

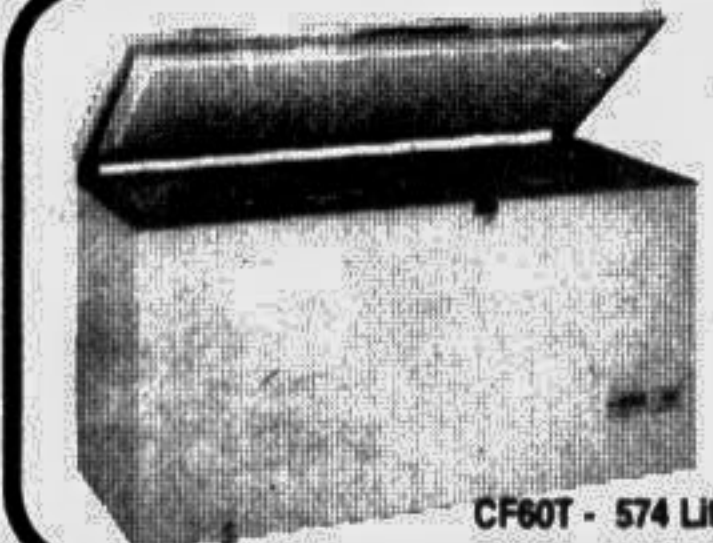


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Speaker urges MPs to stand by flood victims

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury yesterday appealed to all the members of parliament to stand beside the distressed people in the flood-affected areas, reports BSS.

Welcoming the members at the commencement of the 10th session of the seventh Parliament, Speaker described the current floods as devastating and said it had already engulfed the country and hit the national life hard.

He hoped that the people of the country would tackle the situation with courage and fortitude as they have done in the past.

Earlier, the Speaker chaired a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee of the Jatiya Sangsad.

The meeting discussed the duration and businesses of the House and decided unanimously to make the current session as brief as possible so that the members of the house could stand by the flood-affected people.

Members of the committee Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Deputy Leader of the House and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman, Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Industries and Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah, Deputy Leader of the Opposition Prof AGM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Opposition Chief Whip Khondakar Delwar Hossain, Mohammad Saifur Rahman, Advocate Mohammad Rahmat Ali, and Kazi Shamsur Rahman attended the meeting.

The Prime Minister's Parliamentary Affairs adviser Suranjit Sengupta and Whip Mohammad Abdus Shahid attended the meeting on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition.

Shibir observes hartal in Ctg From Staff Correspondent CHITTAGONG, Sept 7: Life was partially disrupted in the city and its surrounding areas following a dawn-to-dusk hartal today enforced by Islami Chhatra Shibir, Chittagong University unit, to press home its five-point charter of demands.

No untoward incidents were reported during hartal period, police said. At Chittagong Port, cargo handling inside the jetties went on schedule although the delivery of goods to and from the port remained suspended as trucks were off the road, port sources said.

All kinds of vehicles except rickshaws stayed off the city roads and transports from Chittagong did not ply in the long distance routes. Shibir activists were seen picketing vigorously in Anderkilla, Momin Road, Sirajuddowlah Road, Chandanpura and Chawkbazar areas, witnesses said.

But activities in the rest of the city areas were normal with most of the offices and business houses doing their work as usual, sources said. Mills and factories at the industrial belts of Nasirabad, Patenga, Kalurghat and Sitakundu operated normally, they informed.

Asma shifted to BMU Hospital

Asma, who lost her kidney during an operation at DMCH, was shifted to Bangabandhu Medical University (BMU) Hospital yesterday for better treatment, reports UNB.

She was admitted to the Nephrology department of the hospital under the supervision of Prof Harunur Rashid. Prof Harun examined Asma and prescribed her hospital sources said.

Asma is struggling with her life after the doctors removed her only kidney at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital last month on the plea that it was diseased.

BDR-Nasaka Held at Balukhali on the Myanmar side, the flag meeting continued for two and a half hours from 2:30 pm, the sources added.

Sector Commander of BDR, Chittagong, Col Md Walullah informed that both the sides agreed in today's flag meeting to take precautionary measures to stop recurrence of such incidents of shootout in future for maintaining peace along the border. The flag meeting was held at company commander level.

The Sector Commander also informed that in today's meeting, the Myanmar team apologised to the Bangladesh team for yesterday's incident of firing. He said the Myanmar team also assured of cooperation in preventing smuggling of fertiliser from Bangladesh.

Communications Minister Anwar Hossain, Secretary Syed Rezaul Hayat and Additional Chief Engineer Nurul Azam were present at the function. Besides, the Nalka-Hatikamrul-Banpara Road, the government has taken up programmes to reconstruct 220 km-long Dhaka-Sylhet Highway, improve 510 km feeder type road and maintain 1000 km roads under the 273 million US dollar RRMF-3.

Tk 2150 crore is expected to be spent for implementing the RRMF-3 by the year 2003.

Two teenage boys drowned in separate incidents in the city yesterday. Fire service officials identified the dead as Kamal Uddin, 16, and Rumel, 17.

