

## Rain paralyses life

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because of torrential rains in the south, southeast and central regions.

Thousands of acres of rice and other crops, hurriedly planted by farmers in the wake of the monsoon flooding, were damaged again. The rain also destroyed Aman paddies and seed fields, killing farmers' hope of rebuilding life in the wake of the devastating floods.

Weathermen said the situation would improve tomorrow evening when the rain-laden clouds in the heart of the depression will drop to the ground, weakening the low.

"The intensity will come down tomorrow. The land depression has already turned into a well marked low and remained stationary halfway between Faridpur and Dhaka.

The more rain will occur, the weaker the low will be," said Arzumand Habib, deputy director of the meteorological office.

Children in most areas in Dhaka could not attend school, most people remained indoors, office-goers faced serious difficulty and many went to work totally soaked.

The gusty winds uprooted trees in many places, blocking roads and causing traffic congestion.

A Biman flight from Kathmandu failed to land at ZIA at 5:30pm and landed in Chittagong, another Biman airliner scheduled to leave for Singapore at 9:00am yesterday was rescheduled for 7:30pm, a Malaysia Airlines flight scheduled for zero hours was rescheduled for 8:00am today.

The Bangladeshi Secretariat compound was inundated. Power supply to the buildings, housing top government offices, remained snapped since 11:00am as rainwater swamped the power substation there.

Secretariat building No. 4 and several tin-roofed offices were also submerged. "I have seen water on the secretariat premises many times in my 25 years of job, but it is beyond imagination," said an elderly assistant with the Power Division.

Attendance to government and private offices was very thin.

"I entered my office wading through knee-deep water and found it reach my waist when I came out in the afternoon," said a bank official at Nayapaltan.

Waist-deep water submerged the VIP Road in front of the Prime Minister's Office and one to three feet swamped most city roads including Manik Mia Avenue, Bijoy Sharani, Darus Salaam Road, Airport Road, Mirpur-1, Mirpur Road, Outer Circular Road, Bijoynagar and Abdul Ghani Road, giving them a river-like look.

The plight of passengers who got stranded on different roads, at bus

stands and in passenger buses, CNG-run three-wheelers, taxicabs knew no bounds.

A few rickshaws and three-wheelers that braved the water charged many-time higher fares.

The submerged manholes or potholes on roads added to people's sufferings as wheels of rickshaws got caught in hidden traps and passengers fell into water.

Malibagh, Shantinagar, Motijheel, Khilgaon, Badda, Gulshan, Banani, Dhanmondi, Mirpur, Shukrabad and old Dhaka were the worst-hit areas in the capital.

Water entered the ground floors of many houses in the city and put slum-dwellers onto the streets, sending their shanties under three feet water in many places.

The overnight downpour forced trade suspension at the country's prime bourse Dhaka Stock Exchange. The incessant rain dampened banking activities, especially in Motijheel commercial heart where many ground floor bank branches went under water.

Shopping malls and other businesses were virtually deserted of shoppers.

About two feet water entered most residential halls of Dhaka University and only a few students, teachers and staff could be seen on the campus.

Prof Abul Khair, provost of Shahidullah hall, told The Daily Star that he had to evacuate his family from the submerged Provost's Bungalow.

The morgue of Dhaka Medical College Hospital also went under water.

An official of the Flood Forecasting Centre said the central and southern regions would experience localised floods. He, however, turned down the probability of flash flood as major rivers flowed below danger marks.

Our correspondents from Barisal, Satkhira, Pabna, Sylhet, Chittagong, Khulna, Bandarban, Manikganj and Noakhali reported the same story.

They said many thatched and mud houses collapsed and flimsy houses blown away. Blackout gripped many towns and villages because of knocked out power lines.

The rains also hobbled the search for about 20 people missing after a ferry sank on Sunday in the Jamuna river near Sirajganj in which at least seven people died.

A landslide also killed five members of a family in the southern part of Chittagong, also on Sunday.

## Power shortfall now 200MW

BSS, Dhaka

State Minister for Power Iqbal Mahmud Chowdhury yesterday told the Jatiya Sangsads that at present the power generation capacity in the country is nearly 3,400 megawatt (MW) against the demand for 3,600 MW.

The total power generation shortfall is 150 to 200 MW and the government has undertaken various measures toward raising power generation capacity, he said responding to BNP lawmaker Khodeja Amin's question.

He listed the government steps as 210 MW thermal power generation plant at Shidirganj, expected to go into operation this month, 105 MW thermal power plant at Tongi by December this year, the first unit of the 2x125 MW thermal power plant at Barapukuria by October next year and second unit by January 2006.

