

Cry for food, water in flood shelters

Intestinal diseases kill 10 in Netrakona, Kishoreganj: 241 attacked, several shelters inundated in B'baria

STAR NATIONAL DESK

With waters all around, crisis of food and drinking water has deepened in flood shelters and affected areas and in Netrakona, Kishoreganj and Brahmanbaria.

Till Saturday, intestinal diseases claimed 10 lives and attacked 4200 people in Netrakona and Kishoreganj. The diseases have broken out in some of the flood shelters.

About 242 diarrhoea patients were brought to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital in the last 24 hours, officials at the Civil Surgeon's office told our correspondent yesterday afternoon.

But they could not specify whether any of the patients were from any flood shelter. A total of 136 medical teams are working in the affected areas, they said.

At many centres visited by our correspondents, people said they are nearly starving and afraid of intestinal diseases due to drinking water crisis. Medical teams were not seen during their visits to some of the centres yesterday and the day before.

There is hardly any dry place in Brahmanbaria town. The ground floor of PTI flood shelter centre there is inundated.

Our Netrakona Correspondent reports: A total of 13,898 families have been sheltered in 209 flood shelters in Netrakona where 81

unions have been flooded. This correspondent visited 15 centres in Netrakona on Saturday and saw crisis of food and drinking water.

Intestinal diseases have broken out in many of the centres, inmates told this correspondent.

At Maghshimul High School flood shelter in Purbadhala upazila and Kalmakanda College shelter in Kalmakanda upazila, this correspondent saw at least 30 people attacked with intestinal diseases. But no medical team was seen.

Sources at Netrakona Civil Surgeon's office said the diseases so far claimed eight lives and attacked around 2400.

The dead are Abdul Rahim, 63 and Momin, 4, in Kalmakanda upazila; Ganendro, 45, Shantosh, 32 and Kamal, 6, in Khalajuri; Osman Faruk, 8, in Purbadhala; Iman Ali, 70 and Amena Begum, 48, in Madan upazila.

The sources said 75 medical teams are working in the flood affected areas. But this correspondent did not see any team during his visit to the 15 centres.

"We did not take any food since yesterday (Friday)", Abdul Majid told this correspondent at Maghshimul High School flood shelter in Purbadhala upazila Saturday evening.

"We are here for three days and got 750 gm rice per head".

Majid of Maghshimul village came

to the centre with a family of five. There are 170 families at the centre.

Widow Amena Khatun of Gagra village said she came to the centre a week back and got only two kg rice.

She said she and her children are fasting for two days. Many others in the centre said so.

There were cries for food and water at Kalmakanda College flood shelter in Kalmakanda upazila. About 150 family took shelter there. The inmates said they got no rice or dry food in the last two days.

Over 1,40,000 families are marooned in Netrakona district.

The Netrakona district administration sources said Tk six lakh and 500 tonnes of rice were distributed among the affected people.

In Kishoreganj district, 15,961 families have been sheltered in 224 centres as 850 village reeled under water, administration sources said.

Chunilal Bajpai, who took shelter at the Bazipur upazila land settlement office with his nine-member family, said he did not get any relief in four days.

People at Bazipur Degree College and Razzakunasha Girls High School flood shelters said they were waiting for relief.

Two children died from diarrhoea in the district and 1800 people have been attacked in the district.

This correspondent saw at least 35 people attacked with intestinal diseases in the two centres.

Civil Surgeon office sources said

82 medical teams are working in the flood affected area. But this correspondent did not see any team in any of the flood shelters he visited on Sunday.

About 1,65,000 people are still marooned in the district, administration sources said.

Our Brahmanbaria Correspondent reports: According to sources at District Relief and Rehabilitation Office (DRRO), 492 flood shelters have been opened in the district where 2,25,800 people have taken shelter.

Another 17,74,200 marooned people are yet to be rescued.

People huddling at the PTI flood shelter in the town told this correspondent during a visit on Sunday that they did not yet get any food. The ground floor of the centre is inundated.

