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The World on Time



Flood affected Manda area of the city.

— Star photo

Parliament tidbits

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JP for quite sometime. Both had talks with Begum Roushan Ershad, sitting just behind her husband's chair, and with JP Secretary General and Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju, sitting beside her. The chair was vacated before Ershad came.

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury seemed annoyed when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury said that he (Speaker) had problem in his left eye and thus Opposition lawmakers, could not see the sitting on his left.

"You're taunting me once again. My left eye is alright", the Speaker remarked.

Abdul Mannan of BNP gave a lengthy statement in the House on the JMBA (amendment) Bill, not moved in the House on the day. The Speaker, who was apparently confused at this, pointed out that the bill moved in the House was on Bangladesh Sugarcane Institute and the bill on JMBA was not tabled due to absence of the minister concerned.

The BNP MP, however, continued to speak on the same bill, causing laughter among the treasury bench members. His microphone was then turned off.

BNP legislator Mashur Rahman wanted to know from the Education Minister if the life-sketches of all the AL leaders would get place in the textbooks. His question led the treasury bench members to shout. The question was, however, unanswered.

Deputy leader of the Opposition Prof. Badruddoza Chowdhury became a backbencher in the Opposition for sometime. He was seen sitting in a seat in the fourth row to talk to a party colleague.

Most of the BNP lawmakers started shouting when AL MP Dharendra Debanath Shambhu took the floor to speak on a notice. Shambhu sparked off a heated debate in the House on Tuesday by passing a remark on the BNP as regards criminal activities.

A statement by AL member Latif Siddiqi drew appreciation from the BNP legislators, who thumbed tables. Siddiqi then clarified that the statement he mentioned — during the rule of the democratic BNP government — was not of his but as was frequently made by the then government. The clarification frustrated the BNP MPs.

In a printed reply from Social Welfare Minister Dr. Mozammel Hossain to a question by Rafiqul Islam Bakul of BNP, Bera thana in Pabna district was misprinted as 'Bhera'.

Wife attacks husband

By DMC Correspondent

A housewife allegedly cut the male organ of her husband in their house at Hazaribagh under Dhanmondi thana early yesterday.

The husband was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where condition was improving following treatment, hospital sources said.

The victim aged about 25, a fish trader, married the woman only three months ago, said the relatives who rushed him to the hospital.

According to them, he assaulted his wife following a family feud on Tuesday afternoon. Further details about the incident were not available immediately.

Flood situation

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were attacked by stomach ailments due to scarcity of drinking water.

Local health workers said the flood victims of Daulatpur, Harirampur, Ghior and Shibalaya thanas were suffering from diarrhoea, dysentery and other types of stomach diseases.

Water Development Board sources said the overall flood situation in the district deteriorated further yesterday as the river Kaliganga was flowing 37 cm above its danger level.

The road links between the district headquarters and its two thanas — Harirampur and Daulatpur — were cut off following the inundation of roads.

In Sirajganj, overall flood situation remained static yesterday but continuous erosion by the Jamuna swallowed more areas in Shahjadpur thana.

Meanwhile, a seven-year-old girl, Ramichha of Shakhpal village in Chowhali thana, drowned and a middle-aged woman, Haraman, died from snakebite at Laxmikhola flood control embankment.

At least 1,000 dwelling houses of Baparkhia, Gopalpur, Hatbara and Mohonpur villages in Shahjadpur thana were destroyed by Jamuna in last 24 hours till 6 pm yesterday.

Besides, 60 shops in Dhatpur Bazar, Sonatali UP office and about 2,000 acres of cropland in the same thana also were eroded by the mighty Jamuna.

In Kushtia, fresh areas were inundated as the flood-protection embankment at Ambaria village in Khoksa thana was washed away by the onrush of flood water.

Official sources said standing crops on about 3,000 acres of land and char area of the district went under water, causing a loss of about Tk 1 crore.

Tk 2.5 lakh, microbus snatched

By Staff Correspondent

An armed gang snatched Tk 2.5 lakh and a microbus from a foreign exchange trader at gun point from near his residence at Khiligaon, Chowdhurypara under Sabujbagh thana in the city yesterday afternoon.

