

All link roads from villages to thana, district HQs under water

B'baria flood claims 28 lives so far



BRAHMANBARIA: Road communication has been snapped as Comilla-Brahmanbaria highway went under flood water. — Star photo by Sk Shahidul Islam

From Sk Shahidul Islam

News snaps

People attack Sherpur Health Complex

SHERPUR, Aug 7: Two employees of Sadar Thana Health Complex were critically injured when local people attacked the hospital on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said the angry people pounced on the employees after the death of a child. They attributed the death to negligence of physicians. Al Amin, a two-year-old child, died at 2.30 pm on Thursday soon after admission to the hospital. As the death news traveled across the area, local people attacked the health leaving the two employees — Anwara Begum and Zahurul Haq — injured. They also ransacked several chambers of physicians, including the RMO office. A case was filed with Sadar thana in this connection.

Fateha Yajdaham observed

MANIKGANJ, Aug 7: Fateha Yajdaham, the death anniversary of Hazrat Abdul Qadir Jilani, one of the greatest saints of the Islamic world, was observed in Manikganj town and other places of the district on Wednesday with due solemnity and religious fervour, reports BSS.

Local socio-cultural and religious organisations held milad mahfil and discussions on the life and philosophy of Syed Abdul Qadir Jilani, popularly known as 'bara pir shahib', who died in Baghdad 858 years ago. Devotees offered special prayers in the mosques as well as their homes at night.

Two boys drown

From Our Correspondent

KHAGRACHHARI, Aug 7: Two boys of Dighinala Model Government Primary School drowned here on Wednesday while trying to pick up 'shapla flowers' from a nearby pond of the school, police said.

The dead were identified as Dibosh Chakma, 6, son of Bikash Chakma and Jadeshhar Dewan, 7, son of Pragma Bangsha Dewan of Paschim Thana village, both students of class two, they said. Doctors in the sadar thana hospital said the boys met the tragic end before entering the hospital premises.

152 crimes committed in 2 months

FENI, Aug 7: Some 152 crimes were committed in all the six thanas of the district during the last two months worsening the law and order situation, reports UNB.

According to police report, some six murder, three abduction, two rape, 9 women repression, 41 robbery, eight violence 12 smuggling and 71 other criminal cases were filed with the police stations of the district during the period. In July alone, some 72 criminal activities were committed in the six thanas of the district, the report said. It added four people — one each in sadar and Daganbhuivan and two in Sonagazi — were murdered during the month. But unofficial sources claimed that a large number of the criminal activities committed during the period were not recorded with the police due to various reasons.

Alleged rapist arrested

KISHOREGANJ, Aug 7: A man was arrested from Ukilpara in the town on Thursday in connection with a rape case, reports UNB.

Police said Chand Miah, 32, was arrested for violating the chastity of Hasna Khatun, wife of Rukun Miah of Purankhana in the town, on Monday. Chand, said to be a relative of the victim, went to Rukun's house at night in his absence and violated Hasna. Later, Hasna filed a case against Chand and police arrested him the following day. Meanwhile, the accused was sent to jail hajat after the court rejected his bail prayer.

24 arrested in Khulna

KHULNA, Aug 7: Police arrested 24 people from different parts of the city on various charges on Thursday and recovered three firearms, reports UNB.

The firearms were two revolvers and a pipegun. Police said one revolver and some equipment for making pipe guns were recovered from a welding shop at Sheikh para in the town and one Khokon was arrested in this connection. Later, they raided a microbus near Gollamari Tar Factory and recovered another revolver. The pipegun was recovered from Ispahani Colony in the town.

Man commits suicide after killing wife

SATKHIRA, Aug 7: A man allegedly committed suicide after killing his wife at Kaikhali village in Shyamnagar thana on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said Kirshnapada took poison after killing his wife Usharani, 32, with dao at midnight. Family sources said they had an altercation over purchasing rice before the incident took place. A case was filed with Shyamnagar police. The bodies were cremated after postmortem.

Reception to meritorious student

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Aug 7: The students and the teachers of Accountancy Department of Government Rajendra University College arranged a function on Friday last to accord a reception to one of its students who secured first class in the honours final examination under the national university.