When contacted, DRRO sources said they received only 547.85 tonnes of rice, Tk 5,67,000, 200 tins of biscuits and house building material worth Tk 3,50,000 from high authorities till now.

District health officials said they got only 25,000 water purifying tables, 51,500 oral saline packets, Civil Surgeon Md Ishak said.

At a flood relief meeting last night, the new Deputy Commission (DC) Md Jahirul Haque informed that they have sought more relief and those will be reached soon.

Police Superintendent ATM Tareque, ADC (general) Mia

Abdullah Mamun, ADC (Rev) Mustafa Kamal and other officials attended the meeting.

Flood-related death toll in the district rose to 23, according to official sources.

About 20 lakh people are marooned as all the 98 unions in four pourasabhas have been flooded.

The flood situation deteriorated due to rain and onrush of water from Tripura hills across the border.

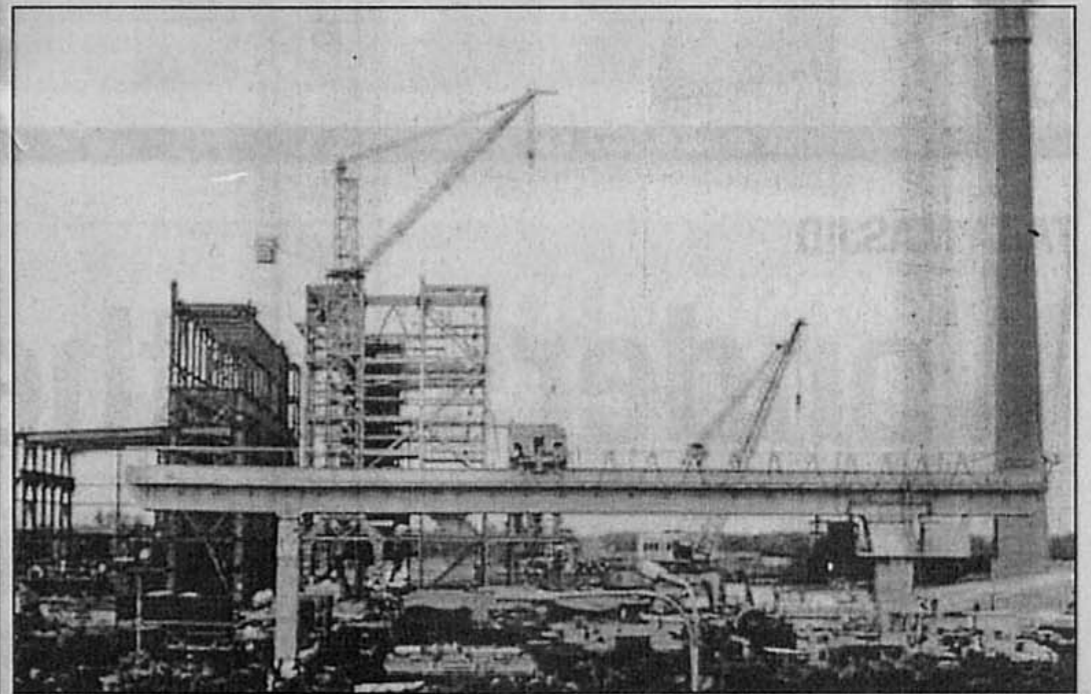
Sarkarpara, Nuahati and College Para areas in Brahmanbaria town is under five to seven feet water.

Official sources said yesterday this year's flood in the district has marooned as the 1988 records. The Titas was flowing 173 cm above the danger level yesterday while the highest level during 1988 flood was 169.53 cm above the danger mark.

The floods this year damaged 2416 kilometres of road, 82 bridge culverts, 193 kilometre dams, 13,990 houses, crops on 21,605 hectares and 2747 educational institutions in the district.

Brahmanbaria SP ATM Tareque distributed some relief materials among the marooned people in Shahjadpur.

