

Rains: Two killed in house collapse in Gaibandha

Waterlogging makes life miserable to lakhs of people in Satkhira; thousands become homeless in Jessore; acute food and water scarcity prevails in affected areas



Flood caused by incessant rains has damaged the Tangibari-Munshiganj Road. The unfit road needs immediate repairing.

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Two persons were killed in house collapse during incessant rains in Gaibandha while waterlogging made life miserable to lakhs of people in Satkhira. Diarrhoea also broke out in Satkhira due to scarcity of food and water. Thousands of people turned homeless in Jessore.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: Two persons were killed and 15 others sustained injuries as houses collapsed on them during incessant rains for the last few days. The victims are Abdul Kader, 50, at Rajpur village in Sundarganj upazila and a five-day-old baby of Dhananjay at Hasanpara village in Sadullapur upazila.

A tornado lashed Sadar, Sadullapur and Sundarganj upazilas. Nearly 300 dwelling houses raged to the ground uprooting many trees and electric poles disrupting road communication with the affected upazilas.

The worst affected areas are Belka, Tarapur, Chandipur, Dhopadanga in Sundarganj upazila, Naldanga, Kamarpara in Sadullapur

upazila, Ghagao, Kuptola, Schooler bazaar, Charnder Vita in Gaibandha Sadar upazila. People were compelled to remain indoors following heavy downpour.

After the deluge, prices of essentials went beyond reach of poor and fixed income group. Coarse rice is being sold at Tk 18 per kg, flour at Tk 17 per kg and green chilly at Tk 70 per kg, and vegetable soared by Tk 6 to 10 per kg than the normal price.

Another report says: Floodwaters submerged a vast tract of land in 30 unions in the district. Standing crops on about 40,000 hectare of land went under water. Fish worth over Tk one crore washed away.

Gaibandha-Palashbari Road was submerged at two points. A bridge at Kutir ghat between Dholbhang and Amlagachhi may collapse due to high velocity of surging water.

Our Satkhira Correspondent reports: Over three lakh people in Kalaroa, Tala and Sadar upazilas (UPs) are passing hard days due to waterlogging. Incessant rainfalls for the last few days are behind the miserable situation.

Diarrhoea has broken out in the

flood affected Kalaroa upazila. At least 25 people have been attacked with the disease in two days.

Acute scarcity of food and drinking water prevails in the area.

The patients are Zabeed Hasan, 10, Chhaya Rani, 25, and Anwar, 22, of Tulshidanga, Sirajul, Shaharbanu and Sohag, of Khordh, Babu Ali of Langaljaaha, Shukjan, 40, of Baksa, Firoza of Lohakura and Asia, 45, of Jhhapaghat in Kalaroa upazila. They have been admitted to Kalaroa hospital.

On contact, Deara UP chairman Anowarul Islam said diarrhoea may turn serious as there is no medical team in the flood affected areas.

However, Dr Rezwaniul Islam, Upazila Health Officer said the department is aware of the situation and necessary measure will be taken to combat the disease.

Meanwhile, the overall flood situation has deteriorated further in Kalaroa, Tala and Sadar upazilas following heavy down power in the last few days.

Though the flood victims took shelter on embankments and high places, yet no government shelter was opened till filing of the report. Local

people expressed concern as no government relief activities started in the worst affected Deara, Jugikhali, Labsa, Balli, Dhandia, Nagarghata and Chandapur unions. Only 47 metric tons of rice were distributed among three lakh flood affected people.

Meanwhile, Satkhira District Water Committee, at a press conference, at the Zila Parishad said at least 1,45,213 families in 732 villages in Kalaroa, Tala, Sadar and Assasuni upazilas and Keshabpur, Manirampur, Sharsha and Jhikargachha upazila in Jessore district were badly affected and about 65,024 houses were damaged.

Standing crops on 1,25,610 acres of land and vegetable on 39,085 acres of land were damaged. Fish worth about Tk 20 crore were washed away.

In a written statement, Principal ABM Shaiful Islam, president of the water committee called upon the government to start relief operation in flood affected areas. He submitted 10-point demand to the government to address the sufferings of the affected people. The demand include, supply of adequate relief materials, distribution of agri-loans and clothes.

Our Jessore Correspondent reports: The Relief and Disaster Management Ministry has sanctioned one lakh VGF cards for the flood-affected people in the district.

Thousands of people in Sharsha, Keshabpur, Maddyakul and Habashpole became homeless. They are living under open sky in an inhuman condition. Flood affected people are staying in 42 relief centres.

