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Dhaka gets digital map next year

NAFID IMRAN AHMED

A digital map of Dhaka City through aerial photography will be available from early next year and it aims to help utility agencies better coordinate their work and take up disaster management schemes.

Speakers at a seminar yesterday also said currently there is no uniform map of Dhaka City, forcing the utility agencies to use different maps. It leads to problems in implementing infrastructure projects and waste of resources.

The map will, however, leave out defence locations like cantonments for national security.

Bangladesh government and Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) have been working on an urban information management system for Dhaka City since 2002.

"One of the core objectives of this study is to produce 1:5,000 scale digital topographic maps and basic data for geographical information system (GIS) of Dhaka metropolitan city," said Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Matsushiro Horiguchi.

He was speaking at the seminar on urban information management for greater Dhaka City at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel yesterday.

The Survey of Bangladesh (Sob), the executing agency of the project, and Jica study team co-organised the seminar.

Muhammad Shafiqul Islam, surveyor general of Bangladesh, highlighted the key features of the study. "So far aerial photographs of 960 square kilometres of Dhaka City and its surrounding area have been taken. As many as 122 topographic

SEE PAGE 11 COL 3

Top Iraq official gunned down

4 killed in suicide bomb; mortar attack on ministries

AFP, Baghdad

Four people were killed when a suicide bomber targeted a US base in northern Iraq while two women shot dead in Basra.

The four, including a child, died when the bomber blew up a Chevrolet Caprice in the main northern city of Mosul, wounding five others, the US military said.

"At approximately 8:02 (0402 GMT) a car loaded with explosives detonated 50 metres (yards) from the main gate of the Mosul airfield," it said.

"One Iraqi civilian and one child were killed when the car exploded. One Iraqi facility protective service employee... later died of wounds. The driver of the vehicle was also killed."

Three US soldiers and two security guards were wounded, the statement added.

A cache of munition rounds loaded inside the car failed to explode, minimising the damage

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7



Attendees of diarrhoea patients, mostly children, at the ICDDR,B throng to collect oral saline yesterday. The outbreak of waterborne diseases in the flood-affected areas has already reached an epidemic level.

Cellphone cos strive to maintain network

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cellular phone operators are struggling to keep alive their networks as the raging floods forced to cut off power supply to many base stations mainly in the country's eastern and northern zones, industry sources said.

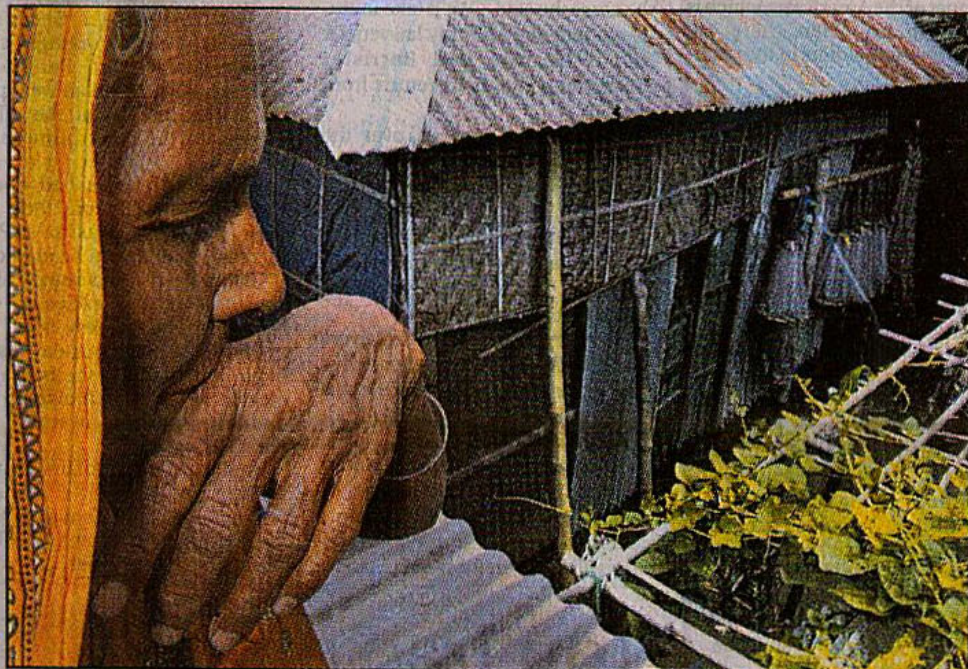
The floods have affected more than 75 base stations of different operators, officials said. A base station works as a relay centre for cell-to-cell communications.

"More base stations are likely to be affected if the flood situation continues to worsen," said an official of a private cell phone operator.

"We're trying our best to keep service uninterrupted as exchange of information is very vital during any disaster," said the official who requested anonymity.

Cell phone subscribers of CityCell in Sunamganj had meanwhile been de-linked for about two hours as power supply failed due to floods.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2



Sixty-year-old Jobeda Begum stares anxiously at the rising Turag waters from the rooftop of her submerged house in Bachhila, Mohammadpur, yesterday.

Stuck on a wet tin roof

BISHAWJIT DAS

Perched on the rooftop of her submerged house in Bachhila, Mohammadpur, 60-year-old Jobeda Begum stares at the raging waters of the river Turag since floodwaters swamped the area 15 days ago.

"The flood has turned my life upside down. I now sit all alone on the roof and try to see water to the horizon," sighs Jobeda. "My son moved his children to his in-laws' house, he and his wife remain busy preparing food and I wait for them to join me," she adds.

At night, Jobeda tries to sleep through the anxiety on a lifted bed in her house.