The Namj-e-Janaja of Rubel, 28, son of Prof Md Mujibur Rahman, principal of Brahmanbaria Government College, was held on the roof top of Brahmanbaria High School Market as there is no dry place in the town.



The under-construction Boropukuria Power Plant at Parbotipur in Dinajpur.

Boropukuria Power Plant to be ready ahead of schedule

RAFIQUE SARKER back from Parbotipur, Dinajpur

Rangpur: The much awaited coal-fired Boropukuria Power Plant is likely to be commissioned two months ahead of schedule.

Work is progressing in full swing and trial power generation by one unit will start in May next year instead of July, PDB Executive Engineer Shamsul Hoque told this correspondent during a recent visit.

All the machinery equipment are in hand and their installation will begin when construction of the building will be completed soon.

The second unit will be commissioned in July 2006, Hoque said.

Officials and workers are working

day and night to complete the construction of the plant, he said.

With commissioning of the plant, power crisis in Rangpur, Nilphamari, Bogra and Dinajpur will ease to a great extent and loadshedding will be reduced substantially, he said.

Coal from the Boropukuria mine will be used in the two-unit power plant to produce 250 mw (megawatt) electricity.

Bangladesh government in collaborating with a Chinese company is constructing the plant.

Prime Minister Khleda Zia laid its foundation on May 23 last year.

A total of Tk 1,634.86 crore has been estimated for the project. Of the amount the government is providing Tk 693.75 crore and the rest Tk 941.11 crore is being provided under

suppliers' credit. The project is being jointly implemented by the

Power Development Board (PDB) and China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation (CMC). CMC is providing all technical support. CMC later involved Shanghai Electric Corporation and Shenzhen Energy Corporation in the project work.

Two sub-stations will be set up in Rangpur and Sayedpur and each will get 132 KV power supply, to be distributed in other northern districts.

The plant will utilise 720 mt of coal annually. Production cost of per unit power has been estimated at Tk 1.72.



A flood centre at Kalmakanda College in Kalmakanda upazila in Netrakona (left) and boats ply alongside rickshaws on Farooki road in Brahmanbaria town (right). The photo was taken on Saturday.

SNAPS

Jhenidah police recovers arms, ammunition from remote village

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishitia

Jhenidah police on Friday recovered arms and ammunition from a remote village.

The firearms include one 3.3 rifle, one foreign and three country made rifles and 115 rounds of bullets.

According to police, a team of Harinakundu police raided a betel leaf garden at Mukimpur village where a group of outlaws were conducting a meeting. Police cordoned off the garden from 11pm.

Sensing police presence, the criminals escaped leaving their arms and ammunition.

Later, police recovered those.

3 'muggers' beaten by mob in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three alleged muggers were beaten and their CNG auto-rickshaw was set ablaze by mob in Agrabad area under Doublemooring Police Station here on Friday.

They fell in people's wrath when they attacked there the Union Parishad Secretary of Salmipur in Sitakunda.

The condition of the muggers, Afsar, Kausar and Hridoy were staled to be critical, hospital sources said.

Police said they attacked the aforementioned UP Secretary named Jamal Ahmad at Beparipara in Agrabad when he came out of his house.

The three muggers intercaptured and fired gunshots at him which missed the target. Then they stabbed in his abdomen.

Injured Jamal cried out for help when local people rushed and caught the muggers.

Doublemooring Police rescued the muggers from people's wrath and sent them including Jamal to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for treatment.

Police also seized a cut rifle from the muggers. A case was filed.

98 acid victims in Barisal in five years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Ninety-eight persons were buried with acid in last five years in Barisal division.

Refusal of love or marriage proposal, land related dispute and dowry were the main causes of acid attacks. Most of the victims were aged between 19 years and 34 years.

Acid Survivors' Foundation revealed it after conducting a survey. Love affairs were not only the main cause of the acid crime. In the survey, 300 acid victims were examined. Of them 91 persons fell victims of acid attack due to refusal of love proposal, while 36 fell victims due to denial of

illegal sexual relationship. Sixty-five victims became the target of acid crime due to land dispute, 44 persons were victimised due to dowry and 27 others fell victims due to disputes in married life. Fifteen persons fell victims due to political reasons, while 17 others did not know the real cause of acid attack. Of them five acid victims were under 18 years of age.

