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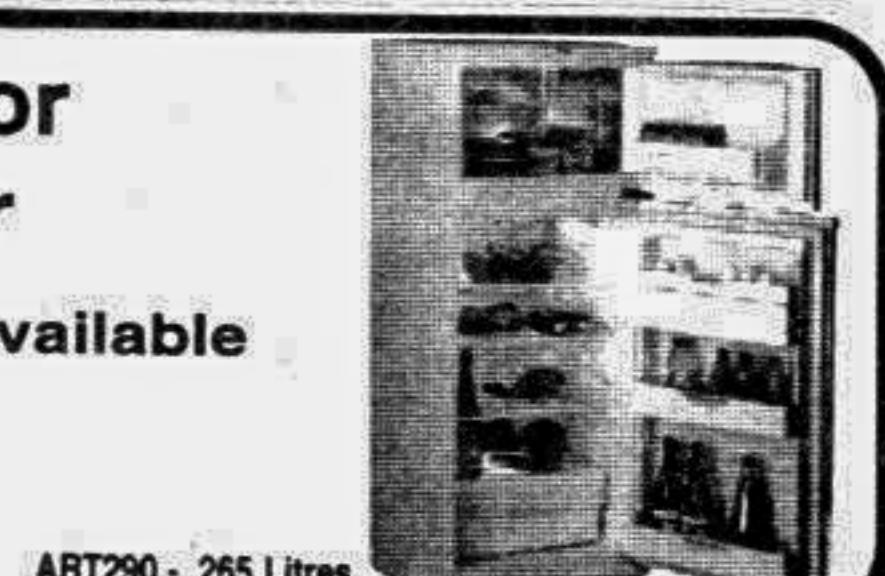
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Debate in JS
body over
distribution of
housing plots

Parliamentarians both from
opposition and ruling parties
yesterday criticised the way city
housing plots were allegedly
handed but mainly to Awami
Leaguers, reports UNB.

"You have let us down. We
can't show our face ...
Akhtarruzzaman MP, Chairman
of the Parliamentary Standing
Committee on Housing and
Public Works Ministry, was
learnt to have told the RAJUK
officials in the JS body meeting.

"If you think nothing unfair
took place in this regard, please
make clear your position to the
public through press conference
or press release," the ruling
party MP reportedly told them.

As soon as the standing
committee session began at
Sangsad Bhaban at 3pm, BNP
lawmaker Abdul Mannan Talukdar
brought the issue to notice of the
meeting.

He, in this regard, showed
some press reports, especially
from Daily Janakantha, and said: "Even the Awami League-
supported newspaper has said
the plots had been allocated to
ruling party men."

However, the meeting de-
cided to talk the issue of allot-
ment of 301 plots in posh Gul-
shan, Banani and Uttara areas
after discussing other agenda
scheduled earlier, meeting
sources said.

As the plot allocation came
up for discussion under mis-
cellaneous issues, RAJUK Chair-
man Azizul Haq told the meet-
ing that nothing unfair took
place in sanctioning the land
plots.

"We maintained the pro-
cedures followed earlier in allot-
ting the plots to people under
various categories," he told the
ruling and opposition lawmak-
ers.

Housing and Public Works
Minister Engineer Mosharraf
Hossain, who also got a plot,
said he didn't take it as a min-
ister or MP. I have been given a
plot under freedom fighter cate-
gory."

The JS body decided to hold
a meeting between the Standing
Committee and the Rajshahi
Uttara Kartripakha (RAJUK) on
July 28 to find out whether there
had been any ir-
regularities in allotting the
plots.

The meeting was informed
that the names of 3,000 people
who would be given plots in Ut-
tara would be announced
within next six weeks. Applica-
tions were sought for the alloca-
tion earlier.

Ctg flood

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east country to divert to Dhaka
though it was scheduled to land
here, airport sources said.

Normal life in the hill dis-
tricts was paralysed due to
downpour.

Administration sources said
about 1000 tribal people were
evacuated from Baghaichhari
area under Rangamati hill dis-
trict today as flood water inunda-
ted over 100 dwelling houses.

Sharif

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pealed to the international
community to bring New Delhi
to the negotiating table to help
prevent recurrence of Kargil-
like situation.

"Now the dialogue phase
should begin. We need to get
back to the negotiating table as
this situation (Kargil-like
crisis) is bound to recur," Pak-
istani Foreign Minister
spokesman Tariq Altaf told
reporters.

