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Damage to edn instts estimated at Tk 650 cr

At least 10,000 educational institutions have so far been affected by the ongoing floods, and damage to the infrastructure has been estimated at Tk 650 crore, reports BSS.

The government has sought Tk 340 crore as emergency relief from donor countries and agencies to recover initially from the losses in the country's education sector.

According to a primary assessment conducted by the Education Ministry across the country, 8,000 primary schools and 1758 secondary schools, colleges and madrassahs have been affected by flood waters. Of the total affected primary schools, 3,000 were fully damaged and infrastructures of the rest 5,000 were partially affected.

The preliminary assessment was made on the basis of reports from the district education offices. Education Ministry sources said. Earlier the district offices were asked to submit their reports on damage and other losses to the ministry.

A full assessment of the damage to educational institutions will be made when the flood waters recede, sources added.

The United Nations in its recent proposal for emergency relief in support of the government of Bangladesh, said 80 per cent schools have been damaged and the remaining 20 per cent

were now being used as flood shelters in 47 flood-affected districts.

Most of the school and college premises of the country's central part were inundated by flood waters and text books and other classroom materials have been destroyed, the district education offices informed the ministry.

The Education Ministry at a meeting recently with Education Minister SAHK Sadeq in the chair, reviewed the situation of the flood-affected educational institutions.

The government will undertake immediate repairs on the basis of existing preliminary estimates of damage and a massive rehabilitation programme of the institutions will be taken in the affected districts.

PM asks ministers, AL MPs to stand by flood victims

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday reiterated her call to the ministers and MPs to stand beside the flood-hit people, reports BSS.

She renewed the call while presiding over a meeting of the United League Parliamentary Party (ULPP) at the Sangsad Bhavan.

The Prime Minister urged them to supervise relief operations so that not a single affected person is deprived of relief materials.

5 temporary army camps in 2 CHT dists withdrawn

KHAGRACHHARI, Sept 8: Five temporary army camps in Khagrachhari and Rangamati districts were withdrawn and the troops closed to cantonments till Monday as per the CHT peace agreement, sources said, reports UNB.

Those were Jongi Tilla camp in Khagrachhari region, Dharmapukur and Chandra Singpara camps in Guimara region, Navanga camp in Rangamati region and Noapara camp in Kapla region.



LEAVING NO STONE UNTURNED: Stones are real heavy on the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway. At a place called Barabo, under Rugganj thana, landslides stopped traffic. The photo shows poor labourers work hard to clean up the mess while government engineers watch. Yesterday, our photographer Anisur Rahman also saw military engineers lending a hand and reported that the road was in real danger.

Special alert

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Twenty-one people died yesterday from drowning, snake bite and electrocution in the country, raising the flood related death toll to 631, said the control room of the Relief Ministry.

Health Directorate said diarrhoea claimed another 14 people and 8,312 more were attacked in 24 hours till noon yesterday. With this, the death toll from diarrhoea rose to 134.

Apart from the Padma and Mahananda, the Sitalakha in Narayanganj also crossed the previous highest record in a century and was flowing 6.92 metre above the danger mark.

The Buriganga and Turag, now flowing 6.92 metres and 7.61 metres above their respective danger levels, will further rise by 24 cm and 29 cm by 6 am on September 11.

According to Relief Ministry control room, the districts where the situation aggravated further yesterday are: Dhaka, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Narasingdi, Gazipur, Madaripur, Faridpur, Shariatpur, Rajbari, Gopalganj, Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Kishoreganj, Tangail, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Rajshahi, Naogaon, Chapainawabganj, Pabna, Sirajganj, Bogra, Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Chandpur, Habiganj, Noakhali, Laxmipur, Barisal and Kushtia.

The FFWC, predicting slow improvement of flood situation, said "but it all depends on the phenomenon of nature."

It, however, said: "Since the rainfall and the inflow at the upper catchment area seems better, the recession of flood water depends on the tidal effect at the estuary of the country."

Additional Director General (Operations) of Bangladesh Railway (BR) NM Khurshid Anower told The Daily Star last night that tracks were submerged at Ullapara near Sirajganj and at Gandaria near Narayanganj.

"We are trying hard to keep the Dhaka-Chittagong train service. Tracks will be further elevated at the flooded points if necessary," he said.

An additional train will be pressed into service today to transport export items, he said.

Relief supply to northern districts inadequate, allege RCC commissioners

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Sept 8: Twenty war commissioners of Rajshahi City Corporation in a joint statement today alleged that the government was providing inadequate amount of relief materials to the flood hit people of the northern districts.

They said that the government was busy distributing relief materials in the eastern region without giving much attention to the flood-hit districts in the northern region.

They protested the discriminatory attitude of the government and demanded adequate amount of relief materials for the northern districts.

