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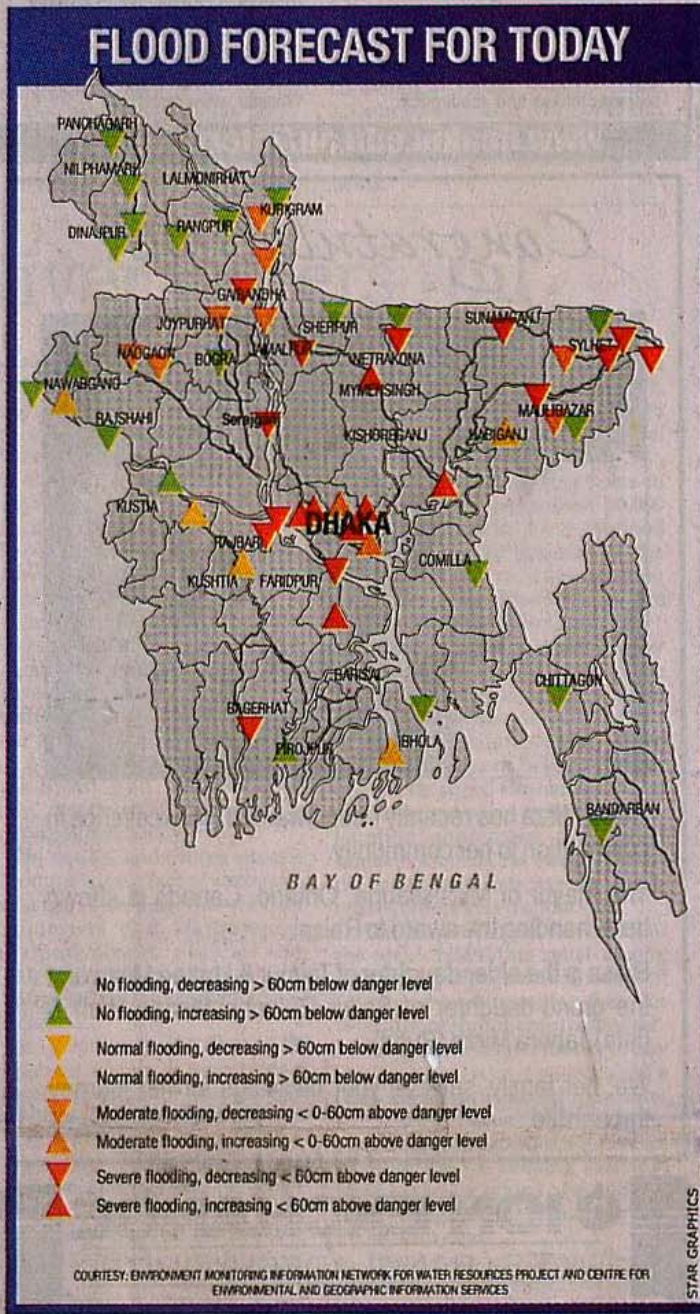
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River waters roil on two key highways

One-third Dhaka floats on floodwaters, sewage



Death toll reaches 227 as deluge set to worsen

STAR REPORT

Floodwaters were rolling over Dhaka-Aricha highway at nine points and Dhaka-Chittagong highway at one point at Gazaria in Munshiganj yesterday, with rain-swollen rivers swamping fresh areas in Dhaka while floods worsened further in the northern and middle regions.

Waters in the Buriganga at Dhaka, Balu at Demra, Lakhya at Narayanganj, Turag at Mirpur and Tongkhil at Tongi rose 11 centimetres on average yesterday, aggravating the situation in and around the capital.

The situation in Dhaka will further deteriorate, Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) warned yesterday. It also said situation in Jamalpur, Mymensingh, Pabna, Sirajganj, Manikganj, Munshiganj, Brahmanbaria, Narsingdi, Madaripur, Rajbari, Gopalganj,

Shariatpur, Narayanganj, Kishoreganj Chandpur and Comilla is likely to deteriorate further.

The situation in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Netrakona is likely to improve and that in Kurigram, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Bogra, Naogaon and Sirajganj may remain unchanged.

Thirty-four of 86 flood-monitoring stations recorded rise and 33 are flowing above the danger level yesterday morning.

The official death toll jumped yesterday to 227 from 202 in 41 districts in less than 24 hours. The Department of Health (DoH) has cancelled leaves of all officials and employees except emergency cases until further notice and engaged a total of 3,659 medical teams in the flood-affected districts to cope with the flood situation.

The department has set up control rooms at district and divisional

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50pc RMG units flood affected Claims BGMEA survey

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has claimed that at least 50 percent of the garment factories in and around Dhaka city have been affected by the current floods.

Besides, hundreds of other factories in the city have been

threatened with the rising water engulfing more and more areas in the capital, it said.

In view of the worsening flood, the association has conducted an emergency survey on the RMG units in Dhaka and Narayanganj to assess the extent of damages caused by the flood.

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Stinky sewer wastes swamp Motijheel commercial hub as floodwaters rose to the road level in and around the area yesterday, sending a chill down the spine of the businesspeople and residents alike.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

About one-third of the capital has gone under floodwaters polluted with sewage and muck, exposing people to serious health hazards.