"This (Kargil) was only a
small episode. The larger issue
(Kashmir problem) is very
much on the horizon and it
would be a gross mistake not to
pay attention to this issue," he
cautioned.

Nothing that as long as
Kashmir problem remained un-
resolved there might be more
such crises, the spokesman said
the "international community
should now tell India to come to
the negotiating table."

"The ball is in the court of
international community to
help resolve the Kashmir issue,"
the spokesman said.

Earlier India today halted
its military offensives in
Kashmir and set a deadline for
the pullout of all Islamic infil-
trators from the disputed terri-
tory.

"All Pakistani forces must
withdraw well north of the LoC
(Line of Control border) in
Kashmir by July 16 morning,"
external affairs ministry
spokesman R. Jassal said in
New Delhi.

He said Pakistan's Director
General of Military Operations
(DGMO) in meeting Sunday with
his Indian counterpart had
agreed to "comply."

"Any Pakistani intruders
found after the deadline will be
treated as hostile and dealt with
accordingly," he said, but in-
sisted the four-day grace period
did not amount to the granting
of safe passage.

Road mishaps kill 5000 a year in Bangladesh

Involvement of private sector in World Bank road safety scheme being planned

Bangladesh incurs a loss of
over Tk 1000 crore because of
traffic jams while several thou-
sand lives are lost due to road
accidents a year, reports UNB.

This was revealed by former
Bangladesh Road Transport Au-
thority (BRTA) Chairman Nazmul
Hossain yesterday in a meeting
between the World Bank and the
Federation of Bangladesh Chambers
of Commerce and Industry held at
the FBCCI office.

It was aimed at involving
the private sector with the
WB scheme on road safety.

He said that last year over
5000 people were killed in road
accidents.

In Bangladesh, out of 10000
vehicles, 70 meet fatal accident
while in India and Europe the
rate is 35 and 1 to 2 respectively.

Considering the grave situa-
tion, the World Bank is cur-
rently preparing Community
Road Safety Initiative Project
(CRSIP) as part of global pro-
gramme against road accidents.

The main objectives of the
project are reduction of road
accidents as a major cause of

death and injury in Bangladesh
and also to improve road safety
in the communities through lo-
cal community participation in
the design, as well as the im-
plementation of road-safety
programmes.

World Bank private Sector
Consultant Judge de Vera who
led the bank at the talks said
the Bangladesh government
and the World Bank, together
with various stakeholders, had
expressed grave concern over
the rate of traffic accidents and
fatalities in the country.

Rate of traffic accidents in
Bangladesh is one of the highest
in South Asia," he said.

In response to this imme-
diate need for action on road
safety, the World Bank consul-
tant underscored implementation
of the WB programme.

Narrating success story of
such a project in the Philip-
pines, he told the meeting that
traffic problems could best be
solved by a combination of proper
enforcement of traffic rules and
regulation, adequate traffic
engineering and driver/pedestrian
awareness of

good driving habits and road
courtesy.

Vera said that the Philippine
experience clearly showed that a
partnership between the pri-
vate and public sector was
workable in a win-win situa-
tion for both parties.

He appealed to the
Bangladesh business commu-
nity for its immediate in-
volvement with this commu-
nity road-safety project with
government of Bangladesh and
the World Bank as equal partners.

FBCCI President Abdul Awal
Minto suggested that in order
to develop a sustainable Road
Safety and surface transport
management the concerned
Ministry should be restructured.
Motor vehicle licensing function
and regulatory work should be
separated.

Abdul Haque, Director,
FBCCI, Syed Shamsul Kaumain
Kutub, Director, FBCCI SM Al-
Husainy, Advisor, FBCCI, Alhaj
Abdus Salam, Amir Hussain
Khan and MH Rahman also
spoke on the occasion.

Denmark keen to
resolve problems
of KAFCO

Denmark is interested in re-
solving the outstanding prob-
lems of KAFCO to make it
technically and commercially
viable, reports BSS.

Danish ambassador to
Bangladesh Finn Thilsted con-
veyed his country's willingness
when he called on Commerce
and Industries Minister Tofail
Ahmed at his office in the city
yesterday.

The envoy said, the Danish
Industrial Fund for Developing
Countries, a shareholder of
KAFCO, is waiting for the report
of the International Finance
Corporation (IFC) regarding re-
habilitation plan of KAFCO. He
also said the Danish govern-
ment wants to provide financial
support in some social de-
velopment projects.