About 160 acid victims were aged between 19 to 34 and 45 years, while eight others were over 55 years of age.

Acid attackers mainly use Sulphuric and Nitric acid which they collected from goldsmiths and open markets.

5 held by Rab in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested five youths in two drives here on Saturday and Sunday and recovered sophisticated arms and ammunition from their possession.

Tipped off, Rab members challenged Mesbahur Rahman Petra, son of a BNP leader Mustaffur Rahman Suja, Petra's associates Kamal Hossain Jony, Rajab Khan and Subrata Khan on Saturday while they were waiting at Bindu Crossing in the city.

A 9mm Italian-made pistol, a magazine full of nine bullets and two knives were also recovered from them. Boalia police sources said that the arrested were included in the police hunt list.

Following confessional statement of Petra, Rab members raided a house at the posh Upashahar area in the early hours of Sunday and arrested Muhammad Jony, son of Lal Muhammad with a German made 9mm revolver.

Rab sources said that the arms and ammunitions were used in the recent violence in the city and the arrested persons were engaged in arms smuggling and trade.

Rab members also chased a private car in Binodpur area early Monday and recovered 1.41 bottles of banned Indian cough syrup

Phensidyl. Driver Abdul Jalil and Tajul Islam Kajol in Kajla area were arrested from the car and they told Rab members that the Phensidyl bottles were being carried to Dhaka.

2 minor girls rescued from traffickers

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two school girls abducted by traffickers from here earlier, were rescued from Bahadderhat in Chittagong city on Saturday night, police said here yesterday.

They are Mousumi Pal Thama, 13, a student of class eight at Bibekananda Diddya Niketan and Tritun Paul Thunu, a primary school student in the town.

The victims' family sources said they were lured and kidnapped on Friday when they were going to private tutors near their houses. After kidnapping, they were taken to Bahadderhat in a microbus, where local people caught the traffickers out of suspicion and rescued the two girls.

Absconding convict arrested in Kishoreganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

A fugitive who was sentenced to death for double murder was arrested in Kishoreganj on Wednesday.

Absconding criminal Shukkur Ali was arrested by Pirjipur Police Camp In-Charge Habilder Haider Ali from his home at Pirjipur village in Bajitpur upazila, Kishoreganj.

On December 29 in 2000, a gang of dacoits led by Shukkur Ali entered into the trading house of renowned businessman Ferdous Mia at Barabazaar in Kishoreganj town and killed two of his employees Abdul Barik and Mosharaf Hossen. The dacoits took away Tk 12 lakh in cash and 110 tolas of gold.

On December 4 in 2003, the Speedy Tribunal Court-4, Dhaka sentenced 10 persons to death.

Seven convicts including Shukkur Ali were absconding.

Korean mine worker killed in accident at Maddhyapara

BSS, DINAJPUR

A Korean mine worker was killed in an accident in Maddhyapara Hard Rock Mine Project (MHRMP) in Parbotipur upazila, Dinajpur on Friday, official sources said.

According to police and project sources, Korean mineworker Tyak Ryak Young, 65, fell deep into the Loading Chamber Shaft (LCS) of the mine while he was engaged in lifting coal.

The accident occurred when his legs slipped into the chamber and he died instantly inside the hole of LCS.

His body was recovered on the same day. An Unnatural Death (UD) case was filed with Parbotipur police.

The authorities of the Korean Company took the body without conducting autopsy after taking permission from Dinajpur district magistrate.

The body was brought to Dhaka for sending it to his relatives in Korea.

BNP activists attack CPB procession: 30 hurt in Natore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

At least 30 persons were injured as ruling BNP activists attacked a procession of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) at Mominpur in Natore recently.