A gang of about six unidentified persons attacked the trader Saïdur Rahman Mithu when he reached near his house at Khiligaon Chowdhurypara, at about 3:55 pm, police said.

The snatchers forced the driver out of the microbus, snatched the money and fled the scene by the microbus, police sources said.

It was suspected that the armed gang took position near the house of the businessman before he reached the spot, police added.

A case was lodged with Sabujbagh thana in this regard. No one was arrested in this connection till last night.

EPZ targets

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recorded a 41 per cent increase over that of the previous fiscal (94-95).

In 94-95 fiscal, the CEPZ exported goods worth 187 million dollars, against its target of 180 million dollars.

The sources said that 12 more units now under construction are likely to go into production shortly.

The CEPZ became operational in 1983 and it was set up on 453 acres of land by developing it in phases.

Officials informed that they were receiving more offers of investments from Korea, Hong Kong, China, Thailand and Singapore.

Many foreign delegates already visited the CEPZ and showed interest to invest here, officials also informed.

New edn policy soon: Sadek

Body to remove distortion of history in textbooks

The government has constituted a special committee to review and rectify distortions of country's history in school textbooks in the light of a new education policy, reports UNB.

Education Minister A S H K Sadek informed Parliament of the government set during question-hour session yesterday.

Eminent educationists and members of the intelligentsia with non-partisan background on the committee, he told the House.

The minister said any distortion, if found, in textbooks from Class One to Class Ten would be removed.

To another question from treasury bench member Mirza Azam, the minister informed the House that the country would have an education policy in few months, updating the policy formulated by the Kudrat-e-Khuda Education Commission.

The minister cautioned that

Literacy rate 44.30 per cent

The country's present literacy rate is 44.30 per cent, according to a sample vital registration (SVR) of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in 1995, reports UNB.

This was disclosed by Education Minister ASHK Sadek while replying to a starred question from Shah M Haduzzaman (Jessore) in the House yesterday.

The minister also informed Parliament that the number of people having passed secondary school certificate (SSC) examination is 49,76,500 while the number of graduates is 12,71,000 in the country.

5 Bills referred to Spl Committee

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury yesterday referred five bills to a special committee asking it to submit its reports within three days for their disposal, reports UNB.

The bills are: the Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agriculture (Amendment) Bill 1996, the Livestock Research Institute (Amendment) Bill 1996, the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (Amendment) Bill 1996, the Fisheries Research Institute (Amendment) Bill 1996 and the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority Bill 1996.

Bowing by MPs 'unislamic': Saidee

Jamaat-e-Islami member Delwar Hossain Saidee yesterday called for repealing the provision of bowing by parliament members while entering or leaving the House, describing it as "unislamic", reports BSS.

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury said he agreed with Maulana Saidee's point but added that for this amendment to the Rules of Procedure was necessary. He advised the Jamaat MP to submit a notice in this regard.

Heated debate over JS bodies

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posal of the committee, our Chief Whip sought the floor to submit his contention, but you refused to allow him to speak."

At this point Prime Minister and Leader of the House Sheikh Hasina took the floor to say that the Chief Whip had proposed the name of the Leader of the Opposition because "A coordination between the Speaker, Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament was necessary to make parliamentary democracy effective." She also added that if the Leader of the Opposition was not willing, she was free to withdraw her name.

But as soon as the Prime Minister had finished her speech, the Speaker put the committee to vote without giving Khaleda Zia chance to withdraw her name. The committee was passed.

Khaleda once again took the floor to point out to the Speaker that since she had objection to be a member of the committee concerned, inclusion of her name in it was a violation of Rule 188 of the JS Rules of Procedure.

The Speaker then told the House that once the committee was passed, he had nothing to do now. "Under the JS Rules of Procedure, one can withdraw his or her name from a certain committee later," the Speaker said.

When the Speaker said that she was making the allegation of partiality by the Speaker on a regular basis, Khaleda Zia said: "In the face of your repeated partiality, I am compelled to make the allegation."