Welcoming the Danish gov-
ernment's support and assis-
tance for the development of
Bangladesh, the Minister said,
IFC will submit the final report
on KAFCO very soon. He said,
the government, shareholders,
KAFCO and other concerned
want to resolve the issue once
for all. He said, the government
has given special attention to
attract foreign investment.

Opposition

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sisting the polls if their de-
mands are ignored and the gov-
ernment tries to hold the up-
azilla and city corpora-
tions unilaterally like in the re-
cently held municipal elec-
tions.

We had boycotted the mu-
nicipal polls as our demands
were not met and we didn't call
to resist the elections. But this
time, we will not only boycott
the elections ... we will resist
the polls at any cost if the gov-
ernment attempts to hold elec-
tions unilaterally," said a top

UNP leader.

Opposition leaders said their
planned anti-government cam-
paigns will take place during
the months of July, August and
September while the non-stop,
tough anti-government agita-
tion will start from the first
week of October. There will be
occasional hartal and blockade
programmes before the non-
stop movement in October.

"We plan to begin a massive
mass contact by the senior
leaders of the party from this
month, but the tour may be de-
layed as there is a forecast for
flood," said a senior BNP leader
adding, "But we are determined
to take our movement to the final
stage by the end of the year
with the objective of ousting
the government by March, next
year."

Another top ranking BNP
leader said Begum Kheda Zia
will take up a number of road
marches from the capital to dif-
ferent bordering places like
Tamabil (Sylhet), Satkura,
Chittagong Hill Tracts, Halu-
aghata (Mymensingh) and the
south-western regions. The
marches will take place in
phases.

The four opposition parties
-- BNP, Jatiya Party, Jamaat-e-
Islam and Islamic Olyka Jote
will simultaneously begin a
three-day road march on differ-
ent routes beginning July 25.
This will be the second road
march of the opposition. The
first one took place on May 16.

Begum Zia will lead the
Dhaka-Mymensingh road
march while three other par-
ties are planning to go to other
corners of the country. BNP's July
25-27 march will cover
Narayanganj, Narsingdi,
Kishoreganj, Netrakona, Ja-
malpur, Sherpur and My-
mensingh.

Another road march is ex-
pected next month. Simulta-
neously, the opposition parties
are planning to launch various
action programmes, including
gherao of the secretariat, prime
minister's office and other im-
portant offices bringing cor-
ruption charges against the
concerned authorities, rail-
road blockade, gherao of divi-
sional, district and thana
headquarters, mass rallies and
demonstration.

