



An inundated area in Patuakhali town (L) and Rudranagar Government Primary School in Kolmakanda upazila in Netrakona yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Downpour floods towns, upazilas in 3 districts

Thousands affected: Crops, fish enclosures damaged

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Downpour in the last three days flooded vats areas in Patuakhali, Borguna and Netrakona.

Most parts of Patuakhali town and low lying areas in Galachipa, Kalapara and Dashmina coastal upazilas are reeling under water following the rains amid high tide under the influence of full moon.

About 40 shoals in the three upazilas are now under three to five feet surging water that has washed away about 300 metres of the flood control embankment in Kalapara.

In Netrakona, most areas of the district town have gone under water and about 20,000 people have been marooned in lowlying areas in the district.

In Netrakona, vast areas in bordering Kalmakanda and Durgapur upazilas have been inundated as rain-fed Someshwari river overflowed its banks at Shakhai on Sunday. At least 3000 people are marooned, official sources said.

Our Patuakhali Correspondent reports: Monsoon rains continued in the district yesterday as high tide and strong wind whipped up waters,

paralysing life in the coastal district.

Newly transplanted Aman crops on about 50,000 acres have gone under water. Fishes worth about crores of taka have been washed away it the seven affected upazilas.

District Fisheries Department officials said, 1200 shrimp enclosures and over 5,000 ponds in Galachipa, Kalapara, Dashmina, Bauphal, Dumki, Mirzagonj and Sadar upazilas have been inundated. They said the fishery department has distributed about 1000 metres of nets to fish farm owners at subsidised rate to protect fishes. But this will be of little use as most of the ponds and enclosures are overflowing their banks, they said.

The meteorological department here recorded 500 mm rainfall in the district in the last five days since Thursday.

The high tide under the influence of the full moon aggravated the situation, they said.

The worst affected shoals are Char Ganga and Lata Chapli in Kalapara; Char Halim, Char Agunmukha, Char Karforma, Char Bangla in Galachipa; Ramgopaldi, Khalishakhali and

Alipura in Dashmina; Muradia in Dumki and North Badura in the Sadar upazila. At last 40,000 people are affected in the areas.

About two kilometres of the flood control embankment have been badly damaged in the areas, officials of Water Development Board (WDB) and the upazila administration said.

In Kalapara, over 100 families have become homeless as their houses went under water after about 300 metres of the flood control embank was washed away on Friday.

Patuakhali town is unprotected as the proposed town protection embankment has not been built in eight years.

Our Barisal Correspondent reports: Flood protection embankments in Babuganj, Baliatoli, Falishatoli, Kalmegha and Bogi in Barguna Sadar are threatened.

Life has virtually stopped in the district town because of the inclement weather. Work at offices is being hampered.

Fish resources worth lakhs of taka have been washed away as about 100 farms in Barguna Sadar, Amtoli,

Taltoli, and Patharghata have been inundated, fisheries officials said. At least 20,000 in these areas have been marooned.

Our Netrakona Correspondent reports: Seven out of 14 unions in Durgapur and Kalmakanda upazilas have been inundated by water from hills across the border.

The affected unions are Birishiri, Kakoyergora and Gaokandia in Durgapur upazila; and Kamai, Pugla, Borkapon and Kalmakanda Sadar union in Kalmakanda upazila.

The Someshwari, Mogra, Kongsa and Dhonu rivers in the district are rising.

One-third area of Kalmakanda upazila headquarter has gone under two to three feet water. At least 300 houses have been washed away. People there are suffering for food, fodder and drinking water.

The road from Kalmakanda upazila headquarter to bordering Gobindapur Bazaar has gone under water at several points, snapping the road link.

Road communication between the district headquarter and Durgapur Sadar is snapped as a portion of the road has been damaged near Jangail Bazar in Durgapur upazila.

Water Development Board (WDB) sources in Netrakona said they are monitoring the situation.

The situation is still under control, WDB Executive Engineer Mohammad Alauddin told newsmen yesterday.

Rangpur BRDB staff press for 8-pt demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) employees laid a siege to the office of its Deputy Director in Rangpur yesterday and gave the authorities three days' time to fulfil their eight-point demand. The demands include transfer of their services under the revenue budget, absorption of BRDB projects in government's Rural Poverty Alleviation Project and reappointment of terminated employees.

They also announced there that they would go for allout agitation from July 7 if the demands are not met by that time.

