contesting from the Left-leaning Pink panel.

For the Social Science Faculty, Prof Asaduzzaman of Public Administration department has been nominated by the White panel while Prof Nazrul Islam of Sociology and Prof Mustafa Chowdhury of Political Science departments have been nominated by the Pink and Blue panels respectively.

Prof Abul Hashem of Accounting department has been nominated by the Blue panel for the post of dean of Commerce Faculty while Prof Abul Kalam Azad of Marketing department and Prof Mainuddin have been nominated from the Pink and White panels respectively.

Prof Sultana Safi of Physics department will contest for the post of Dean of Science Faculty from Blue panel while Safi Chowdhury of the same department will contest from the White panel.

For the Biological Science Faculty, Prof Shahadat Ali of Zoology department, the incumbent dean, has been nominated by the Blue panel while the White panel has nominated Prof Sultan Ahmed of Soil-Science department.

For the newly created Pharmacy Faculty, Prof AK Azad Chowdhury has been nominated by the Blue panel while Prof Nurun Nahar Rahman is the White panel nominee.

Prof Ershadul Bari of the Faculty of Law has been elected uncontested for the third consecutive term.

The Left-leaning Pink panel has not nominated any candidate for the posts of dean of Pharmacy, Biological Science, Science and Law faculties.

Saddam's son-in-law

From Page 1

Republic Guards that from the core of Iraq's army.

"We are calling on the officers of the Iraqi army, the officers of the Republican Guards, the officers of the special guards, the civil servants of the Iraqi state and all the Iraqi society to be ready for this important change," he said.

The defector, in a reference to the foreign-based opposition that has provided little threat to Saddam, said change would have to come from inside the country.

The general, dressed in a dark business suit, would not say exactly what role he would perform from exile in trying to end the rule of his father-in-law and lift the UN economic sanctions that are impoverishing his country.

AFP from Dubai says: Elite army units have been deployed in Baghdad after the defection of part of President Saddam Hussein's family, a former Iraqi intelligence chief said today.

Wafiq Samarrai, who lives in Damascus after fleeing Baghdad last year, said large numbers of troops were deployed in the centre of the capital and at major intersections in the city.

"The special Republican Guard and special troops are deployed in Baghdad and at the principle intersections. The security services are on a state of alert," said Samarrai.

The special Republic Guard is an elite army unit responsible to maintaining surveillance of public buildings and key points in the capital.

The Babel newspaper, run by Saddam's eldest son Uday, reported this week that a half-brother of the president was accidentally wounded on August 8.

Student killed as school roof collapses in Comilla

COMILLA, Aug 12: A teenaged schoolboy was killed and 40 others were injured from roof collapse of the Haji Asmat Ali High School building under Chouara Union of Kotwali thana of the district at around four pm, police and hospital sources confirmed, reports BSS.

The roof collapsed following a storm which lashed Bamisha and Srimantapur villages of the union. The storm accompanied by heavy rain also flattened a number of thatched houses and many trees.

All the victims were teachers and students of the school. Among the injured 20 were admitted to different local clinics and Sadar hospital.

Diarrhoea claims 10 in Savar, Dhamrai

SAVAR, Aug 12: Ten people died of diarrhoea in the flood-hit villages of Savar and Dhamrai thanas in 36 hours till 6 pm today, local people and Union Parishad sources said, reports UNB.

Of them, six people died in Dhamrai and four in Savar.

The food-and-water-borne disease broke out in 20 out of 28 unions of the two flood affected thanas.

At least 2,000 people were attacked by diarrhoea in the flood affected areas, but no medical team was yet sent to attend them.

Workshop on illegal drug control begins

By Staff Correspondent

• A three-day workshop to help formulate a national drug demand reduction strategy began yesterday at a city hotel.

The workshop organised by United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) under the Ministry of Home Affairs, was inaugurated by Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury.

Some 35 participants representing various disciplines and professions, including health and NGO workers, government officials and psychiatrists, will be deliberating over the next couple of days to develop a draft strategy to control the demand for illegal drugs.

The draft will then be presented at four community-level gatherings outside the capital for further deliberations.