Then the Opposition Chief Whip complained that the Chief Whip of Parliament excluded some names he had given earlier. "Besides, he has changed the list." He also accused the Treasury bench of "autocratic behaviour and a tendency of imposing its deci-

Health official injured in road accident, dies

By Staff Correspondent

Dr Azimunnisa Begum, 50, Deputy Director of Planning of the Directorate of Health Services, who was injured in a road accident, died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday morning.

Wife of Prof A K M Shamsul Islam, Head of the Department of Forensic Medicine at the Dhaka Medical College, she sustained fatal injuries when she fell from a speeding motorbike near Abahani playground at Dhanmondi at about 12:45 pm last Friday, family sources said. She was returning to her home in Khilgaon on her son's motorcycle.

The victim was immediately taken to the Bangladesh Medical College Hospital. She was later shifted to the DMCH where she died at about 8:25 am yesterday, family and hospital sources added.

Dr Azimunnisa was buried at the Mirpur Intellectuals graveyard. She left behind two sons and husband.

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Simon Bolivar Prize for Prof Yunus

An international jury at a meeting yesterday at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, selected Prof Muhammad Yunus, Managing Director, Grameen Bank, for the award of the International Simon Bolivar Prize, reports BSS.

There were 22 candidates nominated by various government and non-government organisations, according to a message received in Dhaka from Bangladesh embassy in Paris.

The International Simon Bolivar Prize, instituted by the government of Venezuela, honours, activities that contribute to "liberty, independence and dignity of the peoples as well as strengthening of the solidarity among the nations" and facilitates bringing about a "new international economic, social and cultural order."

The jury acknowledged the exemplary and innovative work of Prof Yunus in the banking sector through the Grameen Bank, which has been termed as "the highest form of struggle for social justice, ideals of the great liberator" of Venezuela Simon Bolivar.

Prof Yunus has been invited to Paris in October this year during the regular meeting of the UNESCO executive board to receive the award in the presence of the Foreign Minister of Venezuela.

House Committee constituted

A 12-member House Committee was constituted in Parliament yesterday with Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah as its Chairman, reports UNB.

Other members of the committee are A S M Firoze, Mizanur Rahman Manu, Mojibur Rahman Talukder, Dipanker Talukder, Mohammad Amanullah and Mannuzam Sufian of the Awami League, Tajul Islam Chowdhury of the Jatiya Party, Jainal Abedin Farook, Syed Wahidul Alam and Abu Yusuf Mohammad Khalilur Rahman of the BNP, and M Delwar Hossain Saidee of the Jamaat-e-Islami.

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury announced the committee.

70 feared killed in Colombo train blast

COLOMBO July 24: At least 70 people were feared killed and 200 injured in a powerful bomb explosion in a train in Colombo suburb today, a government official said, reports Reuters.

"I can confirm 200 people have been injured, some battling for survival. The death toll is possibly higher than 70," said a senior government official supervising rescue operations at the Dehiwala railway station.

A police official had earlier said at least 15 bodies were seen at the site of the blast, security officials said they recovered identity cards of army personnel from the train wreck.

Police said they were questioning two men they had picked up at the train station. They added that two crowded carriages were wrecked, indicating there could possibly be two bombs.

Sugarcane Instt Bill '96 placed

A bill was placed in Parliament yesterday seeking to establish an institute for research and innovation of technology on the carbohydrate crops in the country, reports UNB.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury introduced the Bangladesh Sugarcane Institute Bill, 1996 which also aims at formulating programmes for the carbohydrate crops suitable for sugar and molasses production.

15 hurt as BCL, Shibir clash in Sitakunda

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 24: At least 15 people were injured in a clash between rival activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and the Chhatra Shibir today at Sitakunda college, local people and police said.

Of the injured, five persons were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital with bullet wounds.

Police said the clash had begun at around 2 pm between two groups of supporters of BCL and Shibir centring possession of seats inside the examination hall at Sitakunda College.

The clash was marked by gunshot, blasts of cactaballs and chase and counter-chase, local people said.

Garments

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which were supposed to be placed between September and November, and for fall '96 were also affected to some extent, they said.

"Since the market is bad, the quota committee should review the overall entry position and take appropriate steps to improve the same," said Abu Taher, a garment factory owner.