Bangladesh saw 87 hours black-out at peak hour during July 2004 to shed 80 MW to 100 MW electricity, Iqbal said while replying to another question of Mohammad Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury from Jamaat-e-Islami.

The Rural Electrification Board (REB) has around 53.95 lakh consumers in 41,125 villages across the country till June 2004 and the REB operating income was Tk 2074.13 crore during 2003-04 fiscal against the year's operating expenditure of Tk 2081.61 crore, he mentioned answering another question from Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker Mia Golam Parwar.

### 3 dies

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soaked the cottage and the wire was also torn in the storm.

His cousin cum colleague rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors declared him dead after an hour.

A teenager Mohid Hossain of 3/9 Naya Paltan was touched by an electrified wire on the road in Ramma at 11:00am. Locals rushed him to DMCH and learned about his death.

While, an electric wire fell due to rain on an unidentified male, aged around 40 at Sowarighat in Kotwali at 11:00am.

A pedestrian Manir rushed him to DMCH where doctors declared him dead.

### Interpol expert

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Judicial enquiry commission. The commission formed soon after the August 21 grenade attacks was initially given three weeks to submit its report that expired on September 11.

Interpol experts Robert Thompson, first tool-mark examiner, and Frev Bredford, explosives enforcement officer, flew back to Lyon after a four-day stay in the capital, sources said.

They will submit a summary report on the findings of the Interpol experts. Since August 29, six Interpol experts have so far arrived here and four of them left already.

Sources said more Interpol experts including animation specialist and psychoanalyst may visit Dhaka to assist the probe.

Marash Vucilaj and Jeffery Eyles, Interpol experts still running the probe, yesterday could not move due to heavy rains caused by a depression in the Bay.

### JUDICIAL COMMISSION

The one-member judicial commission comprising Justice Md Joynal Abedin has started recording statements of some intelligence agency officials deployed at the spot on August 21.

The commission has so far recorded statements of about 90 witnesses.

### Dhaka, Delhi

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optimistic about finding an acceptable formula of sharing the Teesta waters at the Dhaka meet. "Tomorrow's meeting is part of continuous consultations. We've difference of opinion on the sharing formula. Let's see what progress we can make," a senior official of the JRC told UNB.

The JCE was established in pursuance of the commitment of Bangladesh and India under the 1996 renewed Indo-Bangladesh Treaty on sharing of the Ganges waters. Both sides agreed to conclude water-sharing treaties/agreements on other common rivers.

Guardian groups were formed to ensure their security, while watchdog to ensure their social recognition and acceptability. Watchdog groups were composed of local elite, opinion leaders and elected representatives.

Once looked down on by others, Maloti also became a member of Market Management Committee.

The women in the market were associated with watchdog and guardian groups to socialise with leaders of the society.

Beside direct involvement in the centre of economic activities, they have been allowed access to local administration and police and are now attending regular meetings of conflict resolution," Tofazzal Hossain Dulu, a local school teacher, told The Daily Star.

"I never thought it would be possible in a rural area like this, but they've done it. They are now playing a key role in the society," said Riazuddin Molla, an elderly vegetable trader of the market.

Angur, Rebecca, Kohinoor, Piara, Beli, Ayesha once were the names of some downtrodden women. Now they, like Maloti, are proud wage earners and leading a dignified life.

She took up work of a day-labourer in a construction farm and

## EPW special issue

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Ahluwalia and Prof Mohammad Yunus. Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud of Bangladesh and Isher Ahluwalia, an Indian economist, currently a visiting professor at University of

Maryland, edited the pieces.

It covered key issues like economic transformation, achievements and challenges, trade, food aid and food security, rice economy of Bangladesh, impact of trade liberalisation, Indo-Bangladesh economic relations, microcredit, health and population, primary education and NGO sector in Bangladesh.

"The roots of the governance problem in Bangladesh lie in the existing politics of confrontation, weaknesses in the practice of parliamentary democracy and the rent-seeking collusion among the political parties, state machinery and vested commercial interests," observed the EPW, of which Nobel laureate Amartya Sen is a patron and contributor.

"The acceleration in per capita income was more marked because of the slowdown in population growth from an average of 2.4 percent per annum to 1.5 percent between the two decades," the weekly said.

Bangladesh has achieved success in many areas of economic and social development despite the presence of the allegedly poor and deteriorating quality of governance, such as manifest in widespread corruption and inefficient administration, the EPW said.

It also appreciated self-sufficiency in food production in Bangladesh.

economic cooperation are seen in a comprehensive framework and if there is willingness in both countries to take a long view.

Microcredit is Bangladesh's home-grown innovation for poverty alleviation providing a widening range of services to meet the economic and social needs of its members, mostly poor women, the EPW said.