The Home Minister welcomed the "timely initiative" taken by the DNC and UNDCP in organising the workshop.

The opening ceremony was also addressed by Azimuddin Ahmad, Home Secretary, Christopher Ronald, regional director, UNDCP; Iqbal H Khan, Director (administration) DNC and M Asad Ullah, project coordinator, UNDCP.

JP blasts BNP

From Page 1

called the BNP government's steps to prolong its illegitimate rule.

Moudud argued that parliament became "non-existent" according to Article 65 of the Constitution, so the government has no legality.

The government deferred the by-elections to the opposition MPs vacated seats through the Election Commission for political reasons, he said.

Echoing the demand, another senior leader, Kazi Zafar Ahmed, said the BNP government should resign immediately handing over power to a neutral caretaker government for ensuring fair elections.

Addressing the rally, Party Secretary General Anwar Hossain Monju said the Opposition MPs had resigned demanding installation of a caretaker government to oversee the next general polls. "So there is no scope for dialogue on the issue."

Demanding release of party chairman and former President HM Ershad, Monju said the government would have to bear all the consequences if the movement goes on a "different course" for not releasing Ershad.

Presided over by Jatiya Party city unit vice-president Shamsuzzaman Mintu, the rally was also addressed by city unit General Secretary Abdus Salam. Later, the party brought out a procession.

Fakris' abductors

From Page 1

were backed by some political leaders who, during election period and on other occasions, used them as mercenaries to serve their interests.

Fakri's abduction, not only created panic in the business community but also led to various rumours after his dramatic release.

Sources said Fakri's release followed mediation by a political leader and a secret monetary deal.

But Fakri, talking to newsmen after his release, said he was ignorant of anything behind his release.

One Jahangir, allegedly involved in the abduction, was arrested with his wife and son.

Police had threatened that if Fakri was not released, the wife and son of Jahangir also would not get release. The threat demoralised the abductors, police claimed. Besides, police created pressure on local UP chairman and elite at Fatikchhari and Raozan thanas and conducted house to house search at some villages. The terrorists were thus compelled to release Fakri, police officials claimed.

The Midnight File

14 soldier burnt alive in Sofia

SOFIA, Aug 12: Fourteen soldiers were burnt alive in a crash between the lorry they were travelling in and a trailer near the outskirts of Sofia, police said today. The accident happened on Friday evening, when their lorry was travelling on the Sofia ring road "at a speed not appropriate to the situation," reports AFP.

'No alliance with Jamaat, JP'

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesher Communist Party (CPB) yesterday expressed its concern at the prevailing political impasse in the country.

The central committee of the party, at a meeting expressed its disappointment with the ruling party and said that the present government was acting undemocratically and irresponsibly.

FBCCI refutes JSD statement

By Staff Correspondent

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) yesterday refuted the statement made by two JSD leaders wherein they had alleged that most of the FBCCI leaders were loan defaulters. The JSD leaders' statement was published in Saturday's issue of The Daily Star.

The Secretary of the FBCCI, in a statement yesterday clarified that Rashiduzzaman, Vice-President of the FBCCI had stated on August 9 that FBCCI supported the views that bank loan defaulters should not be allowed to participate in national election. At the same time, FBCCI also likes to see that those who are leading luxurious life without any known source of income and do not pay any income tax should also be declared ineligible for contesting the national election, the statement said.

Manpower export

From Page 1

same place with Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Shawkat Ali in the chair to explore possibility of sending Bangladeshi agricultural labour to Mali on crop-sharing basis.

The possibility of Bangladeshi agricultural labour export to Mali is likely to be discussed during the coming visit of the President of that country to Bangladesh.

Nirman Int'l owner released

By Staff Correspondent

KZ Islam, a prominent businessman of the country, who was picked up by the CID police Thursday for interrogation said yesterday that there was no charge against him.

"Whatever happened was in accordance with the law of the land," said Islam, owner of Nirman International, a construction company.

Islam was picked up from his Gulshan residence in the city at around 6 pm Thursday following a directive from the Home Ministry, police sources said. Police officials refused to give details.