Kamal drowned in the river Buriganga while fishing at Abdullapur area at about 1 pm, fire services sources added. In another incident, Rumel, a resident of city's Gulshan area, drowned in the Jheel inside Dhaka Zoo while bathing along with some of his friends at about 1:30 pm, police said.

ADP funds istries to send reprogrammes how additional money could be generated by chopping the low priority projects and refocusing funds to most needed ones.



DHAKA-MAWA HIGHWAY HAS ITS GROUND LOST: Braving the gushing waters which stopped normal vehicular traffic on the road, an locomotive has made it. For most people in the surrounding areas, making a living is what matters most now. Their indomitable spirit has probably kept them going.

Flood in full fury

kuria (Gopalganj district), Nazirganj-Rajbari (Pabna district) and Sherpur-Dhuna-Kazipur (Bogra District) road links snapped yesterday as waters have been flowing at different points. Railway authorities said, rail communication between Jamalpur and Jagannathganj Ghat snapped again yesterday.

Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) officials said Rajshahi City Protection Embankment and Narsingdi-Narayanganj Irrigation Project (NNIP) have again become critically vulnerable. Troops and civilians continued their efforts to salvage some of the stranded trucks at Jangal on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway, where the level of flood water rose further. They tried to elevate portions of the flooded highway.

Troops and civilian workers, aided by people living in the area continued their battle yesterday to save the DND embankment which appeared vulnerable at several points. The swirling waters gnawed portions of the embankment at Bouranibazar, which had to be protected with wooden planks and bamboo spikes. Five new leaks at Chashara and Hajiganj were plugged with sandbags. Stacks of sandbags had to be raised further up as the fury of the Sitalakhya continued to menace the fragile defence line, protecting thousands of people living on the flood plains.

Deputy Commissioner of Narayanganj Mohammad Abdur Rahman told The Daily Star last night that the water level of Sitalakhya rose six inches above the rail line connecting the Adamjee Jute Mills where the authorities had to reinforce the defence lines with 15,000 sandbags yesterday evening. In the evening, the Lakhya rose by three cm over its morning tide level of 6.69 cm, the DC said.

It is natural that the water level will rise further due to the impact of the full moon which normally keeps the tide high. If the river continues to rise today, it will pose a danger to the embankment, the DC said. Panic gripped the people living in the area.

UZ Parishad Bill tabled

parishads and pourashava under the upazila. The Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) will act as the secretary of the Upazila Parishad. In a statement containing the objects and reasons of the Bill, the LGRD and Cooperatives Minister said that the government had decided to enact the Bill to strengthen the local government system in the country.

He said that the establishment of Upazila Parishad was an election commitment of the present government and enactment of the Bill would fulfil the government's commitment. The Supreme Court Judges (Remuneration and Privileges) Bill has sought certain amendments to the respective ordinance of 1978 for enhancement of salaries and remunerations of the Supreme Court judges.

The President's (Remuneration and Privileges) Bill sought amendments to the respective act of 1975 to refix the president's remuneration and privileges. The Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority Bill sought certain amendments to the respective ordinance to make the law suitable for collecting tolls from Bangabandhu Bridge and all the bridges which are 1500-metre or more in length.

Dhaka to host NAM Summit in 2001

The next summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) will be held in Bangladesh in 2001, reports UNB. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced this in Parliament last night amidst cheers from members on both sides of the House.

Hasina said Bangladesh will be the Chairman of the NAM after it hosts the 13th summit in Dhaka in 2001. The just concluded 12th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement was held in Durban in South Africa. South African President Nelson Mandela is the new Chairman of the Movement.

The Prime Minister told the House that she had to cancel her programme to attend the NAM summit in view of the current flood. 20 feared drowned as rescue trawler capsizes in Padma FARIDPUR, Sept 7: Twenty people are feared drowned in the swollen Padma when a rescue trawler carrying them capsized in between North Channel union and CNB ghat today, reports UNB.

The trawler, while rescuing the marooned people of the union in Sadar thana, capsized with all passengers on board at about 5:30 in the evening. District Administration sources said a relief trawler reached the spot soon after the capsiz but was yet to recover any body of the passengers. A total of 14 trawlers were engaged to rescue the 200 families of the union which was totally submerged with the rise of turbulent Padma.

Land dispute

gunpoint. But according to the police official, out of fear both the girls took shelter at one of their neighbour's house during the incident. Police handed the girls over to their parents yesterday noon. A series of untoward incidents occurred earlier relating to the possession of the piece of land where Kawsar Sultana, wife of Arsal Ali has been staying. So far, the woman could not show any legal document in support of her ownership of the land, said a police official.

Four members of the gang were arrested, one possessing a firearm, police said. The arrested were identified as Razzak, Abdul Kalam, Nayan and Mahe Alam. Kawsar Sultana alleged in her FIR that Abdul Kader, ward commissioner of the area, instigated the gang to attack her house at about 12:30 am, police said. The gang demanded Tk one lakh from the family and on refusal to pay the sum the armed goons started beating the inmates of the house, it was stated in the FIR.