An earlier reports says: About 1,500 flood-affected people of about 350 families in Bishnupur, Sheikhpara, Komorpur, Bheribadh and Sagardari villages in Sagardari union are still living under open sky. They are getting inadequate relief materials, it is alleged.

People of over 100 families in Raipur, Dhannyakhola, Boliapara, Dubpara and Shakhripota villages are still staying under the open sky on the Benapole-Bahadurpur road.

Cancellation of work order: Commotion among hospital food contractors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A commotion was created among the food contractors of Syedpur 50-bed Hospital over cancellation of work order by the district Civil Surgeon (CS) recently.

Three contractors served legal notices on the CS separately last week to amend the terms of tender called for supplying food to the hospital during new July-June session. After cancellation of a few filed tenders a local contractor, Md Sohel was selected and given work order last week.

However, contractors Biplob Ghosh, Atiqullah and Mohsinul Huq challenged the decision.

Meanwhile, the CS, through a government lawyer, replied to the legal notice served by three contractors.

In the reply the CS justified the steps taken by the selection committee on October 3.

While talking to this correspondent the CS told that a five-member selection committee headed by him with Resident Medical Officer of Syedpur as secretary and Deputy Director, Family Planning Department, a representative of Deputy Commissioner and Medical Officer of the CS Office verified all the tenders and selected Sohel because 'his filed tender was lowest and as per rule of the Health Department'.

According to rules, the Marketing Officer of the district also submitted the market rate and we accepted it.

However, when asked to comment about the tense situation in the Syedpur hospital, the CS told this correspondent that there is no tension in the hospital.

REMOVAL OF CUV C JCD launches mass signature campaign

CU CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong University (CU) unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) launched a mass signature campaign recently to press home their one-point demand for removal of Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury.

They alleged the VC was patronising Jamaat-Shibir men and appointed teachers and staff through corruption.

JCD General Secretary (GS) M R Milton Chowdhury alleged that after his take over the VC violated university rules and regulation and appointed at least 70 teachers loyal to Jamaat-Shibir.

'About 5,000 signatures have so far been collected and we shall continue the campaign till the end of current week', he said to this correspondent.

He further told JCD will go for a tougher agitation within a few days and will declare their next course of action through a press conference next week, he added.

JCD started the oust-VC agitation on September 23 by holding a procession and meeting. A human chain was also formed on September 26 in support of the demand.

Threat to woman commissioner to withdraw case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Alleged criminals are threatening a newly elected women commissioner of Satkhira pourasava to withdraw an extortion case filed with Satkhira thana against them.

Marzina Khatun, commissioner elected from reserved seat No 3 in the town, filed a General Diary recently seeking security of her life, police said.

They said a gang allegedly led by Mohammad Ali, president of Satkhira district Krishak Dal, peasant front of the ruling BNP, entered her house at Palasapole on the night of September 10 and demanded toll. When they were refused, they snatched her gold chain at gunpoint.

She then filed a case with Satkhira thana accusing Mohammad Ali and 14 others.

Since then the miscreants are threatening her to withdraw the case or to face 'dire consequences'.

Domestic help fighting for life

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

Fifteen year-old domestic help Fatama Begum is now fighting for life at Modhupur Upazila Health Complex. She sustained serious injuries after being hit by her mistress with an iron rod recently.

Police said they filed a case against Arifa Begum, wife of Mohammad Ali, Forest Officer at Modhupur under the Women Children Repression Act. But she is yet to be arrested.

Fatima is the daughter of Nur Ahamed of Maipara village in Ukia upazila in Cox's Bazar.

Kalapara people face acute drinking water crisis

Work on Tk 1.17 cr overhead tank project stalled for three years

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Acute drinking water crisis has been prevailing in Kalapara due to non-completion of a overhead water tank though its work began 36 months back.

Sources in Kalapara Pourasabha (municipality) said, the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), Patuakhali took up the project in assistance with the DANIDA at a cost of Tk One crore 10 lakh five thousand 7 hundred and 39.

Work on the one lakh litre capacity overhead tank began at Mojaharuddin Biswas Collage ground. Messers Milon Enterprise got the work order as selected firm of the contractor from the DPHE on September 20, 2000. This project work was scheduled to be completed within one year, according to the project schedule. But its work was left abandoned after completion of one-third of the entire work due to unknown reason.

