



PHOTO: STAR

EROSION ADDS TO FLOOD MISERY...

Houses, left, under the threat of collapse because of erosion in Ratankandi village in Kazipara upazila, Sirajganj; and villagers, middle, mill around the river bank on the edge of cave-in at Gangachhara and families, right, left homeless by devastating erosion in Rangpur.

Flood status sharply falls in 6 N-dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Flood situation in six northern districts sharply deteriorated yesterday as the Brahmaputra swelled further due to torrential rains and submerged fresh areas.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) feared that the situation in Panchagarh, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Kurigram and Gaibandha might deteriorate further.

Sufferings of the flood-hit people are mounting due to shortage of food and medicine and scarcity of drinking water.

In Nilphamari, the authorities have closed all schools to accommodate people displaced from their homes.

Officials of the FFWC said yesterday more areas in Bogra, Jamalpur, Sirajganj, Pabna and Tangail are likely to go under water in the next 24 to 48 hours. The situation in Narayanganj, Manikganj, Munsiganj, Madaripur and Narsingdi might worsen slightly.

The flash flood situation in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Habiganj and Netrokona is likely to remain unchanged.

The Meteorological Office said heavy rainfall was recorded yesterday at most places in the north and north-eastern regions and light fall at a few places.

Water Development Board (WDB) officials said the Brahmaputra-Jamuna registered a fresh rise at all points except at Aricha. The Ganges-Padma also recorded slight rise at upstream points. Most of the rivers in these two basins also rose. The rivers in the Meghna and the south-eastern hill basins recorded both rise and fall.

Out of 85 monitoring stations on the rivers, 38 recorded rise and 27 recorded fall. The water level was above danger level at 13 points and unchanged at two points.

Our Nilphamari correspondent reported that more than 20 thousand people marooned by the flood are facing acute shortage of food, medicine and drinking water.

Reports said about 50 thousand people in these upazilas have been marooned.

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8 villages washed away in Sirajganj

ROVING CORRESPONDENT

At least eight villages in Shubhagacha, Ratankandi and Gandhali unions in Sirajganj district have been washed away while quite a number of other villages were inundated during the last 12 hours because of breaches in the Boikholia-Shubhagacha embankment and the Shubhagacha spur.

The areas, untouched by flood since 1998, were affected because of lack of timely maintenance of the two main flood protection dams and eleven spurs.

The government took no repairing initiative when Mohammad Nasim of Awami League (AL) won the Kazipur seat in the last parliamentary elections, alleged AL leader Golam Mustafa Khokon.

Local BNP leader and Shubhagacha union chairman Nasir Uddin Ratan also considered 'lack of political lobbying' as one of the causes behind the neglect of repair works.

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Charges pressed against 12 in ex-MP Sujan murder case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday pressed charges against BNP leader Dr Raushan Alam and 11 others in former BNP MP Shahjahan Howlader Sujan murder case.

The Investigation Officer (IO) of the case submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka in the afternoon.

The other accused are Kajol Ahmed Jalali, Khorsheed Alam, Humayun Kabir alias Phool Miah, Abdul Mannan alias VP Mannan, Ziauddin alias Bayes, Akhter Hossain alias Akbar Ali, Kamal Ahmed, Forkanuddin, Giasuddin Jalali and Ibrahim Nur alias Apu.

Of the accused, Forkanuddin, Giasuddin Jalali and Ibrahim Nur

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PHOTO: STAR

A mother along with her newborn baby at the DMCH also could not get artificial breathing support at the intensive care unit recently.

Remu dies for lack of ventilator at DMCH

NAIMUL HAQ

Remu had to die prematurely in the early hours of Tuesday simply because doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) could not provide her with a ventilator for artificial breathing.

"We could have saved Remu if we had proper facility for artificial respiration. The patient had high blood pressure, respiratory distress and severe abdominal pain and we badly needed intensive care support," said Dr Fahmida Naz, registrar of gynecology and obstetrics department of the DMCH where one patient arrives every 30 minutes with pregnancy and other birth related complications.