Schoolgirls in Gaibandha protest attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Several hundred schoolgirls at Palashbari yesterday brought out a procession in the upazila headquarters protesting the alleged attempt on the life of fellow student Hosne Ara Keya, who is now fighting for life at Rangpur Medical College Hospital.

They demanded arrest and punishment of the culprits and handed over a memorandum to Palashbari Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO).

Keya is a student of class X at Piyeri Girls High School. It was alleged that one Shaheen used to tease her often.

On Friday, Shaheen attacked Keya and her mother at their house. He hacked them with an axe.

The mother and daughter were taken to RMCH in serious condition.

A case was filed but police are yet to arrest the accused.

Khulna boy held in murder case finally freed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Eleven-year old boy Milon Howlader was finally released from Khulna district jail yesterday.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Kabita Khanam had earlier granted him bail on June 23.

The minor boy was arrested by Sonadanga police on May 2 last year in connection with a case for murder of Awami League leader Manzur Morshed Labu.

But the real accused wanted in this murder case was Milon Shaikh, son of Amjad Shaikh of Shaikhpara in Khulna city.

Milon Howlader, son of Yunus Howlader of Goborchaka in Sonadanga thana, was sent to court, as he, having similar name, was named in the case.

The case was investigated by Sub Inspector

Narhu Gopal Das. The real accused, outlaw Milon Shaikh, was not arrested as he bribed the IO, Yunus Howlader alleged.

SI Narhu Gopal Das was dismissed from service in July last year as allegation against him was proved after investigation by a team of senior officials of Khulna Metropolitan Police.

Manzur Morshed Labu, Secretary of Sonadanga thana Awami League, was killed in a bomb attack allegedly by extremists in January last year.

Some legal complications delayed release of the boy from jail though his bail prayer was granted on June 23. The prayer was moved by the divisional chief of Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Ainjibi Samity.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Kabita Khanam also exempted the minor boy from the murder charge.

Gaibandha town still out of fibre optic network

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Gaibahda district town is still out of fibre optic network only for lack of a 20-kilometre cable line from the Plalashbari cable loop.

The fibre optic cable network from Bogra to Panchagarh covers all the northern district towns of Rangpur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Saidpur, Nilphamari, Dinajpur and Thakurgaon. Though the cable line is erected through Gobindaganj and Palashbari upazilas in Gaibandha, the district town is not linked up for 'unknown reason'.

Bangladesh is going to be linked up with the Information Super Highway through Submarine Cable Network, but Gaibandha people will remain deprived of modern telephone and Internet facilities only for the 20 km cable line.

Gaibandha telecommunications system is still dependents on the old technology of Ultra High Frequency (UHF) through wireless contact with Bogra, and it does not serve the purpose.

"We don't get Internet connection all the time", said Rezaul Karim, who owns a small computer shop in

the town.

There is a little opportunity for youngsters to use cyber cafe and broadband system of Internet in Gaibandha, said Habibur Rahman, another IT man in the town.

When contacted, the T&T Divisional Engineer in Bogra could not say why Gaibandha town was skipped when the fibre optic network was laid.

The journalist community in Gaibandha district is the worst sufferers. They drew the attention of authoritirs several times, but to no effect.



PHOTO: STAR

Members of The Daily Star Readers Club, Rangamati, took out a procession in the town yesterday afternoon after a meeting at a local restaurant. It was led by Monjulika Chakma, Tuku Talukder, Sunil Kanti Dey, Ajoy Tripura, Mong Thoai Ching and Kumar Nandit Roy.

5x3

4 AL men sued on extortion charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A case has been filed against four Awami League men including its Sadar unit general secretary and district Chhatra League secretary on charge of demanding toll from Gaibandha Sub-Registrar Office.

Police on Sunday night arrested Gaibandha Sadar AL general secretary Shah Sarwar Kabir and Mostafa Kabir Montu, lecturer at Fakirhat College and an AL activist.

The two others sued in the case are Gaibandha district BCL secretary Shah Ashraf Kabir and Tuheen.

The arrests followed filing of a case by Sub-registrar Mozahar Hossain with Gaibandha police against the four under the Speedy Trial Act.

The Sub-registrar alleged in the FIR that the four together with some unidentified persons demanded Tk 10,000 toll during working hours on Saturday. They even attempted to attack and threatened him if he failed to pay the toll on the next day (Sunday), he alleged.

District AL president Mohammed Khaled however termed the allegation false and demanded withdrawal of the case and release of the two party men.

9x3

5x3

5x2