

Nor'wester lashes N-dists, 3 killed

BSS, Rangpur

At least three people were killed and 12 others injured when a nor'wester accompanied by moderate to heavy rains lashed several northern districts on Saturday night.

Some 825 houses, 42 institutions and standing crops on many places were damaged and over 1,250 trees uprooted.

Nine persons were injured in Gaibandha, Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Rangpur, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts.

Rangpur Met office recorded 31mm rainfalls and nor'wester speeding up to 79km per hour from the north-western direction. Similar reports have been received from Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, parts of Panchagarh, Joypurhat, Bogra, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts.

Three persons were killed and

two others injured by lightning in Harivasha village under Sadar upazila of Panchagarh amid strong nor'wester and rains. Three houses and many trees were also burnt.

Power supply remained cut off in eight districts of greater Rangpur and Dinajpur as the national power grid line went out of supply following collapse of a electric tower in Polashbari upazila of Gaibandha district.

The 20 MW Rangpur diesel fueled power generation unit is now somehow meeting the urgent demand of power in emergency places of Rangpur, Nilphamari and Dinajpur. All other places are out of power supply, the sources said.

The nor'wester coupled with thunders and rains lasted for three hours. Average rainfalls between 30mm and 60mm have been recorded at different places of the districts, the sources said.

1,875 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,875 people on various charges from different parts of the country in the last 24 hours as of 6.00am yesterday.

Thanksgiving prayer in honour of new Pope

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

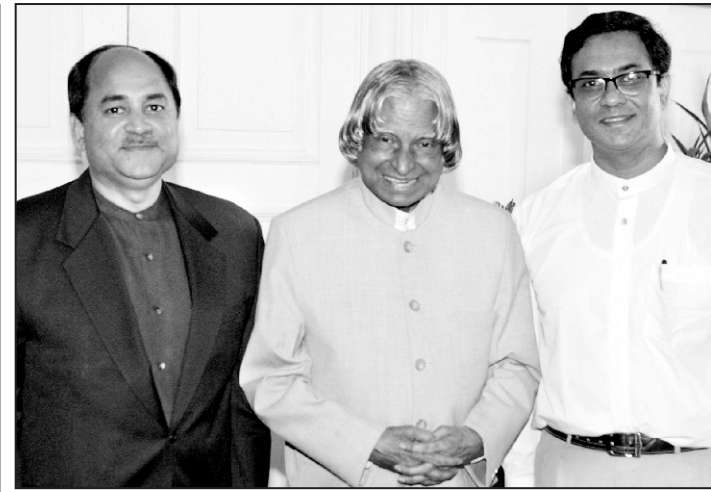
Hundreds of Catholics gathered at a thanksgiving prayer service at Ramna Cathedral in the city yesterday evening in honour of Pope Benedict XVI, head of the world's 1.1 billion Roman Catholics.

The Vatican Embassy in Dhaka and the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Bangladesh jointly organised the prayer service.

At the prayer service, the devotees prayed that the newly-elected Pope would lead the Catholic community following the ideals of Jesus Christ and be a deserving successor of Pope John Paul II in establishing peace.

Archbishop Paul Chang In-Num, the Vatican ambassador, led the prayer service while Archbishop Michael Rozario of Dhaka and other bishops assisted him.

High commissioners of different countries, diplomats, priests and nuns also attended the service.



Square Group Managing Director Tapan Chowdhury, left, meets Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam, centre, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi recently.

Square Hospitals team meets Indian president

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of Square Hospitals Limited, led by Managing Director of the Square Group Tapan Chowdhury, met Indian President APJ Abdul Kalam at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi recently.

During the meeting, Tapan Chowdhury mentioned the huge trade imbalance between the two countries and sought the president's help in reducing the gap.

President Kalam underscored the need for greater cooperation in the fields of education and modern technology, especially in medical science.

Stressing the need for more interactions among the younger generations of the two countries, he said they should spend more time in each other's countries.

Dr Rubayul Morshed, chief of the Healthcare Department of the Square Hospitals, now under construction, was present at the meeting.

The team visited India to gather experience on different aspects of the health sector of the neighbouring country.

The state-of-the-art Square Hospital, a sister concern of the Square Group, will be inaugurated formally in the middle of this year.

First laparoscopic surgery on child today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For the first time in the country, doctors will perform a laparoscopic surgery on a child at the Institute of Child Health & Sishu Hospital at Mirpur in the city today, says a press release.

Previously the patients had to go abroad for laparoscopic surgery, which was very expensive. At present, such surgery are being performed on the adults in the country.

Relatives and doctors will be able to watch the surgery live on monitor.