

PM orders measures to mitigate sufferings of flood-hit people

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her deep concern at the plight of the country's flood-affected people and directed the district administrations to take all measures to mitigate their sufferings, reports BSS.

The directives, issued by the Prime Minister's Office yesterday to all the divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners, asked them to remain alert and face any eventuality caused by the flood or any subsequent calamity.

The directives said in the light of experiences of flood during the previous years, the thana and district administrations should identify the flood-prone areas and work out necessary preparedness plans for evacuation of the flood affected people and the cattle as well as undertaking relief operations in the affected areas.

The prime minister directed the local administrations to work out possible post-flood rehabilitation programmes. The prime minister also directed the administrations to integrate the local people, NGOs, scouts and red crescent and other social and voluntary organisations in combating the natural calamity.

The pre-disaster preparedness reduce the losses and sufferings of the affected people and help combat the post-disaster situation, the directives said.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presiding over a review meeting of Land Ministry at Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday. — PID photo

What's on today . . .

Workshop: A workshop on 'Development of Information, Education and Motivational Publications on Road Use and Road Safety' will be held. Organiser: Tangail Infrastructure Development Project (TIDP) of LGED and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). Venue: LGED Bhaban, Agargaon, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Time: 9:25 am.

Seminar: The department of Computer Science of North South University (NSU) will hold a seminar on "Cartesian Groups and Symmetric Generalized Hadamard Matrices". Venue: NSU seminar room, BTA Tower. Time: 2 pm.

Club meeting: The weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club Ltd. Time: 5:30 pm.

Weather

Moderate rain forecast

Moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over the country with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

The Met office said day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period.

Country's highest temperature 33.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Mongla and the lowest 24.0 degree Celsius at Comilla.

The sun sets at 6:49 pm and rises on Thursday at 5:20 am.

Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	30.1	25.5	91	92
Chittagong	29.0	25.0	97	96
Rajshahi	30.8	25.5	96	93
Khulna	32.8	27.5	82	98
Barisal	30.8	24.5	91	97
Sylhet	28.4	24.4	98	98
Cox's Bazar	29.4	25.0	97	91

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Encroachment on city lakes

Rajuk probe bodies fail to submit reports within deadline

By Staff Correspondent

All the three Rajuk probe committees, formed to investigate illegal earth-filling, encroachment and allocation at the Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Uttara lakes, have failed to submit their reports within the deadline.

Rajuk sources said it was now 'almost certain' that the committees would not be able to submit any report at all because they could not even start work due to several complications. The committees were formed following reports of indiscriminate earth-filling of the Gulshan lake. The Minister for Housing and Public Works visited the lake area following the reports in May and ordered a

probe into the alleged irregularities. One month's time was given to the committees to report back on the situation.

Two of the three committees were assigned to probe at the lake sites. The remaining committee, headed by Rajuk's Member (Planning) was formed to monitor the progress of the fieldwork.

The committee members came up with several pretexts for not doing their job. They said they could not start work because important files were missing from Rajuk archives. Despite repeated requisitions, the committees were not given official information, said a Rajuk official and a committee member when asked what was

obstructing their work. Some others said they were exposed to 'insecurity' whenever they tried to conduct their work at the sites. One official, citing a recent incident in Gulshan, said they had been assaulted while doing their work.

Rajuk has had several precedents when committees were formed which were never able to submit their reports. One such committee was formed following the sudden collapse of a four-storied building in city's Kalabagan area in 1996. The committee slowly died off without compiling any report.

The Minister for Public Works and Housing could not be reached for his comments.

MMC report on UP elections

Candidates' budgets did not comply with expenditure

By Staff Correspondent

Budget of the candidates did not comply with their election expenditure and the transparency of election expenditure was absent among the candidates during the December 1997 Union Parishad (UP) elections across the country.

Publicity on voters' education was also not carried out properly by the local election offices during the elections.

These were revealed in an election observation report published by Mass-line Media Centre (MMC) recently. The report was prepared according to the MMC observation of UP elections in five coastal districts from December 1 to December 31 last year. The districts included Barguna, Feni, Noakhali, Laxmipur and Patuakhali.

The three-phase monitoring included pre-election situation observation, election-day observation and post-election observation. At the pre-election period, some 132 unions in five districts were observed.

According to the observation, a large number of voters were not included in the voter lists of different districts.

A number of women candidates were found contesting for both the reserved and common seats in the polls, it said. Many of them also contested for UP chairman post, according to the report.

More or less violation of code of conduct took place in different areas. "Sufficient election officials were found deployed by the EC, but publicity about voters education was not done satisfactorily." Yet the voters were found very enthusiastic about the election, the MMC report said.

Visiting 178 centres on the

election day, MMC observers found the arrangement of most of the polling centres satisfactory throughout the five districts.

"Some 113 persons were held for casting fake votes. A large number of women and minority voters turned out to cast their votes at different centres. Sufficient security personnel including mobile security team were registered during observation period. Around 95 persons were injured at election day violence but no report of death was registered.

"Transportation for the women voters to bring them to the polling centres was arranged to a great extent by different candidates in all the districts observed," the report said.

A large number of ballot papers were found rejected or cancelled due to tattered ballots, ballots not stamped and improper stamping, it said. Counting of two centres was postponed due to irregularities, it added.

MMC observers monitored 132 unions of the five districts at the post election period. Primary results of all the centres excluding only 17 centres of Patuakhali, Noakhali, Feni and Laxmipur were not declared.

Stray incidents of attack took place at different places and a total of 36 people were injured due to post-poll violence at observed areas of Noakhali and Laxmipur.

Chairman candidates were congratulated by defeated candidates at the rate of 17 per cent in Patuakhali, 7 per cent in Barguna, 13 per cent in Feni and 21 per cent in Laxmipur which were one of the most important democratic attitudes

President assents to Bangabandhu Agri 'Varsity bill '98

President Shahabuddin Ahmed Monday assented to the 'Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Agricultural University Bill, 1998,' reports UNB.

The Bill was passed in the budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad, said a press release.

PM assures all out help to killed BCL leader's family

Principal Naresh Chandra Acharya, father of Partha Pratim who was killed on the Dhaka University campus last April, called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence Ganabhaban yesterday, reports UNB.

Partha Pratim Acharya, a meritorious student and a journalist, was killed in a clash between the Chhatra League and Chhatra Dal on DU campus on April 23. He was a central committee member of BCL and convener of 'Bangabandhu Avijatrik', a socio-cultural organisation.

Naresh Chandra, founder Principal of BB College of Daulatpur, Manikganj was accompanied by his two other sons, Mridul Kumar and Bishwanath.

They narrated to the Prime Minister the plight of their family following the tragic death of Partha Pratim.

The Prime Minister consoled them and assured all out help and assistance for redressing their hardship.

BCL president Enamul Huq Shamim and vice-president Akhter Hossain were also present.

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