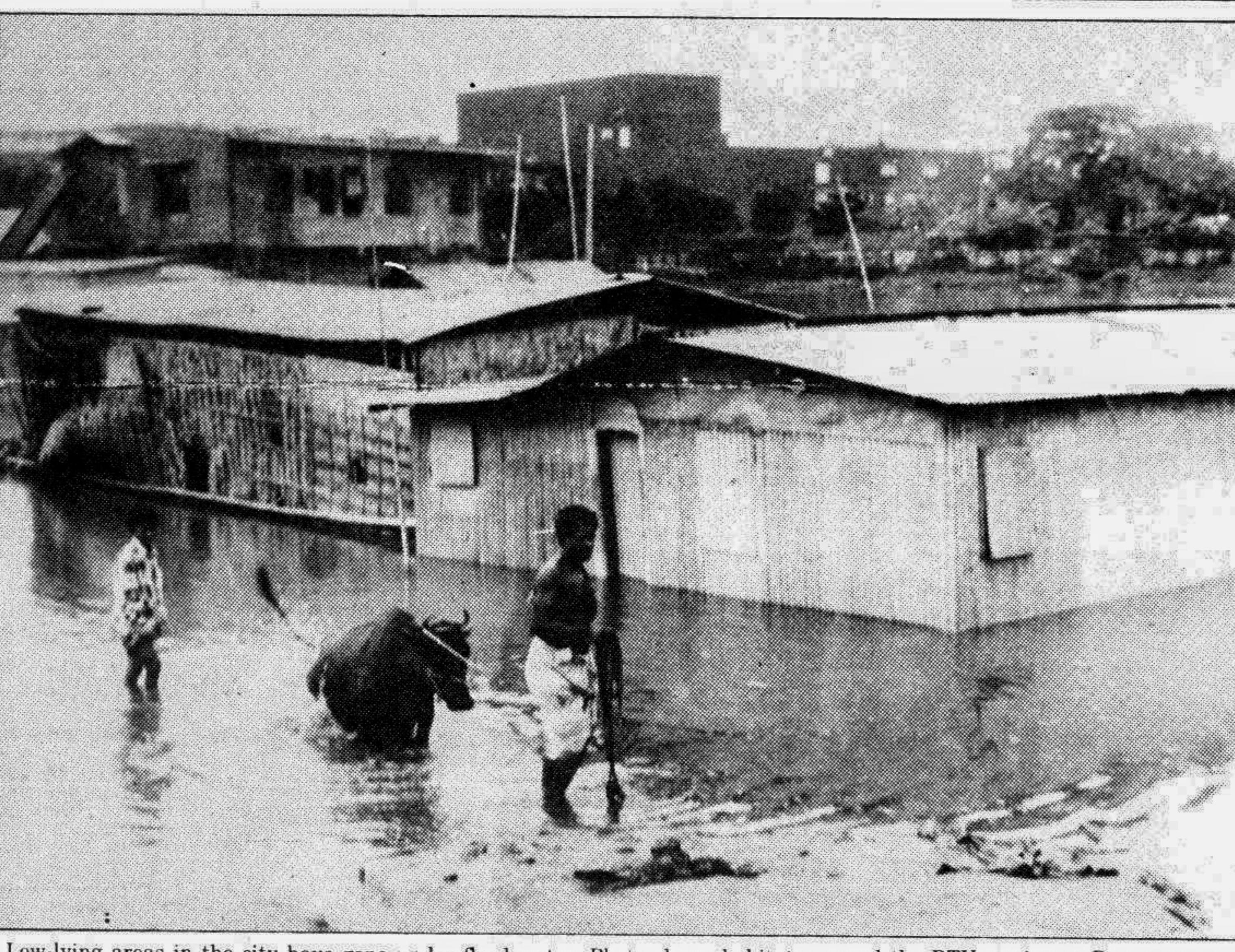
Sources said BNP will soon
give necessary instruction to all
its district and thana units
across the country to prepare
for the road marches. Local
leaders in consultation with
headquarters will finalise the
routes and possible dates of the
planned marches.

Sources said BNP's policy
making body said the leader of
the opposition will send all se-
nior leaders of BNP and its
front organisations for a hectic
tour across the country to drum
up support for the planned
marches as well as to further
strengthen organisational ac-
tivity.

Sources said during the road
marches, Begum Zia will ask
the people to take preparation
for "Cholo Cholo, Dhaka
Cholo" and the one-point out-
government programmes.

A top leader of the BNP yes-
terday said that the party chief
had already held a number of
meetings with her senior col-
leagues, advisors, policy mak-
ers and front organisation
leaders and discussed about the
future course of action with them.

She will soon formally meet
with standing committee mem-
bers, MPs, concerned senior
leaders and front organisation
leaders to finalise the long term
programmes and the strategy of
movement.



Low-lying areas in the city have gone under flood water. Photo shows habitats around the BTV station at Rampura.

—Star photo

Breach in embankment

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until 7 a.m. yesterday.

When troops were sum-
moned to repair the breach, it
was too late. They had very lit-
tle to do in repairing the dam-
age in strong current and incen-
sant rain, some district offi-
cials said. They said a spinning
mill, built at a cost of tk 35
crore, has also been affected by
the flood water.

Our correspondent reported
that the situation in the Feni
district also deteriorated with
heavy rains and rush of water
from the Tripura hills.

The Muhuri was flowing
above danger level and flood
control embankments of Selo-
nia and Kohua rivers developed
cracks at four points.

Six unions of Fulgazi,
Parshuram and Chagalnaya
thanas have been inundated in
the last 24 hours. Road links
between Parshuram and Belo-
nia and between Chagalnaya
and Muhuriganj were disrupted.
Water was overflowing the
Feni-Parshuram road.

There are allegations that the
embankment became vul-
nerable at least three days ago
but the Deputy Commissioner of
Comilla did not call Army

relief camps have been
opened at different places and
they are being given dry food by
the administration. Water Re-
sources and Flood Control Min-
ister Abdur Razzak visited the
Gumti embankment yesterday.

The breach occurred about 4
kilometres away from Comilla
Cantonment.

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