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Tornadoes batter Dhaka, districts: 13 killed

3 feet tidal surge in Patuakhali

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 13 people were killed and over 500 injured as tornadoes and severe storms lashed capital Dhaka, adjoining Tongi and several central and southwestern districts yesterday.

The coastal belts in Patuakhali

were washed away by two to three feet high tidal surge while rest of the country experienced heavy down-pour under the influence of a land depression now crossing the Indian state of West Bengal.

The storms left a trail of devastation in the affected areas and disrupted power and water supplies in

Dhaka and other cities and towns.

A tornado hit Tongi Biswa Jtama ground at 1:00pm killing three people on the spot while two died on their way to hospitals. Two workers of Jerin Textiles Mills in Tongi -- Babul Miah, 22, and Saiful, 20, -- died when a wall collapsed on them.

Over 200 were injured in the three-minute storm.

In Dhaka, a woman was killed in a house collapse in Uttara and a man electrocuted during the storm in Badda. Besides, one each person was killed in tornadoes and severe storms in Barisal, Gopalganj, Bogra

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Rain brings capital to a standstill

PINAKI ROY

An unbroken spell of gusty wind and rain continued lashing Dhaka for the second straight day yesterday, delaying by at least an hour three domestic and international flights from Zia International Airport (ZIA).

Amid torrential rains, a tornado struck Tongi Biswa Jtama ground areas and two villages in nearby Uttara yesterday noon, killing five people and wounding more than 100.

Riding on a land depression now hovering over the Gangetic plain between Bangladesh and West Bengal of India, the rain sent many

areas in the capital under knee-deep water.

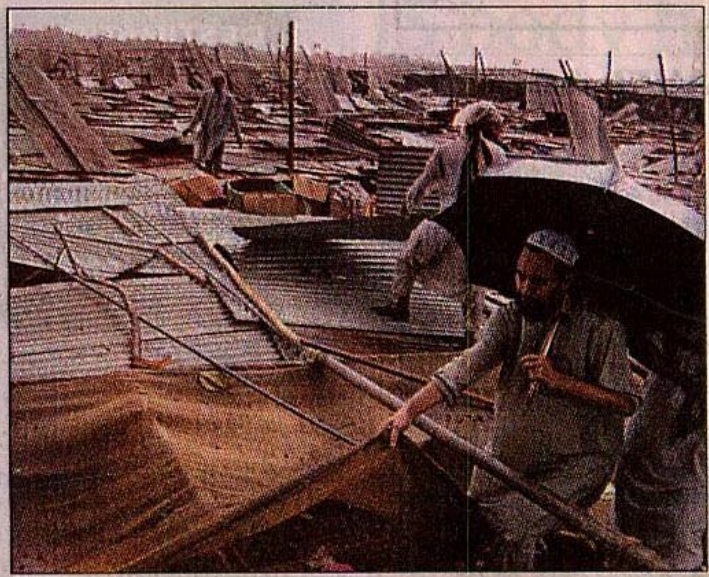
It also left hundreds of vehicles with thousands of commuters stranded and forced many to stay indoors and children to skip schools. Office-goers faced great difficulties and many went to office soaked to the skin.

Day-labourers were the worst sufferers, as they found no work to feed their families.

Meteorological office advised hoisting cautionary signal number two at inland ports and signal number three at maritime ports.

Weathermen said the situation will start improving this evening.

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A man sits among ruins as a tornado yesterday tore through the tin-sheds at Tongi Biswa Jtama site killing five.

PHOTO: STAR

Rain to continue for 2 more days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rain will continue for at least two more days as the land depression in the Indian state of Orissa last night moved to West Bengal heading for Bangladesh, meteorological office said.

"The well marked low in Indian land intensified into a land depression again, moved to West Bengal from Orissa tonight (Thursday night) and headed for Bangladesh. The more it rains, the weaker the depression gets," said Arzumand Habib, deputy director of Meteorological Department.

"But it depends on wind situation and so many other factors," she pointed out.

A CNN weather report yesterday

SEE PAGE 11 COL 6

High borrowing fear looms large

Govt receives Tk 2,062cr loans from banks in July against annual target of Tk 2,599cr

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON

Government borrowing from banks may exceed the target set in the budget this fiscal year if the government does not get additional budgetary support from donors.

The embarrassing prospect has prompted Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman to ask the

World Bank president for fresh credits support.

Net government borrowing from the banking sector has already increased 10 percent in the first month of this fiscal year.

The government's net borrowing from banks in July stood at Tk 2,062 crore, the year-on figure of which

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6 Rab men killed in road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Six members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were killed in a road accident in Chandpur Bazar in Natore yesterday.

The accident happened as a Natore-bound passenger bus from Rajshahi collided head-on with a Rab jeep coming from the opposite direction.

Of the six members of the Rab team of three army personnel, one navy man and two policemen, five died on the spot and one at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH).

They are team leader sub-

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JS body hails law and order improvement

SHAKHAWAT LITON

A parliamentary body yesterday claimed that law and order is much better now than any other time in the past, though crime figures of 15 homicides and 350 other crimes on average a day suggest quite the contrary.

The reconstituted parliamentary standing committee on home ministry at a meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban expressed satisfaction with the overall law and order situation as the previous committee did. Yesterday's meeting was held

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

3 YEARS OF COALITION RULE

Crime takes on terror proportion

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Crime waves continue striking terror into entire Bangladesh despite a range of government steps to check the downside in law and order, one of the election pledges of the four-party alliance government that completes three years in office on Sunday.

With the introduction of a num

SEE PAGE 11 COL 7

SENSE OF INSECURITY

- Biggest-ever arms and ammo haul
- Grenade attacks, a new dimension
- Range of new crime-busting forces
- Killing of sitting MP in broad daylight
- Increase in murders, repression of journalists
- Govt-backed fanatic leader Bangla Bhai enforces his own law



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