Islam, however, declined to say why he was picked up by the CID and what they wanted to know from him. "I just had to answer some queries made by the CID," said Islam.

Ershad

From Page 1

named as an associate with the above three in the radar deal and remained absconding since the start of the case, committed offence under Section 5 (2)/109 of the Prevention of Corruption Act and liable to be punished U/S 409/109 of the penal code, the judge said.

Shahzad Ali, another director of the United Traders and earlier named as an accused in both FIR and charge sheet, was dropped from the charge after the prosecution had made submission to the affect.

All the three accused persons claimed "innocent and not guilty" when asked by the judge to comment on the charges brought against them. Ershad told the court that he would appeal to the higher court.

Mahbubur Rahman, former minister and counsel of Ershad said since the alleged act was performed within the period covered by 7th Amendment to the Constitution, this could not be questioned in any court of law.

Public Prosecutor Abdur Razzak Khan opposed the defence contention and said malafide act is not immune from questioning.

The judge, however, made no observation on maintainability and bail petition prayed for Ershad and fixed September 16 to resume the trial.

Editors, teachers demand release of Farhad Mazhar

By Staff Correspondent

Editors of 10 national newspapers and 24 teachers of Rajshahi University yesterday expressed their concern over the arrest of Farhad Mazhar, Chairman of the Board of Editors of the weekly Chinta.

In separate statements, they also demanded immediate release of Farhad.

Signatories to the statements included Toab Khan of Janakantha, Rahat Khan of Ittefaq, Enayetullah Khan of Holiday, Bazlur Rahman of Sangbad, Atiqul Alam of The Morning Sun, Moazzem Hossain of The Financial Express, Mahfuz Anam of The Daily Star, Borhan Ahmed of Janakantha, Matiur Rahman Chowdhury of Banglabazar Patrika and Matiur Rahman of Bhorer Kagoj and RU teachers Shahidul Islam, Sarwar Jahan, Julfiker Matin, Priyabrata Pal, Mohammad Yunus and Shamsuddin Elias.

FC accounts

From Page 1

count, Resident Foreign Currency Deposit (RFCD) and foreign currency accounts maintained with retention quota of merchandise and service exporters may also maintain accounts in German Deutsche Mark and Japanese yen in addition to dollar and pound.

A Bangladesh Bank announcement yesterday said the central bank had also arranged maintenance of clearing accounts of authorised dealers in mark and yen apart from dollar and pound to facilitate inter-bank transfer of funds in these currencies.

BSF kills 2

From Page 1

7 this morning.

Golam Gain was fatally wounded when the Indian border guards fired on him thrice at 5 pm Friday while fishing in the river in Talpotti area of Shyamnagar thana. The BSF men left the place when BDR patrols appeared there.

Golam was also admitted to Sadar Hospital where he died at 3 am today.

FM to visit US, Japan this month

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman is expected to visit important capitals in the third week of this month to plead the cases of LDCs of which Bangladesh is a frontline member, reports UNB.

In Washington and Tokyo, Mostafiz, as coordinator of the Least Developed Countries, will discuss with the authorities of the two G-7 countries the new international economic order and the position of the LDCs.

Matters relating to flow of funds from the developed into the developing nations, in particular, will be discussed.

Johnson

From Page 1

culmination of eight races in seven days.

Johnson wants to attempt the same double at next year's Atlanta Olympics. The organisers are keen that he should, the host television company is probably equally anxious.

Only the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) need convincing that they can further amend their timetable to suit one man — so before his post-race news

Details on page 11

conference on Friday Johnson took the opportunity to give the world governing body a little reminder.

In a prepared statement, Johnson thanked the Gothenburg organisers for allowing him to "show all of my talents".

"I am certain if I get the opportunity in '96 I can do just as well," he said.

Film superimposing Johnsons' running action over that of Jesse Owens shows an uncanny similarity to the man who won four golds under the shadow of the Swastika at the 1936 Berlin Olympics and who set four world records in one afternoon.

But although Johnson appreciates the comparison he does not encourage it.

"I think Jesse Owens was the premier track and field athlete," he said. "I don't think you can compare any athlete today with Jesse Owens."