The armedmen then took away Tk 40,000 in cash, 10 tola of gold ornaments, electronic goods, valuables and some almirahs from the house. They also dragged at gunpoint two of her daughters, one aged about 13 and the other about 19, out of her house, Sultana said in the FIR. A case in this regard was filed with Mirpur thana yesterday accusing more than 35 people including the local ward commissioner. Police also filed a separate case in connection with possession of illegal arms by one of the arrested.

Essentials

From Page 1 katcha bazar of the New Market. Anwar said she goes shopping every week and found prices of some of the essential items up by Tk 10 to 20 per kg this week. "Except chicken, the price of every item is increasing." The price of onion shot up to Tk 30 per kg from Tk 28, Ginger to Tk 50 from Tk 44, pepper to Tk 90 from Tk 80, flour to Tk 16 from 15 and soyabean oil to Tk 54 from Tk 50 per kg, according to shopkeepers.

Price of some vegetables also rose by Tk 5 to 10 per kg but the shopkeepers said it was a normal phenomenon during this period. "During the month of Bhadra and Asoin, prices of vegetables in the country go up every year" said Abu Sayeed, a vegetable trader for the last 27 years. "The prices may go up," Sayeed observed. Green chilly was selling at Tk 150 to 160 per five kg yesterday against Tk 100 a week back. Cucumber was selling at Tk 24 to 28 per kg. Its price was Tk 20 to 24 earlier. Price of Carrot rose to Tk 50 per kg from 40.

Prices of Hilsa and shrimp however decreased over the last few days. Fish traders at the market said a big size Hilsa which was earlier sold at between Tk 250 and 300 was selling at between Tk 150 and Tk 180 yesterday. Medium size Shrimp was sold at between Tk 150 to 350 per kg. Its price was Tk 250 to 400 earlier.

4 WASA pump stations closed, 40 others may face similar fate

Four water pump stations of WASA were closed while operation of 40 others may be suspended anytime, reports UNB. "Operation of about 40 pump stations is going on with all odds. We may be forced to close them down because of flooding," WASA chief engineer Kazi Mohammad Sheesh told UNB over telephone yesterday.

He, however, assured that the pumps at higher places will be kept in operation to maintain water supply to all areas in the city. The water lines are inter-connection, not isolated, he added. The WASA official appealed to the city dwellers to use boiled water for all purposes. Kazi Sheesh was apparently worried and nervous at the worsening flood situation. "We are perturbed at the forecast that water level may go up further by one and a half feet. We do not know what could be done in that event."

"You won't get water by sinking tube wells", he said. "You need to go about 200 feet deep which will not be an easy task." He said a comprehensive plan has been drawn up for repairing and cleaning of water and sewerage lines. The work will start from September 15 if the water recedes. "Our fervent appeal to the city dwellers is not to throw non-dissolvable materials like polythene bags and papers and hard materials in the manhole, most of which are open now. That will make our task extremely difficult," said the WASA chief engineer.

BNP calls 8-hr hartal in Sylhet division today

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, Sept 7: BNP has called for an 8-hour hartal in four districts of Sylhet Division tomorrow as part of its 5-day agitation programme. The programme was announced in protest against lodging of 'fake and motivated' cases against BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, former finance minister Saifur Rahman, and other senior leaders by the government and for its failure in carrying out relief activities adequately throughout the country.

The other programmes include mass contact with professional groups and like-minded political leaders and workers and bringing out protest rallies today in all the four districts of the division. He questioned the wisdom of many members of the standing committee. "There are complaints against inclusion of many of them in the party's decision-making body. But no changes have been made in deference to the wishes of the party workers."

Akhbar said he did not request the party chief to change the decision. He replied in the negative when asked if he would follow suit in case all the party MPs deposit the resignation letter to the chairperson. "So what if all of them do it?"

Injunction against holding of FBCCI election

From Our Correspondent LALMONIRHAT, Sept 7: Senior Assistant Judge, Lalmonirhat Sadar, Golam Mostafa has issued a temporary injunction against holding of election of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI), scheduled for October 15. The injunction followed a case filed by former MP Abul Hossain and Fazlul Haque, both members of Lalmonirhat Chamber of Commerce and Industries, challenging dropping of their names from the voters' list of the FBCCI. The voters' list was published on September one.

The petitioners said that as per the FBCCI constitution, Lalmonirhat chamber has four voters. The ADC (Gen) of Lalmonirhat, who is now the administrator of the chamber, had sent a list of four voters to the FBCCI but the two names of the petitioners were dropped from the voters' list.

Rubel murder

From Page 1 the investigators. The CID is also certain that the DB policemen who are "missing" since the murder of Rubel in custody were involved in the torture, the sources said. The two DB men will be also accused in the CID chargesheet in the murder case. The CID is likely to submit the chargesheet of the case by the end of this month, the sources said.

শেখ হাসিনা সরকারের অধীনে বাংলাদেশ গ্যাস সার্ভিসেস লিমিটেড (BGS) কর্তৃক পরিচালিত।

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