Pradip Kumar Biswas secured first class in honours final examination in accountancy last year. None obtained first class in this subject so far. Biswas was also decorated with a gold medal. The function was attended by Prof Mian Lutfur Rahman, Director, Higher Education as chief guest while Prof Sadat Hossain, Controller of Examinations, National University and Prof Subhash Chandra Ghose, Principal of the college were special guests. Prof MA Zabbar, Chairman of Accountancy Department presided over the function.

Steps sought to stop fishing of fries

SYLHET, Aug 7: Fish fries are being caught in the district with impunity by dishonest fishermen defying government ban, reports UNB.

Fish fries of different species are being sold at various markets of the district and Sunamganj everyday before the nose of the law enforcement agencies, local people alleged. They also alleged that with the advent of the monsoon, a section of dishonest fishermen have started fishing fries freely using current nets. This type of net has been banned by the government considering its harmful effect on the overall production of fish. Local people urged the authority to take immediate measures to stop fishing of fries and use of current net for protecting the fish resources.

Teenage boy killed in road accident

JESSORE, Aug 7: A teenage boy was crushed under the wheels of a Jessore bound speeding bus near Dhaka bridge here on Jessore-Dhaka highway on Tuesday, reports UNB.

Police said Ashraf Ali, 14, son of Tashir Uddin of east Baraudipara, met with the accident as he was crossing the road riding a bicycle in the evening. The driver and the helper of the bus managed to flee the scene. Police sent the body to the General Hospital here for autopsy and a case was filed in this connection.

SSC examinee commits suicide

COMILLA, Aug 7: A teen-aged girl allegedly committed suicide here Tuesday night failing to come out successful in the SSC examination for the second time, reports UNB.

The victim Nigar Sultana Sumi, 18, of Dhaneswar village in the sadar thana took her life by hanging herself from the ceiling fan of their home after hearing the sad news. She appeared at the examination from the Dhaneswar High School. She also could not come out successful in the SSC examination held last year. A UD case was filed with the Kotwali police.

Work of Post Office bldg progressing

TANGAIL, Aug 7: Postal Department is constructing the first floor of the existing Tangail Main Post Office building at a cost of Taka 24 lakh, reports BSS.

The work is progressing and expected to be completed by four months time under the supervision of Postal Engineering Department. Besides, the postal department has also taken a programme to construct boundary walls of Santosh, Madhupur and Nagarpur post offices.

Shafiq stands first in BSc (AH) exam

MYMENSINGH, Aug 7: Md Shafiqur Rahman secured first place in first class in BSc (AH) examination held this year from Animal Husbandry Department of Bangladesh Agricultural University, according to a press release of the university, reports BSS.

He is the second son of M Jamaluddin Sarker of Pepsi Lane under Phuldhuti thana of Bogra district.

Breast Feeding Week opens

TANGAIL, Aug 7: A week-long programme in observance of the universal Breast Feeding Week was inaugurated on Thursday morning at Bindubasini High School ground, reports BSS.

A rally was held followed by a discussion meeting in Bhasani Hall on 'feeding of mother's milk is a great investment.' The week-long programme includes holding of motivation meetings, seminars, symposiums on the utility of breast feeding.

BRAHMANBARIA, Aug 7: A total of 8,53,700 people of the district have been affected directly by flood in all the seven thanas including Brahmanbaria Pourasava.

According to Agricultural Extension Department, Brahmanbaria district office sources various crops including seedbeds and vegetables worth Taka 54,35,04,000 have been damaged totally by flood waters.

Among paddy on 20,979 hectares of land worth Tk 37,76,00,000 have been damaged. Aus paddy on 2352 hectares worth about Tk 5,64,48,000, vegetables worth about Taka 8,15,00,000 on 815 hectares of land, jute worth about Taka 80,00,000 on 811 hectares and Transplanted Aman paddy worth about Taka 1,09,00,000 on 664 hectares of land have been damaged.

Besides, 25,000 trees including plants have been damaged. Meanwhile, big trees being nearer by the turbulent waves and current of flood waters have fallen down while small plants and saplings have been inundated and damaged.

Due to onrush of hilly water from across the border devastating floods hit the district almost every year.

This year people of 98 unions of the district are experiencing flood. Most areas of the district are under two to three feet deep water. The river Titas has started receding following cessation of rains.

According to District Relief and Rehabilitation office sources, flood situation has improved in the upper part of the Titas basin of the district as water level of the river Titas has fallen down by 3 cm from 112 cm above the danger level, but from Nabinagar to Bancharampur and the downstream of the river Titas and the Meghna basin flood situation remains unchanged.