"Whatever quota we will fulfil this year, will be done at a very low cutting and making (CM) rate," said Taher. "The rate for trousers we used to sew for 25 dollars a dozen has now come down to only 15 dollars, putting tremendous financial pressure on the factories."

Even the scope for swing and shift from one category to another is negligible since orders are not coming, exporters said.

Iqbal Ahmed of Burlingtons Limited said there are now only four months left to fulfil the quota, but orders are not coming.

"But even if orders come now, the fabrics will not arrive until October which leaves us only two months for production. This is too short a time to fulfil the quota," he said.

Orders for major cotton items like 34 and 34 1/2 are almost zero, he said, adding that "quota has crashed terribly." Market for cotton items have gone cold this year following hike of cotton price in the international market.

The synthetic market was, however, good, but the political crisis had also discouraged orders for these.

2 students drown in Goran

By DMC Correspondent

Two students drowned in a boat capsized in a lake at Goran under Sabujbagh thana in the city yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Khalid Mahmud Babu, 22, a second year HSC student of Notre Dame College and Nahid, 16, who passed the SSC examination this year from the Central Govt High School with distinctions in four subjects, police and hospital sources said.

Nahid of 381, North Goran died on the spot while Khalid, son of one Nurul Huda, on the way to the DMCH.

The two students went on a cruise in the Goran Jheel with three of their friends who, however, swam to safety. The two drowned as they did not know swimming, hospital sources said quoting the local people who had taken them to the DMCH.

DMC may reopen on July 30

By DMC Correspondent

The Dhaka Medical College (DMC) may reopen on July 30, according to a highly placed source at the college.

The academic council of the college at a meeting yesterday observed that an official announcement in this regard would be made soon, if the overall situation improves further, the source added.

Newly-appointed principal Prof A B M Ahsanullah presided the meeting, attended by more than a hundred teachers, at the college conference room.

The classes of the first year MBBS course will start on August one if the college re-opens on July 30, they observed, the source added.

Principal Prof Ahsanullah earlier visited the dormitories of both the boys and girls and talked to the leaders of student bodies.

The DMC was closed since die following clashes between the activists of the pro-BNP Jatiyabadi Chhatra Dal and pro-Awami League Chhatra League during the Golden Jubilee celebration on July 10.

6 Indian fishermen rescued

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, July 24: Six Indian fishermen were rescued from the Bay of Bengal yesterday, one of whom later died. Their fishing boat capsized in Bangladesh's maritime zone 20 days ago.

The dead was identified as G Revi (23) while the others are Moni Marulang (26), V Kumar (35), M Ilumalai (37), Ramu (23) and R Revi (28).

Cabinet decision

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wells in the flood-hit areas will be repaired free of cost, while new tubewells will be sunk on an emergency basis wherever it is necessary.

The meeting also decided to ensure supply of pure drinking water and required medicines and oral salines to check any outbreak of epidemics. The meeting was informed that medical teams had already been constituted in all the unions of the flood affected areas.

The meeting decided to allocate funds on priority basis to undertake emergency repair of roads, bridges, culverts and other infrastructural facilities damaged in the floods. The meeting requested all the ministers and state ministers to visit the flood affected areas as well as to supervise relief and rehabilitation activities.

It was informed at the meeting that the Disaster Management and Relief Ministry will take necessary steps to monitor the flood situation and stock resources so that relief materials were easily available. Besides, measures will be taken to reconstruct damaged embankments immediately.

The meeting was attended by ministers, state ministers in charge of different ministries, cabinet secretary and concerned secretaries.

3 CHT bodies

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Chakma and Hill Women's Federation vice president Kabita Chakma said that it was beyond their comprehension why the 24 Infantry Division gave a statement "bypassing the ISPR which usually releases all statements regarding the Army."

They said that the Army had, at first, tried to cover up the kidnapping of Kalpana Chakma, a women's leader of the hill tracts, by saying that it was an "affair of the heart."

Now the Army is contradicting its own statement by saying that Kalpana went abroad. The leaders questioned why the Army was not investigating the issue and checking with the immigration department.