They also demanded distribution of relief materials through the Armed Forces.

Saiduzzaman Khan Mato, Shahid Ahmed Badal, Entazul Islam, Zahidul Islam, Jahan Panna, Ansar Ali and Nazma Begum signed, among others, the statement.

Sheikh Hasina said, those who were made homeless by the flood would get priority in getting loan from house-building fund. In addition, the poor and marginal farmers as well as people affected by river erosion would be rehabilitated under 'Ashrayan Prokalpa' and 'Adarshya Gram Prokalpa'.

The Prime Minister said that necessary loans would be

'Dhaka's election as NAM chairman for next term a rare honour'

Foreign Secretary Mustafizur Rahman yesterday said Bangladesh's election as Chairman of the 114-member Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) for next term is a unique and rare honour for the country.

The 12th NAM Summit, held in Durban of South Africa from September 2-3, unanimously decided to hold the next summit of the Movement in Dhaka and confer the Chairmanship on Bangladesh.

"This is a reflection of confidence and trust by Least Developed Countries in Bangladesh," Rahman told UNB at his office.

He said the election of Bangladesh as the Chairman of NAM, the second largest organisation after the United Na-

Donors urged

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lief is being distributed through the official channel and there is no scope for politicisation of the relief operation.

"He also ruled out the demand for setting up an all party relief committee raised by the opposition.

Kibria claimed that relief reaching the furthest corners of the country and food is reaching people where it is needed because of the method applied by the government.

Speaking on the donors' response, the minister said the US has committed food aid of four lakh metric tons while Australia announced 50,000 metric tons of food aid in addition to similar amount of normal aid.

The World Food Programme has pledged to provide 2.22 lakh MT while private importers have imported 3.5 MT in the last two months.

Canada is expected to announce its contribution in a couple of days, he said.

Food and Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury told newsmen that the first US food aid consignment is expected to arrive by end of September. She said more supplies will start coming from October.

Outlining the government's relief activities, he said the finance ministry has allocated an additional Tk five crore in cash and 45,000 metric tons of rice.

Twenty-five lakh people will be given cards under the vulnerable group feeding (VGF) programme, she said adding that half the cards have already been distributed. Some 107,000 metric tons of rice have been allocated for the VGF programme. Under gratuitous relief 61,200 MT rice has been allocated, she noted.

The minister also said Tk five crore has been allocated for house building in the flood affected areas and another Tk 12 crore will soon be allocated for the purpose. For agriculture rehabilitation, Tk 21.56 crore has been allocated and two lakh tonnes of fertiliser will be imported.

"We are talking about rehabilitation of the flood-hit projects with the donors," Kibria said. "We have requested them to rehabilitate their own projects."

and the schools were declared closed. The renovation works of these educational institutions would start immediately after the assessment of exact damage.

She said that Tk 10 crore has been allocated for repairing of damaged embankments on emergency basis while immediate, short-term and long-term schemes have also been prepared to rehabilitate and repair railways and roads.

The Prime Minister said that owing to devastating flood the import of foodgrains in the current fiscal has been raised to six lakh metric tonnes from targeted three lakh metric tonnes. Besides, she said, to meet the food shortage, a commitment of four lakh metric tonnes of wheat was received from USAID and another 1700 metric tonnes from Italy.

BNP observes hartal in greater Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Sept 8: A half-day hartal, called by BNP in four districts of Sylhet division, was observed peacefully.

BNP called the hartal protesting filing of 'false cases' by the government against the party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia, former finance minister Saifur Rahman and other senior BNP leaders.

During the hartal, all modes of vehicles were off the roads while no classes were held in educational institutions.

Attendance in private and government offices was thin. Business establishments remained closed. Trains and Biman flights, however, operated as usual.

There was no report of any untoward incident during the hartal.

The Sylhet District BNP held a rally at Court Point of the town during hartal.

JU students withdraw gherao programme

By JU Correspondent

Students of Jahangirnagar University (JU) withdrew gherao programme of the Vice-Chancellor's residence yesterday following the VC's assurance of their security on the campus and publication of report of the 'Fact Finding Committee' on rapes on the campus on September 13.

The 30-hours gherao by students under the banner of General Students Unity (GSU) started from 4 pm Monday.

The VC came out of his residence at around 9:45 last night and assured the students that he would take sufficient measures to prevent any untoward incident on the campus.

He said that the university Syndicate would meet on September 13 to review the Fact Finding Committee report.

WASA to supply water by boats

By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka WASA will start supplying drinking water by boats to the flood affected people in the city's submerged areas from this morning.

