



# The Daily Star



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## Biman F-28 skids off runway, nosedives into ditch: 30 hurt

**IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet**  
A Biman Bangladesh Airlines aircraft yesterday morning skidded 150 feet off the runway after landing at Osmani International Airport and finished up stuck in mud across a canal, leaving about 30 passengers, including a former caretaker government advisor, and the pilots injured.

The Fokker F-28 Friendship aircraft of domestic flight BG-601, the day's first flight to Sylhet, took off from Zia International Airport at 8:30am with 79 passengers including some 37 from London on board. It had a delayed landing in Sylhet at 9:15am amid heavy downpour as its nose wheel was jammed.

The pilot, Captain Shahana Begum, touched down the plane far beyond the usual landing point on the runway and so lost control, an official of Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh (Caab) told The Daily

Star on condition of anonymity. Former advisor to the 2001 caretaker government and Executive Director of BRAC Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury, Shahana and Co-pilot Abu Safa got trapped in the cockpit as the plane's nose including the cockpit dug at least 5 feet into the ground on the far end of the 20-foot wide canal. The front wheel was stuck in 2-feet deep mud on one bank and the back wheels resting on the other.

Shahana and Safa were rescued after about three hours at 12:10pm and Mueyed at 3:20pm by army, air force and Caab crews. The rescuers cut away the craft's belly under the cockpit and some seats to get him out.

Shahana suffered fracture in her right arm and underwent an operation at Osmani Medical College Hospital (OMCH). She was then sent to Combined Medical Hospital

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Rescuers cutting the cockpit of the ill-fated aircraft to bring the captain out. The aircraft of Biman Bangladesh Airlines with 79 passengers aboard skidded off the runway at Sylhet Osmani International Airport and nosedived into a canal yesterday morning.

## Ctg tense as AL, 4-party vow to hold rally at Laldighi today

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**  
Tension runs high in the port city over holding rallies by the ruling BNP-led four-party alliance and Awami League-backed Sammilita Birodhi Dal (SBD) at Laldighi at the same time today.

City Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury, also general secretary of city unit AL, in a news conference at local press club yesterday vowed to hold the rally even at the cost of blood to press home a 40-point demand for development of Chittagong.

The four-party alliance also in a press briefing at Enesol Bhaban

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## Tornadoes and storms kill 14 more, injure 500

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
At least 14 more people were killed and over 500 injured as tornadoes and storms lashed different parts of the country yesterday.

Of the dead, four drowned when a trawler capsized in the Buriganga near the capital due to gusty wind. Four others went missing.

Four people were killed in house collapse due to storm in Mymensingh and two each in Rangpur, Lalmonirhat and Bhola.

At least 15 people were missing when three fishing trawlers sank in the Meghna, reports received in Dhaka said.

Earlier on Thursday, 13 people were killed and over 500 injured in similar tornadoes and storms in Dhaka, adjoining Tongi and some districts.

The land depression that caused the tornadoes and storms is now hovering over Bangladesh and adjacent northeastern region of India. It might move slowly deep

into the Indian territory, leaving a 'strong influence of monsoon' in Bangladesh and in the North Bay, weather officials said yesterday.

The meteorological office advised hoisting cautionary signal number three at maritime ports and cautionary signal number two at all inland ports.

The highest rainfall yesterday -- 66mm -- was recorded in Sylhet from 6:00am to 6:00pm.

The trawler that capsized in the

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## Top outlaw killed in 'crossfire' with cops

**UNB, Chuadanga**  
A leader of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Janajuddha) was killed in a shootout with police at Atharokhada village in Alamdanga upazila early yesterday.

Police said Abdul Malek alias Pavel, a regional leader of the underground outfit, and his accomplices opened fire and threw hand bombs on a patrol police team when it reached near Poldanga at the village at about 2:00am. Police returned fire, leading to a gunfight between the sides.

Police said Pavel, 30, was killed in 'crossfire' and his accomplices managed to flee, leaving two shutter

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## 3 YEARS OF OPPOSITION

## AL disappoints as main opposition

**SHAKHAWAT LITON**  
Awami League seems to have failed to play its due role as the main opposition in and outside parliament during the first three years of the coalition government because of strategic weakness, lack of vision and repression by the ruling coalition leader, BNP.

The main opposition, which in our Westminster-type democracy forms and runs a shadow cabinet, could not motivate and rally people against different crucial issues like price-spiral of essentials, and law and order downside. It could neither put pressure on the government nor launch a strong movement.

As its political activities mostly remained confined to street agitation on unimportant issues and lacked active participation in the Jatiya Sangsad, the AL failed to generate mass participation in its

antigovernment movement despite existence of a lot of issues of public concern.

From the very beginning of the BNP-Jamaat-led coalition regime to date the main opposition has been

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## Dam cut by BSF triggers flood in Satkhira villages

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira**  
Gushing flood water from across the border is entering Baikari union under Sadar upazila as Indians aided by the Border Security Force (BSF) cut the Khaitala point of Bhomra-Baikari embankment on Thursday midnight.

Vast tracts of land adjacent to the embankment have already been

submerged, prompting panic-gripped people of several villages in Baikari union to look for safer places.

Sources said, some 20 villages are likely to be fully submerged by Friday night.

Meanwhile, flood situation in the district may worsen further due to onrush of water from Indian territories and heavy rainfall.

## Chronology of Biman mishaps

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Fifty-seven people died in four of the eight air crashes in the country since independence.

Some of the accidents Biman Bangladesh Airlines met over the years including the latest one in Sylhet yesterday occurred as aeroplanes skidded off the runways.

Yesterday morning, an F-28 aircraft skidded off the slippery runway of Sylhet airport and fell into a ditch, 100 feet from the runway.

Earlier on August 5, 1984, a Fokker F-27 Friendship 600 aircraft of the national flag carrier crashed killing 49 people on board, the highest number of casualties so far. The aircraft fell into water, 550 metres off the runway.

On February 10, 1972, five crew members on board a Biman flight were killed when a Douglas DC-3 aircraft crashed. It was the country's first air accident.

Four crew members of a Fokker F-27 flight escaped unhurt when it crashlanded in a field near Savar Bazar during a test flight on November 18, 1979. The accident

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## Maathai first African woman to win Nobel Peace Prize

**AFP, Oslo**  
Kenyan ecologist Wangari Maathai yesterday won the Nobel Peace Prize, the first African woman to be awarded the prestigious prize since it was first handed out in 1901.

Maathai, who has served as Kenyan Assistant Minister for the Environment since 2003, founded the Green Belt Movement in 1977, the largest tree planting project in Africa, aimed at promoting biodiversity and at the same time creating jobs and giving women a stronger identity in society.

The Nobel Committee honoured her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace.

"Peace on earth depends on our ability to secure our living environment," the committee said.

Maathai stands at the "front of the fight to promote ecologi-



Wangari Maathai

cally viable social, economic and cultural development in Kenya and in Africa," it said.

"She thinks globally and acts locally."

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এখন থেকে ঢাকা ব্যাংক-এর শাখায়  
আপনার হাজার টাকা জমা দিতে পারবেন

লাকারেক, আল্লাহুমা লাকারেক।

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