According to reports, at least 45,185 thatched and kutcha houses of all 98 unions in the district and 4,500 houses of Brahmanbaria pourasava have been damaged totally or partially, while 377 cattle and 1263 poultry birds have been affected.

Due to flood all the link roads from rural areas to the thana headquarters and district town have been totally inundated and damaged. At many points of Brahmanbaria-Comilla highway flood water has been flowing through the highway disrupting road communications. Flood water has been flowing at many points, over Brahmanbaria-Comilla highway and Brahmanbaria-Sylhet highway. Some portion of the highway near Uzanishar and Chandura and Baishmaur have been damaged very badly.

Besides, the Lalpur road, Chandura-Dhakar road and Akhaura-Dharkhar road have badly damaged by the torrential rain and turbulent waves of water of flood. The road communication between Lalpur, Chandura and Dhakar has been disrupted.

According to District Relief and Rehabilitation office

sources, 75 culverts, 2,164 kilometres road and 277 km embankments of all 78 unions in the district and also 191 culverts and bridges, 185 kilometres pucca road and 150 kilometres of kutcha road of Brahmanbaria pourasava have been damaged.

Meanwhile, the maximum areas of Kasba thana in the district have been inundated. Breaches have been developed at the eight points of Howra embankment while breaches which have developed at Gumul embankment near Saldia has deteriorated the flood situation, especially at Kasba thana of the district.

Due to devastating flood at least 9,000 ponds have been overflooded. The banks of many ponds and tanks have been eroded by flood water.

According to district public health engineering office sources, at least 75 tubewells have gone under flood water while 200 tubewells have been affected and have become contaminated with flood water. In the meantime, people of some areas of Brahmanbaria Pourasava and other unions of the district have been attacked by waterborne disease including diarrhoea.

The death toll in the current monsoon flood has shot up to 28. Most deaths have been caused by drowning, snakebite, house collapse and diarrhoea.

According to the civil surgeon office sources a total of 175 medical teams including 25 teams of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) have been working in the flood affected areas. Campaigns are being conducted to make the people aware of basic healthcare methods to check spread of diarrhoeal and other waterborne diseases.

Meanwhile, intravenous saline are not available sufficiently here as only 2,000 packets of saline are in the stock of the district civil surgeon office store for all the seven thanas of the district. 80,000 packets oral saline are in the stock, a medical officer of the civil surgeon office said.

When contacted Brahmanbaria Pourasava Chairman Al Mamun Sarker said that 37500 dwellers of 12 Moholla of the purasava had been affected and property including 5,000 trees and saplings, 92 religious institutions, 4,500 houses, 185 bridges culverts and 341 km pucca and kutcha roads had been badly damaged. The current flood had damaged the property of the pourasava areas amounting to Taka 8,70,00,000 or more, the pourasava chairman said. When this correspondent visited one of the badly flood affected areas-Shahjadapur union, some of the flood victims informed that they did not get any relief materials and their heads of family are mainly day labourers. Due to inundation they have no job. Now the situation forces them to suffer from starvation for some time. Some of them have started begging from door to door for food.

While contacted, S K Md Nurul Islam Sarker, an old farmer

of village Shahjadapur he said said that if the flood water does not recede fast, a serious crisis will be created in the village.

He informed that all the crops including paddy fields have gone under flood water during the last 25 days. As a result, all the crops and paddy plants have been rotten.

Ninety-nine percent people of Shahjadapur village are dependent on cultivation. By losing their crops by flood most people of Shahjadapur are now jobless.

The dwellers of low-lying areas of the district have taken shelter in various camps in the schools while the some dwellers are living in temporary make-shift houses. Due to inundation of all link roads the rickshaw pullers from all parts of the district have come to the district town. Now at least ten thousand excess rickshaws are plying in the district headquarter creating a serious traffic jam in the main road of the district town.

It is alleged that boat piracy has been increased in the inundated rural areas. Pirates are raiding here and there every night.

Besides, 3,000 poor families of the pourasava have been facing serious problems due to flood. In the mean time, most of them have taken shelter in the flood camps. While this correspondent visited Muzadded Alfesany Academy where a flood camp has been established, the flood victims said that they did not get any relief. They demanded adequate relief materials.