Remu, from Sutrapur in the city, had given birth to a dead child at a private clinic in Moghbazar four days before her own death.

"An Intensive Care Unit (ICU) consultant examined Remu, while she was in shock, and suggested connecting her to a ventilator. But it

80 anti-India militant camps active in Bangladesh Indian daily claims

BSS, New Delhi

The Daily Pioneer of India has reported that Bangladesh's soil is being used by at least 80 militant training camps run by the so-called "rabidly anti-India Islamic militant organisations."

The daily reported on its front page quoting unidentified Indian central as well as West Bengal intelligence agencies as having submitted a report on the matter to "top officials".

Under the headline, "Bangladesh claims

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Family governance runs corporate show

Saifur points at 'intense profiteering tendency' hindering good governance

STAR REPORT

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday said Bangladesh's corporate sector is in the family grip and companies are run by 'family governance' rather than good governance, hurting general investors.

The government took no repairing initiative when Mohammad Nasim of Awami League (AL) won the Kazipur seat in the last parliamentary elections, alleged AL leader Golam Mustafa Khokon.

Local BNP leader and Shubhagacha union chairman Nasir Uddin Ratan also considered 'lack of political lobbying' as one of the causes behind the neglect of repair works.

The finance minister was speaking at the launch of a two-day workshop titled Corporate

Governance in Bangladesh, organised by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Saifur said the corporate sector is still lacking governance despite the existence of Registration Act, which was promulgated in 1913. He attributed the lack to the perception of intense profiteering tendency in every sector.

Investors who mobilise their savings into companies barely have access to give their opinion. "Rather, the brother-in-law, sister-in-law, husbands and wives are sitting on the board and running the affairs of the company. They are the chairmen and managing directors of the companies," Saifur said.

"Everywhere I see a tendency to pinch money out," Saifur said adding, "there needs to be a change in the mindset of the company owners for establishing good governance in the corporate sector."

Saifur identified the need for business ethics, firm morality and strong feeling against extortion as

the pre-requisite to establishing governance in the corporate sector.

"But with regret, I see something inherent, which is hurting the entire business sector," the minister said.

"I strongly feel that there needs to be a sense of responsibility among the owners and sharing attitude with those who mobilise their resources into these companies," Saifur said.

The minister said although the situation is depressing, the reality is that Bangladesh needs to establish good governance. "The sooner we do it, the better it is for our future."

Expressing dissatisfaction over

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Young man dies in police custody

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 'drug addict', arrested on charge of snatching a watch from a bus passenger on Monday, died at the Ramna police custody yesterday.

Sheikh Farid, 35, was caught red handed when he snatched a watch from CS Pal, air force warrant officer of maintenance branch, on Monday night in front of Pir Yemeni market at Gulistan.

Farid was handed over to Ramna police and a case was filed with the Ramna Police Station.

When the accused told police that he had handed over the watch to his accomplices Zakir and Badal Gazi, they raided the area but failed to arrest the two.

Farid was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court on Tuesday with remand prayer. The court placed him on a

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JS nod to RAB Bills on flag vessels, BSTI also passed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad last night passed three bills provisioning formation of a special force, the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB), creation of a level playing field for both local and foreign ship operators in cargo handling and adoption of stringent punitive actions against trademark fraudulence.

The passed bills are the Armed Police Battalions (Amendment) Act, 2003, The Bangladesh Flag Vessels (Amendment) Act, 2003, and The Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (Amendment) Act, 2003.

The other accused are Kajol Ahmed Jalali, Khorsheed Alam, Humayun Kabir alias Phool Miah, Abdul Mannan alias VP Mannan, Ziauddin alias Bayes, Akhter Hossain alias Akbar Ali, Kamal Ahmed, Forkanuddin, Giasuddin Jalali and Ibrahim Nur alias Apu.

Of the accused, Forkanuddin, Giasuddin Jalali and Ibrahim Nur

the already working 23 Rapid Action Teams (RAT).