Like Jobeda, floods have hit hard some 2,000 flood-affected families out of 2,500 in the neigh-

bourhood while affecting half of the 1,500 families in the nearby Owajpur village.

"The river Turag rose about (15 to 22 feet) submerging one-third houses of the village," said boatman Samiuddin, a resident of Bachhila. "Floodwaters rose about a foot today, which is a bad news for Rayerbazar-Mohammadpur embankment," he added.

Residents of hundreds of houses have deserted the inundated area. The ground floors of the multistoried houses have gone totally under water while the floodwaters are about to reach the rooftops of the single-storied ones.

"We have had no choice but to drink the river water since all the tube-wells in the village are

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Manikganj reeling

SHAMEEM MAHMUD,
back from Manikganj

The district headquarters and all seven upazilas of the district have been flooded with thousands forced to leave their inundated houses and lakhs still marooned, all facing miseries due to crisis of food and drinking water.

Hundreds of flood-hit people were still moving to high land and schools, highways and embankments with their belongings and livestock.

At Manikganj town, the district jail, police lines, educational institutions including Debendra College, offices, shops and businesses have gone under knee to waist-deep water. The situation is likely to deteriorate day by day as water level is still rising.

On Dhaka-Aricha highway, the local authorities have stacked sandbags at some points as surging floodwaters were about to swamp the major highway that links the capital to southern and southwest-

ern regions of the country. The villages on both sides of the highway look afloat.

Mohammad Mohiuddin with his seven-member family from village Nayabari in Shibbalaya upazila has taken shelter at Nayabari High School as his house went under water about two weeks ago.

Several hundred people from the same village have also moved to the school, now overcrowded with flood victims.

A number of families, who could not manage a place at the school, made makeshift shelters using plastic and bamboo on nearby Dhushar bus stoppage. As floodwater is still rising, they fear they might have to move elsewhere.

Mohiuddin considers himself fortunate as he got 10 kg of rice on Sunday from a local union parishad member. "It is not much for my seven-member family but I have to make do," he said.

But 55-year-old Minajuddin of village Basail is yet to get any relief.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

NGOs seek cheap food supply, logistics for relief operation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) yesterday sought food supply at 'reasonable prices' and logistic support from the government for conducting relief operation in remote areas.

At a meeting with the government, the NGOs also asked for water purification tablets, oral saline and some other essential items for distribution among the flood victims.

The government advised the NGOs to go to outlying areas with relief materials instead of conducting city and town-based relief operation.

State Minister for NGO Affairs Lutfar Rahman Khan Azad chaired the meeting while Minister for Food and Disaster Management Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf attended it as chief guest. Representatives of 38 NGOs

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

4 killed in a span of four hours in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Local criminals stabbed dead a Dhaka University (DU) student in Demra while separate gangs gunned down a grocer at Kalyanpur, a garment employee in Mohammadpur and a local criminal in Badda in a span of four hours yesterday.

Monirul Hasan Dipu, 25, a BBA student of the DU and also a press owner, was sleeping in his grandfather's residence at Kabirabagh when local criminal Babu called him out at around 3:15pm.

"Babu and his gang member Arman, Millat and Sumon took my son to a nearby place and stabbed him in the head," said Dipu's mother Laila Begum Lily.

Dipu's relatives admitted him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where he died at 5:00pm.

The mother linked the killing to Dipu's feud with Babu over the press.

At Kalyanpur, Mohammad Montu, 25, was going to his uncle's house when some criminals intercepted him at road No. 1 at 7:30pm.

Shooting him in the head, the criminals left Montu, a grocer and an embroidery employee at Shyamoli, in a pool of blood.

Some pedestrians took him to Suhrawardy Hospital, but doctors sent him to the DMCH where he was declared dead.

The victim's father, Azizul Haque, has not clue to the murder of his son.

Locals found the bullet-riddled body of garment worker Dulal, 22, near Ring Road in Mohammadpur at 6:30pm.

Police found the victim's identity card to confirm him to be an operator of Fair Apparels on Darus Salam Road in Mirpur.

Police said the killers might have dumped his body in

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Kushtia schoolgirl raped, another kidnapped

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

One schoolgirl was violated in Kushtia while another one was kidnapped in Jhenidah in two separate incidents on Sunday.

Police said one Zinnah, 22, son of Alauddin, raped a five-year-old girl on Sunday evening at village Mohishkhola in Mirpur upazila of Kushtia.

He brought the next-door's little girl into his room after tempting her by a guava and raped her. As the girl cried for help, her family members rushed there and rescued her. They

SEE PAGE 11 COL 5

GK PROJECT HC declares re-tender illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday declared illegal the water resources ministry's controversial decision to re-tender the installation of a massive irrigation system in the Ganga-Kobadak (GK) project area.

A Division Bench of the HC comprising Justice Abdul Matin and Justice Tariq-ul-Hakim asked the ministry to forward the offer of the lowest bidder to the Cabinet Committee on Public Procurement

SEE PAGE 11 COL 1

Prayer Timing		
July 27		
Fair	Azan	Jamaat
Zohr	4-20	4-55
Asr	12-45	1-15
Maghrib	5-00	5-15
Esha	6-50	6-55
	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		

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Former Vice Chancellor, National University

POSTPONEMENT OF WEDDING CELEBRATION

In view of the deteriorating flood situation we feel it is not on appropriate time for celebrations. We have therefore postponed the wedding ceremonies for

Daniah & Fayyaz

scheduled to be held on **5th & 7th of August 2004** to **23rd & 25th of December 2004.**

Our families most sincerely regret any inconvenience this may cause and ask for your prayer for those currently in distress.

Farhat & Salauddin Quader Chowdhury

Persis & Rownak Khandker