According to the district relief and rehabilitation office sources, 180 metric tons of rice, 30 metric tons of wheat and three lakh taka in cash have been sent to all the flood affected areas of all seven thanas of the district.

The District Agricultural Extension Department office sources said, they have already taken a plan to prepare seedbeds of transplanted Aman seedlings on 166 hectares of high land in the district.

BSS adds from Jagannathpur in Sunamganj district: Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad said that the present government would do whatever necessary to assist the flood affected people through the implementation of coordinated relief and rehabilitation programmes.

The flood-hit farmers would be supplied with seed and seedlings under farm rehabilitation programme and would be provided assistance for building houses. Azad said here on Tuesday at a meeting to review the flood situation in the district.

The minister also visited different flood affected areas of the district and distributed relief materials among the victims.

The minister announced a cash donation of Taka one lakh from Awami League's Relief Fund.

The Deputy Commissioner of Sunamganj briefed the minister about the flood situation

and the post-flood rehabilitation programme.

During distribution of relief materials among the victims, the minister enquired about their welfare. The minister was told that the flood situation in Sunamganj was improving although the water level in the Surma was flowing above the danger level.

UNB reports from Habiganj: Standing crops on about 25,000 hectares of land in seven thanas of the district have been damaged by the onrush of flood waters.

Local Agriculture Extension Department said standing Aus and Aman crops, vegetables and seedbeds of the vast tract of land in Sadar, Madhabpur, Chunarughat, Nabiganj, Lakhal, Baniabhang and Ajmiriganj thanas were damaged due to heavy downpour and onrush of hilly waters.

Of the total, crops on some 3,821 hectares were damage in Sadar, 6,582 hectares in Madhabpur, 2,433 hectares in Chunarughat, 7,152 hectares in Nabiganj, 1,509 hectares in Lakhal, 3,608 hectares in Baniabhang and 380 hectares in Ajmiriganj.

AED officials said during the current season some 65,474 hectares of land have been brought under Aman farming in the district against the target of 69,000 hectares.

Besides, standing Aus and Aman crops in all eight thanas of the district have also been affected due to pest attack.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: Flood situation of the district is improving gradually with the recession of water level in three main river basins, but the rate is too slow.

Acute scarcity of pure drinking water is prevailing in the flood affected areas. Besides, crisis of fodder is another problem of peasants as all the

stock piles of fodder in flood affected areas have already been damaged due to long standing water-logging. So has become difficult for survival of the cattlehead for want of fodder.

Meanwhile, different political alliances, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have started relief operations in different affected areas of the district. But relief materials are not adequate. Those who are rendering services in relief activities are BNP central and district committees, MP of Gaibandha-5, Bangladesh Chhatra League, Shaghata thana, Gano Unnayan Kendro, Jatiya Mohila Sangstha, district unit of Anjuman-e-Mafidul, Sandhani Donor Club, Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, Comilla, Gaibandha, Rajshahi Club, the relief materials included rice, flat rice, pulse, biscuit, sari, lungi, life-saving drugs, water purifying tablets and cash taka.

Besides, the government allocated cash and relief materials to flood affected people which is not enough to meet the requirements. Our Kushtia Correspondent says: Post flood miseries have multiplied the woes of flood victims in six thanas of the district. The district experienced a severe flood due to onrush of hilly water from the upper riparian and incessant rain for the last one month.

As waters have started receding from the affected areas the flood victims are now in grip of various problems. The marooned people have been suffering a lot for want of pure drinking water, sufficient food-grains, fodder for cattle and adequate medicine to combat water-borne diseases. Scarcity of housebuilding materials is very acute in the affected areas. The relief materials have not yet reached the poor affected people and as a result their suf-

ferings have become manifold. Most of the people in the flood hit areas have become jobless. They need relief materials for their subsistence at the moment. Hundreds of cattlehead have died due to serious scarcity of fodder in the affected areas. Cholera, diarrhoea and dysentery have already broken out in the affected areas where vaccination, inoculation and other medical aids are needed to bring the worsening situation under control.

Prices of rice and other essential commodities have gone high beyond the purchasing capacity of common people. Post flood rehabilitation measures are immediately needed to make the people self-reliant and to get rid of miseries they are facing. Meanwhile, almost all the pucca roads from Kushtia including Kushtia-Ishwardi and Kushtia-Meherpur highways have been badly damaged due to heavy and continuous downpour during this season. The roads have developed widespread potholes and have become unworthy for easy plying of all kinds of vehicles.

