

Robbers stab 2, loot Badda house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Robbers stabbed a college employee and his daughter, and beat up other family members before looting valuables worth Tk 1.8 lakh from his Badda house during cloudburst early yesterday.

Mojibar Rahman, accounts officer of Shaheed Suhrawardy College, and Mahfuza Akhter, 28, are being treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

A gang of about seven stormed into the 55-year-old's tin-roofed house at West Merul Badda, breaking open the front door at 3:00am.

"Woken by the sound, I saw three masked men in 'lungi' and shirt walk inside my room and caught one of them," Mojibar said at DMCH.

Four other masked robbers then

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2 electrocuted in the city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two more persons were electrocuted in the capital yesterday in the wake of three-day's downpour.

Akhtar Hossain, 25, a show factory employee in Alu Bazar of Kotwali, was returning from his workplace at 2:00pm when he stepped into a waterlogged place on road where a torn electric wire fell from an adjacent pole.

"Akhtar suffered from heavy electric shock and doctors declared him dead when we rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at 2:30pm," said his colleague Azizur Rahman.

In Khilgaon, Al-Amin, 22, of Meradia also died from electric shock at his house that was electrified due to rain.

His neighbour Adom Ali brought him to DMCH to learn about his death at 11:00am.

LIFE WATERLOGGED



Residents take to boats at Kamalapur (top left); a truck tips sideways after hitting a pothole at Motijheel as rainwater inundates the area (top right); slum dwellers look for drinking water (bottom left) and a man wades through chest-deep water at Tejgaon.

Sharon insists on Arafat expulsion

AFP, Jerusalem

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon insisted yesterday Yasser Arafat would be expelled from the West Bank, adding that the Palestinian leader would be dealt with in the same way as two assassinated heads of Hamas.

In an interview with the top-selling Yediot Aharonot newspaper published a year after his security cabinet approved the principle of Arafat's "removal", Sharon insisted that his arch enemy would be banished "at a time that suits us".

"Arafat will be expelled from the territories," Sharon told the paper.

"We took action against Ahmed Yassin and (Abdelaziz) Rantissi and a few other murderers when we thought the time was right. On the

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Rainwater invades 8 DU halls

DU CORRESPONDENT

Torrential rains in the last three days have flooded parts of Dhaka University (DU) campus with rainwater entering eight halls including two for women students that have already been evacuated.

Students of the inundated halls are moving in boats as the hall premises and roads beside them have gone under two to three feet deep water.

The submerged halls are SM Hall, Fazlul Haque Hall, Shahidullah Hall, Jahurul Haque Hall, Mohsin Hall Extension, Sahnewaz Hall and Bangladesh-Kuwait Moitree Hall and Fazilatunnesa Mujib Hall for women.

The DU authorities yesterday evacuated the two inundated women's dormitories, shifting students to Rokeya Hall and Shamsunnahar Hall. The students moved to the two other halls mostly in boats in the morning.

Residences of the provosts and

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Safety concerns may shrink FDI: AmCham

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Bangladesh yesterday expressed deep concern over the safety of foreign investors, which it said might have a negative impact on foreign investment in the country.

Referring to, and condemning, the reported threat to World Bank Country Director Christine I Wallich, AmCham President Aftabul Islam said such incidents issue clear signals of what lies ahead.

"If the World Bank country director feels insecure, it's needless to

speculate what the foreign investors here are feeling and what will be the impact of such a situation on future foreign investment," Aftab remarked.

He was speaking at a luncheon meeting of the chamber at a city hotel, with US Ambassador to Bangladesh Harry K Thomas attending as the chief guest. Visiting US States Department Deputy Assistant Secretary for South Asian Affairs Torkel L Patterson was also present.

The AmCham chair said before Bangladesh had barely recovered from one of the worst floods of its

history came the gruesome grenade attack on a public rally of the main opposition party, leaving the nation in grief and horror.

Bangladesh has been witnessing stray bomb attacks during the last few years, observed Aftab, but the incident on August 21 targeted the hard-earned democracy of the nation.

He said the attack was well planned and professionally executed so as to cause maximum deaths and destruction.

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AB Bank staff dies from 5-storey fall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Subrata Roy, 36, an official of AB Bank main branch died Monday night falling from a five-storey under-construction building in Demra.

Subrata alias Royal went to the roof of his residence at North Jatrabari for a smoke at around 10:00pm, said his wife Nibedita.