WASA said yesterday that 10 of its water pumps were shut down due to the deluge resulting in serious crisis of drinking water in Magbarah, Pearabagh, Madhubagh, Khilgona, Rampura, Gulshan, Pragoti Sarani and other adjacent areas.

A WASA official said that water could be supplied to most of these areas by normal motorised vehicles but, for certain other areas boats are the only option.

WASA is going to supply water in big plastic containers by boats to the worst-hit areas in Basabo, Kadamtala, Mirbagh, Mirana, Ashkona, Mirer Chala, Anandanagar, Nandipara, Goran, Bonasri and Khilgona.

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CID takes up KMP malkhana theft case

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 8: The CID has taken up investigation of the case of theft in the KMP malkhana police sources said today.

Nurul Huda, Additional IG (CID) of Police visited the malkhana yesterday.

During the visit, Nurul Huda expressed his dissatisfaction over the "gross irregularities" in the KMP administration.

"He also took note of the haphazard condition of the malkhana, and freestyle movement of outsiders with prisoners in the court hajat", one source said.

The Additional IG also interrogated CSI Majetul Islam and constable Jalaluddin, both accused in the theft case. They are now in CID custody.

ASP Iqbal Ahmed of CID was made the IO of the case today.

Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs M A Rob also visited the malkhana today. He also expressed dissatisfaction at the maintenance of

registers and alamats (evidence in cases).

Meanwhile, the five-member probe body headed by Additional Police Commissioner Dhananjay Sarker is learn to have submitted its report to police commissioner Kazi Nazrul Islam.

Another probe body headed by Additional DIG Khulna Range Mozammel Hing has been formed. It is expected to submit its report on the incident shortly.

The sources said that the accused are still denying their involvement in the incident in which a large member of firearms, ammunition and other alamats were stolen from the malkhana Friday night. A highly placed source in KMP when contacted today, did not rule out the possibility of the AC (prosecution) being charged for negligence in checking the malkhana registers as per rule.

Two former CSIs Robinndra Nath and Mokhesur Rahman have also been asked to appear before probe bodies.

The sources said no stolen firearm and ammunition could be recovered till today.

CU teachers to boycott classes today

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Sept 8: The Chittagong University Teachers' Association (CUTA) has decided to boycott all classes tomorrow protesting Shibir's attack on the university teachers' bus and shuttle train.

According to a press release signed by Prof Hamida Banu, President of the association today, CUTA will also hold a rally wearing black badges on the campus protesting Shibir's violence.

Earlier, Shibir damaged five CU teachers' buses during their on going siege programme.

The university shuttle train remained out of service till today. The Railway authorities suspended the university shuttle train from on September 6 after a train driver was kidnapped and an assistant driver was attacked by Shibir activists on September 5.

Meanwhile, Shibir extended its siege programme on the campus for an indefinite period after observing a day-long strike in greater Chittagong yesterday.

In a related development, Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) protested the authorities' decision to ban all political rallies and processions on the campus. In a press release signed by Mohammad Kalim, General Secretary of the BCL university unit, declared that it will ignore the ban.

Official sources said about 2,50,000 cattle have been living without sufficient food for over two months as flood waters have inundated the farms.

Milk vita

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But the prolonged flood has made colossal damage to the dairy farms, with the cows failing to give the required quantity of milk as they are suffering from malnutrition and other diseases.

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4 fire brigade stations in city closed

By Staff Correspondent

The Fire Brigade suspended its operations in four of its 12 stations in the city till yesterday, due to rise in flood waters, according to official sources.

Among these, three stations — Postagola, Demra and Lalbagh — were closed yesterday, sources said.

The Goran station was closed about a month ago, they added.

5 temporary army camps in 2 CHT dists withdrawn

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Road links snapped

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services at the Aricha, Natakola and Nagarbari ghats, snapping the capital's road links with 36 south-western and north-western districts.

The ferryghats at Aricha are at least under three feet water, a senior official of BIWTC said last night.

Ferry service at Mawaghat was suspended on Monday. The Dhaka-Mawa highway that connects the capital with south-western districts has already been inundated at several points.

The capital's road links with Sylhet and Narasingdi were cut

4 Bangladeshis among 67 held in Turkey

EDIRNE, Turkey, Sept 8: Turkish authorities detained 67 would-be immigrants including four Bangladeshis as they tried to sneak across the border into Greece, the Anatolia news agency reported today, says AP.

Authorities also detained five Turks suspected of smuggling the immigrants, according to Anatolia. Turkey's semi-official news agency.

The refugees were rounded up in at least seven villages along the Meric River, which marks the border between Turkey and Greece. The river is known as Evros in Greece.

Fifty of the immigrants were Iraqis. The rest were five Romanians, four Bangladeshis, three Palestinians, two Iranians, two Pakistanis and one Rwandan, Anatolia said.

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