Transport owners have complained that the authorities concerned had been showing indifferent attitude to take steps in this regard. They also urged the government to take immediate steps for repairing of the damaged roads.

Transport owners opined that plying of vehicles in the damaged roads would damage their vehicles and it would increase the risk of accidents. Besides, there are roads from Kushtia to Pragpur via Bheramara and other destinations which are in a very pitiable condition.

Plying of minibuses and buses would be stopped at any moment if these roads are not repaired immediately, the transport owners opined.

Some people complained that after receiving the allocation of khas land they have been facing obstacles to get the possession due to complex procedures and red-tapism.

They also alleged that a section of dishonest employees of the land offices allocate the

same land to more than one people by adopting illegal practice.

As a result, the common people fall in trouble in getting possession of their lands.

Taking the advantage, locally influential land owners use their muscle power to grab the lands.

Some of the victims said the land policy, rules and regulations prompt the local touts to file cases increasing the number of unsettled cases.

Source said, in Golachipa land office alone, some 14,806 land cases have been lying unsettled involving 31,170 acres of Khas land in the thana.

The cases were filed before announcement of the Land Policy in 1987.

Following the new land policy, fresh cases were filed and remained unsettled as usual. The number of such cases is 1,156, the report said.

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SYLHET: Jon Geddes, Second Secretary, Political, Press and Public Affairs of the British High Commission in Bangladesh speaking at a meeting with the journalists at Sylhet Press Club on Monday evening. — Star photo

UK-Bangla ties to strengthen further: Jon Geddes

From Staff Correspondent

jects, the Department of International Development is helping Sylhet Medical College to develop its curriculum and set up a model clinic. It is also involved in construction of some bridges in the region including a major bridge at Bhairab. Geddes informed.

The Second Secretary said, the number of British-Bangladeshis will be about three lakh most of whom originate from this region. Besides, there are more than 10,000 Bangladeshis owned restaurants in UK, he said adding, this is not the only field in which Bangladeshis have become successful in Britain. The community have made valuable contributions in various fields including Public Service. Over the years, many Bangladeshis have made their homes around Brick Lane in London's East end, he said further. Indeed such has been the influence of the Bangladeshis community that Brick Lane was renamed as Bangla town by the

Bangladeshi Foreign Minister during his visit there. Bangla town represents a major success story in many ways. Geddes also informed that a Bangladesh Arts Festival will be held in London in July 1999.

The Second Secretary said, Britain respects the freedom of worship of people of all religions and their right to practise their own cultural heritage. This includes respect for the arranged marriage system which is common throughout the Muslim World including Bangladesh, he said adding, however, there are instances where the respectable tradition of arranged marriage has been abused resulting in forced marriages. This is being happened frequently which is a concern for all.

The British High Commission official visited the offices of two local dailies -The Sylhet Dak and The Jalalabad on the next day. He also hosted a luncheon for some senior journalists working in Sylhet.

Large number of land cases lying unsettled across coastal belt

BARGUNA, Aug 7: A large number of cases related to khas land have been lying unsettled with various land courts across the country's coastal belts causing sufferings to the people, reports UNB.

According to a survey conducted by a local non-government organisation, about 1.5 lakh people of landless families of the coastal belt have been leading an inhuman life due to the bureaucratic complexities in allocating and recording of khas lands in the Barisal region.

Local people said vast areas of land were identified as khas land in the coastal districts which the government had decided to allocate among the landless people.

According to the survey report the applications of about 25,000 land less families are lying pending for the last half century.

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Repression on women up in Noakhali

FENI, Aug 7: Some 75 women were murdered and 979 others faced severe tortures in separate incidents in greater Noakhali during the last five months, records UNB.

Of the murders, 24 were for dowry and 20 others were killed after rape, revealed a survey conducted by the Poor Development Programme (PDP), a greater Noakhali based NGO.



SYLHET: Anamika Das who stood first among girls and seventh in the combined merit list of Science group in the SSC Examination under Comilla Board this year is the third child of Debendu Kumar Das, retired Associate Professor of Sylhet Government Women's College and Aditya Chowdhury, Senior teacher of Pragati High School. She got 908 marks with seven letters. She was a student of Blue Bird High School. — Star photo