The processionists were demanding release of Puthia upazila unit president of the party, Principal Abul Kalam Azad.

Police arrested Principal Azad on July 16 after operatives of outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) hurled bombs on BNP leader Rahim Newaz.

Local journalists condemned the incident and demanded immediate release of Arif after a proper investigation.

In a separate incident, criminals in the town threatened a local daily editor on Friday.

According to a general dairy (GD) filed by the editor with Sadar police station, Jalal, son of Momin and his accomplice Bijoy of Thanapara stormed into the office daily 'Ajker Alo' and threatened to kill its Editor-in-Charge Jamal Uddin Haidari.

They also asked him to leave the district as soon as possible.

Several crime stories published in his daily annoyed the criminals.

However, their names were not published in the report.

Local journalists condemned the incident and demanded immediate arrest of the criminals.

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Kumarkhali newsman held on 'false' charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishitia

Kumarkhali police on Thursday arrested a newsman and implicated him in two false cases.

Arrested Arif Khan is the correspondent of Jessore-based Gramer Kagaj and also the Secretary of Kumarkhali Reporters' Unity.

Local journalists told this correspondent police falsely implicated Arif in murder and abduction cases as he wrote stories about corrupt practices of some police officials in the thana.

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BAGMARA BNP LEADER MURDER 17 chargesheeted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police pressed charges against 17 persons including Workers' Party leader and Jhikra Union Parishad chairman in Bagmara upazila Ali Khwaza for killing BNP leader Abdul Hamid Moru.

Investigating officer of the murder case Mustafa Hasan filed the chargesheet in a court on Thursday.

Unidentified assailants shot and slaughtered Abdul Hamid Moru, Bagmara BNP president and former UP chairman in Ghoshpara area of the city on November 9 last year. Outlawed Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) claimed responsibility for the murder.

Police arrested seven persons. In a confessional statement on June 25 it was revealed that Ali Khwaza was not among the killing squad members.

Workers' Party politbureau member Fazle Hossain Badsha told that Ali Khwaza's name was intentionally included in the charge sheet following secret order of local BNP leaders.

Tk 362.89 BRDB loan for poverty alleviation

BSS, Rajshahi

The regional office of Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) here disbursed about Tk 362.89 cr as loan among poor and destitute persons till June this year.

The loan was distributed for poverty alleviation by creating self-employment facilities in agricultural and non-agricultural fields.

BRDB is implementing a programme titled Rural Livelihood Project (RLP) as a follow-up of the Rural Poverty Cooperative Project (RCP) in 49 upazilas of Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj, Naogaon, Natore,

Pabna and Sirajganj districts since January 1999, according to official sources here.

RPCP started its implementation work in 1993 and ended in 1998 after finishing the tenure of Northwest Rural development Project, launched in 1984 to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural people by utilising local resources.

According to the officials, the RLP project is being implemented to empower rural poor people, specially women, by upgrading their ability in different income generating activities and provide assistance for establishing a 'district bank' for the landless people on experimental basis to disburse micro-credit to the target people.

About 1.78 lakh members including 1.43 lakh women along with equal number of families were brought under the project through forming 5,610 including 4,493 women Bittahin Samabaya Samity.

BRDB Regional Director Liakhat Ali told BSS that the authorities recovered about 357.35 crore against the target of Taka 369.33 crore from the beneficiaries under the programme, showing recovery rate at 97 per cent till the same time.

Man with fake Tk 500 note held

CU CORRESPONDENT

Police on Friday arrested one person with a counterfeit note of Tk 500 from the Bahaddarhat Bazaar area here.

Chandgaon Thana police arrested Jahidul Alam when a shopkeeper informed the nearby police on suspicion as he tried to change a counterfeit note of Tk 500.

Chittagong Metropolitan Police also picked up 178 persons on various charges from different parts of the city on Friday.



Leaders of the Barisal unit of Hindu Buddha Christian Oikya Parishad submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner on Saturday demanding steps against communal and terrorist activities by vested quarters, marking observance of its anti-communalism day.