The special force, the RAB, will be formed with an eye to improving law and order.

Armed personnel and officers in the RAB would be drawn from the army, navy, air force and police.

The Armed Police Battalions Ordinance, 1979, is amended to give the RAB an institutional shape with the nomenclature, RAB, under the existing Armed Police Battalion (APBn).

It is stated in the bill that as it was not possible to keep the law and order situation normal with the regular police force only, the

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4 NCBs write off Tk 1,044 cr bad loans till June

REJAU KARIM BYRON

Four nationalised commercial banks (NCBs) have written off nine per cent of their classified loans as at June 30 in line with a Bangladesh Bank (BB) policy.

The written-off amount equals Tk 1,044 crore of default loans, banking sources said.

Sonali Bank has written off Tk 736 crore, Agrani Tk 200 crore, Janata Tk 60 crore and Rupali Bank Tk 48 crore.

Till December 2002, default loans with these banks stood at Tk 12,179 crore.

Default loans in private and public sector banks stand at about Tk 24,000 crore and more than half

of the figure lies with the four NCBs.

On January 13, the BB asked the four banks to clean up their balance sheets. To do that, the central bank asked them to write off bad loans, which are at least five years old, and those the debtors.

The banks will also have to make full provisions of the loans they are going to write off.

Sources said while writing off these loans, these banks have prioritised loans, which turned bad before 1990. The total amount of default loans by 1990 stood at Tk 4,500 crore. But the banks were able to write off only a small part of the figure.

"We could do very little because

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BBC rejects deal on naming Iraq dossier source

THE GUARDIAN

The BBC and the government were engaged in an extraordinary game of cat and mouse over the source of the story which claimed that Alastair Campbell had sexed up an intelligence dossier on Iraq's weapons programme.

The Ministry of Defence struck first, saying that an MoD official had admitted an unauthorised meeting with BBC reporter Andrew Gilligan to discuss the September dossier.

The daily reported on its front page quoting unidentified Indian central as well as West Bengal intelligence agencies as having submitted a report on the matter to "top officials".

Under the headline, "Bangladesh claims

According to senior BBC sources, Geoff Hoon, the defence secretary, offered to tell the BBC chairman, Gavyn Davies, the name of the MoD official linked to Mr Gilligan if in return Mr Davies immediately said whether the person was the single source for Mr Gilligan's story.

The BBC refused the offer, believing it was an "elephant trap" set by the MoD to glean more information. "We are not getting into that game," the senior BBC insider said.

The fast-moving events began when the MoD released a carefully-timed and carefully-worded statement saying it had identified the possible source of Mr Gilligan's story on BBC Radio 4's Today programme on May 29 when he

said the September dossier had been "sexed up" at the behest of the prime minister's communications director, Alastair Campbell.

The MoD statement said an official had admitted meeting Mr Gilligan to discuss the September dossier. It said the official had come forward voluntarily to admit he met Mr Gilligan at a central London hotel at the journalist's request.

The statement said: "During the conversation Mr Gilligan raised the Iraqi WMD [weapons of mass destruction] programme, including the '45 minutes' issue" - a reference to the claim that Iraqi forces could deploy chemical or biological weapons.

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Muggers rob NGO staff of Tk 12 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed muggers looted Tk 12 lakh from two NGO officials at Babar Road in Mohammadpur yesterday.

Abdur Rashid and Mohammad Hasan, president and general secretary of Al-Markajul Islam, an NGO, were returning in a microbus from Standard Chartered Bank's Dhanmondi branch with Tk 12 lakh.

When they approached their office at Babar Road at noon, four armed muggers stopped the vehicle.

The gang broke glasses of the microbus with sticks. Pointing a gun at driver Mofazzal, they snatched the money and left the spot firing blankshots.

No case was filed on behalf of the organisation, the Mohammadpur Police Station said.

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Sun Rises	Sun Sets
July 10	6-50 pm
July 11	5-18 am

Prayer Timings		
July 10		