It praised Bangladesh's GDP growth, per capita income and population growth. GDP accelerated to 4.4 percent in the first half of the 1990s, and to 5.2 percent in the second half, which was 3.7 percent in the 1980s.

"The internal conditions of different prisons were also bettered, jail authorities claimed.

The cabinet in the meeting also went-ahead a proposal for corroboration of bilateral agreement between Bangladesh and Singapore on investment, development and protection.

The meeting approved a proposal for amending Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission, 2003.

Cabinet members and state ministers in-charge of different ministries took part in the meeting while cabinet secretary, principal secretary to the prime minister and secretaries concerned were also present.

**Decapitated man identified as fax shop employee**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A father yesterday identified the beheaded body retrieved in 5 pieces as his son, a phone-fax shop employee in Dhammondi.

Abu Taher of Ranichara, Chandina of Comilla district yesterday described his son at Midford Hospital as Mohammad Sadek, 20, who worked in a phone-fax shop at Dhammondi's Khan Plaza.

The body chopped into 5 pieces was found Saturday in a jute-sack lying near Aliyah Madrasa on Urdu Road.

Taher, however, could not say anything about the reason of the killing. Police also was clueless until last night about the incident.

**Australia complete**

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Antipodean rivals is washed out.

Matthew Hayden edged a wild swipe behind for 23 to give Howard Johnson a prize wicket while Charles Reid dropped a caught-and-bowled chance off Gilchrist.

Kasprowicz earlier grabbed four for 14 and Gillespie four for 15 to limit the United States to 65, the lowest total in Champions Trophy history, in just 24 overs.

Only Steve Massiah (23) managed to make double figures although the US showed some fight against the world's most potent attack.

They were not helped by 42-year-old former West Indies batsman Clayton Lambert being ruled out with injury.

Brett Lee started the demolition by bowling opener Mark Johnson for a duck second ball before Michael Clarke dropped a chance in the slips off Leon Romero next delivery.

Romero was run out by Damien Martyn next over, however, unintentionally blocked by bowler Glenn McGrath going for a dubious run.

McGrath, 34, returned to the Australia attack for their first game in the 12-team tournament but failed to take a wicket.

### Tornadoes

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villages of Bashkhali upazila at 9:30pm and 10:00pm Sunday with rain and thundershower kept lashing the entire country for the third day.

More than 350 houses were razed to the ground in the two villages, leaving at least 20 people injured.

"Two anchored vessels - an engine boat and a trawler - were blown up from Katharia khali and dropped about 250 metres away by the violent storms that lasted 15 minutes," says a spot report.

Of the injured, 13 people were admitted to local health complex.

Another tornado hit Lalangan of Sidakunda upazila at about 3:00am and battered down over 300 houses to the ground, leaving more than 30 people injured.

Seven of the injured were admitted to local health complex.

Meanwhile, torrents of incessant rain and onrush of water from upper-catchment sent rivers into a spate. Low-lying areas in Bashkhali, Anwara and Sitakunda upazilas were flooded yesterday with waters overflowing embankments.

They informed her of the government's stand to provide top security for her at office, residence and on road.

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman also assured her of the special security coverage and advised her not to move out of the country. The World Bank Vice President for South Asia Praful C Patel also advised her not to leave Dhaka.

Wallich left Dhaka silently for Singapore that night by a Singapore Airlines flight.

She reportedly told her security officials during her departure that she was leaving the country on personal grounds and would be back soon.

Saifur expressed surprise over her departure saying bomb threats were being used here as political gimmick and even he himself received such threats on phone from unidentified sources.

After her departure from Dhaka, Saifur talked to top World Bank officials in Washington including Praful C Patel who in turn asked Wallich to return to her workplace immediately.

The power supply and cell phone networks were yet to be restored till filing of this report at 8:00pm.

The cyclonic storm raged through about 20 feet wide area, blowing away roofs of some schools, local post office and madrasas.

Met office sources, which recorded 146mm of rainfall yesterday, forecast more rains for today.

## Cabinet directs jail uplift

BSS, Dhaka

The cabinet yesterday at its regular meeting instructed the authorities concerned to take necessary measures for further improvement of jail administration.

The meeting chaired by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the Prime Minister's Office was apprised of the programmes on jail reforms of the cabinet committee.

The meeting was also informed that the authorities have acted on the recommendations of the cabinet committee to improve facilities for the prisoners in various jails across the country including expansion of infrastructure.

The internal conditions of different prisons were also bettered, jail authorities claimed.

The cabinet in the meeting also went-ahead a proposal for corroboration of bilateral agreement between Bangladesh and Singapore on investment, development and protection.

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