He used to smoke there after having his dinner. The roof became slippery due to rain and there was no railing, she told reporters.

Roy died on the spot and his body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

90pc bribes officials for land registration

TIB survey says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About ninety percent of households are forced to bribe field level officials for registration of land as corruption and lack of transparency and accountability reign supreme in land administration, Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) revealed yesterday.

The offices of assistant commissioner (AC) land, sub-registrar, tahsildar, deed writer, Kanungu and settlement officer exacted about

Tk12.21 crore in bribe from service seekers, the TIB found in a survey conducted in six municipalities and 52 unions of greater Mymensingh region during October to November last year.

Findings of the survey that covered cases of the past two years were presented at a roundtable at the CIRDAP auditorium in the city.

"Each individual household in municipalities and rural areas had to bribe Tk 2,928 and 1,910 respec-

tively on an average for land registration," said TIB researcher Saidur Rahman. "About 59 percent households showed land price 49 percent less than actual to evade tax in connivance with registration officials and clerks."

A total of 3,000 households -- 1,800 in rural areas and 1,200 in municipalities -- had to bribe land registration officials Tk12, 21, 8 2 0 0 0 .

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BOAT CAPSIZE 4 more bodies recovered in Sirajganj

Death toll rises to 11
UNB, Sirajganj

Four more bodies were recovered yesterday from Jamuna River in the district, raising the death toll from the Sunday's boat capsize to 11.

Three of the bodies were identified as Setu, 14, Jarina, 45, and Shamsu, 50, but the fourth could not be immediately identified. The bodies were found some 14 kilometers downstream from where the engine boat had capsized last Sunday.

About 30 passengers of the boat remain still missing, most of them feared dead, local sources said.

The Sirajganj Sadar-bound boat from Kazipur capsized in the Jamuna Sunday morning with 60 to 70 passengers on board when it was caught in a whirlpool.

Divers, sent from the capital for rescue operation, said they might not be able to start work soon as the turbulent Jamuna was flowing with heavy current amid the inclement weather.

Prayer Timing		
September 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-14	6-17
Esha	7-45	8-15
Source: Islamic Foundation		



PHOTO: STAR

A gigantic African catfish weighing about 5kg was caught on the National Press Club compound yesterday after it reached there in rainwater rolling down drains.

WATERLOGGING AT DMCH

8 bodies float in morgue

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and BISHAWJIT DAS

Eight unidentified mutilated bodies were floating on knee-deep water in the Dhaka Medical College (DMC) morgue yesterday spreading germs and stink as the morgue and its surrounding areas have been waterlogged amid heavy downpour.

Sources said the bodies were kept on the floor of the morgue and nobody from Anjuman Mafidul Islam came to collect the bodies in the last

four days.

"We could not collect unidentified bodies from DMC and Mitford morgue for incassant rain and waterlogging," Osman Gani, duty officer of the voluntary organisation said. "Moreover, seven of our vehicles are now out of order."

He further said it has become difficult to bury bodies in Jurain and Azimpur graveyards, also affected by waterlogging.

The waterlogging is disrupting

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GRENADE ATTACKS France wants extensive investigation

UNB, Dhaka

French Ambassador Michel Lummaux at a meeting with Leader of Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday said his government wants an extensive inquiry into the August 21 grenade attacks on Awami League (AL) rally.

"The French government will not compromise on the question of upholding democracy in Bangladesh, and we've already called for full inquiry into it," Lummaux was quoted by Hasina's political secretary, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, as saying when the

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Good governance at mercy of grafts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Systemic corruption poses a serious challenge to the efforts to promote good governance in Bangladesh, said a report by Transparency International (TI) yesterday.

The report titled - 'The National Integrity Systems TI Country Study Report 2003' was simultaneously released from TI secretariats in Berlin, Germany and Dhaka yesterday.

Professor Muzaffer Ahmed, chief researcher of TI Bangladesh, while briefing journalists at the National Press Club yesterday, stressed that

urgent steps be taken to address the lack of laws on political party finance, poor service conditions and low salary structure for public officials.

He also noted the fact that key watchdog agencies in the country lack adequate, well-trained and skilled staff.

The creation of the Independent Anti-Corruption Commission is a positive step forward, but need to ensure a truly independent anti-corruption commission with real teeth still remains, said Professor Ahmed, a trustee of TI Bangladesh.

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