The worst affected are those living in slums and low-lying areas where the low-income people find the house rents affordable.

Temporary flood shelters have been set up at almost all school buildings in the city. Acute sanitation problem is threatening the health of those who have moved to these shelters.

Most of the flood shelters are running without any help or monitoring from the government. Lowering political leaders are trying to maintain order at some centres.

Filthy water emitting foul smell has swamped roads, houses, shops and business establishments in the flood-hit areas as sewerage lines and septic tanks have merged under floodwaters.

The eastern part of the capital that does not have any flood protection embankment has gone under swelling waters of the Turag, Balu, Shitalakha and Buriganga rivers that marked a sharp rise in the 24 hours till yesterday evening.

Fakirerpool, East Badda, Khilgaon, Sabujbagh, Arambagh, Motijheel, part of Gulshan and Khilkhet are among the areas under highly contaminated waters.

On the western part of the city, water inside the flood protection embankment is rising fast mainly due to rain and dumping of thousands of cubic metres of tannery waste in it.

Kalyanpur pumps are moving water out of the embankment but they cannot cope with the massive volume of accumulated water.

Meanwhile, local authorities have stopped power supply in many flooded peripheral areas of the capital fearing electrocution.

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GAZIPUR-2 BY-POLLS BNP, AL, JP top rule violators: acting CEC

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Acting Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Safiur Rahman yesterday reported pervasive violation of electoral code of conduct at the hustings of the August 1 by-election in Gazipur-2, naming BNP, Awami League and Jatiya Party candidates as the chief perpetrators.

Talking to The Daily Star at his office, Rahman said, "All candidates, particularly those of the three major political parties, are breaking the code, which we never expected from them."

"Infringement of electoral norms by these political parties is even

more surprising, as the very code of conduct was formulated in consultation with them," the acting CEC observed.

The Electoral Inquiry Committee (EIC) for the Gazipur-2 parliamentary by-polls has already proved several instances of election code violation by the candidates concerned. The EIC issued warning to them, asking to abstain from such malpractice in future, he added.

The three candidates - Prof MA Mannan of ruling BNP-led coalition, Zahid Ahsan Russel of Awami League (AL) and retired brigadier general Kazi Mahmud Hasan of the

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HC stays new holding tax system

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed the entire process of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) for realising holding tax on self-assessment basis.

A bench comprising Justice MA Matin and Justice Tariq-ul-Hakim issued rule asking the government and the DCC to show cause why the July 15 notice served on the house owners to submit form of self-assessment of holding tax should not be declared illegal.

The rule and stay came on a writ filed by Begum Asmatunnessa of Nawab Abdul Ghani Street, Sutrapur, challenging the DCC notice.

The rule is returnable in three weeks and the stay will remain till disposal of the case.

Moving the petition, Asmatunnessa's son AY Moshuzzaman submitted that the

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Ministers, MPs lobby hard for extra relief 28,000 MT rice as relief allocated for the marooned

RAFIQ HASAN

Some ministers and parliament members from the ruling coalition are lobbying hard with the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management every day to get extra relief allocation against their flood-hit constituencies.

As many as 15 ministers and ruling coalition MPs yesterday went to Food and Disaster Management Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf and sought extra relief allocation, according to sources.

Some ministers went to the disaster management ministry for relief allocation while some others sent their close aides to lobby with the ministry officials for increased allocation, the sources said.

The ministry, however, is allocat-

ing relief on the basis of requirements placed by the flood-affected district administrations, said a high official of the ministry, who spoke to The Daily Star wishing to remain unnamed.

Yusuf yesterday talked to the deputy commissioners of flood-affected districts and inquired about the latest flood situation, the official said. The minister also met with the ministry high officials and reviewed the status of flood and relief distribution.

The ministers and MPs who made extra effort for increased relief allocation include Mosharraf Hossain, Abdul Moyeen Khan, Abdus Salam Pintu, Lutfozzaman Babar and Fazlul Haque Milon, the official said.

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ASIA CRICKET CUP 2004

Indo-Pak clash today

AL MUSABBIR SADI, from Colombo

India find themselves in a rather strange situation ahead of their crucial Asia Cup match against arch-rivals Pakistan at the Premadasa Stadium today.

The four-time champions have all 14 players fit to choose from with Zaheer Khan regaining fitness for the day-night clash against the defending champions.

The high-voltage encounter will be telecast live on Bangladesh Television as well as ESPN and STAR Sports at 2:45pm.

India are expected to go ahead with three pacers so left-arm Zaheer faces competition from Ashish Nehra. The think-tank will also have to choose between spinners Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh, who performed well in his

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PM assures all-out help

UNB, Bogra

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday assured the flood-hit people of all possible support and made an appeal for all to face the calamity with patience and courage.

"Never think that you are alone and helpless---the government remains and will remain with you as a friend in need at the crisis hour," she told two public gatherings of flood victims at Dhunat and Sariakandi in Bogra, one of the worst hit districts.

Describing the usual trend and duration of floods in Bangladesh, the prime minister said there is possibility of recurrence of the floods this year and urged people to take mental preparation to face the situation.

She said the government has adequate stock of food and relief and will provide necessary assistance to the people.

The prime minister mentioned government's ongoing relief operations and rehabilitation

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