The work was stalled since September 19, 2001. The municipal authorities sent a letter to the DPHE authorities to take necessary action, but to no effect.

The Executive Engineer of the



An incomplete overhead tank in Kalapara Pourashabha. Its work started three years back which was abandoned later by the concerned contractors due to reasons unknown to all. Acute drinking water crisis prevails in the area.

DPHE, Patuakhali, Moniruzzan told The Daily Star that they had selected another contractor for completion of the project work through a tender notice.

People urged the higher authorities to complete the project work without further delay.

Punishment to JU teacher demanded

JU CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally on the Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus recently demanded punishment to the Physics Department teacher who gave a fatwa to female students to wear veil on September 26.

Progotisheel Chhatra Jote (PCJ) organised the rally in front of the administrative building where they threatened a tougher students' agitation if the authorities concerned fail to punish the teacher.

PCJ also brought out a procession on the campus and chanted slogans against fundamentalism and communalism.

Meanwhile, the students of Physics department brought out a silent procession on the campus and submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor (VC).

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) also reiterated their demand for exemplary punishment to the controversial teacher.

Meanwhile, a probe committee will publish its report soon, according to Pro-VC and Convener of the investigation body Prof Enamul Huq Khan.



Rounakul Islam, Judge of Women and Children Repression Prevention Special Court, Nilphamari handing over money, on behalf of Islami Bank Foundation, among 115 distressed people in Syedpur, Nilphamari last week. Sewing machine, tin, almirah and bi-cycle were also distributed to different social and educational institutions at the same function organised by Islami Bank.

'UPs are sick organisations'

Biprobalegharia Union Parishad chairperson Mohua Pervin Lipi wants UP autonomy; more govt allotment

Z A M KHAIRUZZAMAN

Mohua Pervin Lipi, 32, is the UP (Union Parishad) chairperson of Biprobalegharia union in Sadar upazila, Natore. She is the only female UP leader in 52 unions.

She was studying in HSC (Higher Secondary certificate) class before her marriage with the chairperson of the union, Zahid Hossain Mukul. Before entering in politics, she was merely a housewife. Her husband was involved in BNP politics. As a Jubo Dal leader he earned name and fame. But he faced a premature death as he was killed by his rivals while he was on way home on October 28, 1997. People of all walks of life were shocked at his premature unnatural death. Actually it is her husband's death which prompted Lipi to enter in local government politics.



MOHUA PERVIN LIPi She took part in the bye-election as desired by the people who overwhelmingly elected her a chairper-

son. Being empowered, Lipi came to know that Union Parishad is a sick organisation. Most of the UPs have no independent source of income. Moreover, government allotment is decreasing gradually. In such a situation, the responsibility of leasing hats-bazaars and water bodies should be handed over to UPs. Government allotment should also be increased, Lipi thinks. She is in favour of direct allotment of money to the concerned UPs. Only then the UPs will be able to play a greater and effective role in rural uplift, according to her.

Lipi believes in decentralisation of power, otherwise the socio-economic condition of rural habitations will not change. UPs should be given autonomy for strengthening development activities in the unions.

People of Biprobalegharia union elected Lipi chairperson for a second term in recognition to her welfare-oriented activities during tenure of her first term in office.

There are only one college, one higher secondary institution, six secondary schools and eight primary schools in her union, inhabited by 30,000 people. There are also seven madrasahs and 52 schools being run by NGOs. About 45 per cent people are literate in her union. The economy of the union is mainly dependent on agriculture. About 14,000 metric tons of agricultural products are produced here. Of these paddy, jute, onion, garlic, pepper and muster are worth mentioning.

The two-storied office building of Mohua Pervin consists of a computer although internet facility is not available. She stresses on improvement of communication and power systems. Besides, She wants to establish agriculture-based industries to solve unemployment problem. According to her, joblessness is the main problem in the area. About 40 to 45 incidents of repression on women happen annually in her union. The incidents occur over dowry, child marriage and polygamy. She has taken a bold initiative to curb the unwanted incidents.

As a female chairperson, Lipi did not face any problem socially. According to her, local people extended their helping hands towards her. Her male colleagues are also cooperative. Administration officials always encourage her although the influence of politics in union development activities frustrates her sometimes. Often influential circles of ruling parties interfere in activities in the union. This is because they gave priority on self-interest rather than meeting people's needs. Most of UP chairpersons in other unions also have to face similar problems, she feels. But Lipi thinks this should not happen for people's interest and local development.

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