

Shrimps on 2,500 hectares swept away, 5km dams damaged

236 mm rainfall in two days after last week's tidal surge in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

The tidal surge that swept the coast last week washed away shrimps from farms covering about 2500 hectares and damaged five kilometers of Water Development Board (WDB) embankment in Cox's Bazar, according to district administration's estimate.

The situation remained almost the same yesterday as Sunday's heavy rains swamped the area again when waters whipped up by cyclone Akash started rolling down, officials said.

Meteorological department officials said they recorded 120 mm rainfall in Cox's Bazaar yesterday and 116 mm on Sunday.

Leaders of shrimp firm owners association said shrimps on 2500 hectares were completely destroyed by the tidal surge. The loss would be

around Tk 100 core, they claimed.

Upazila Project Implementation Officer Kishore Majumdar however told this correspondent that the loss to shrimp farms is yet to be ascertained.

The tidal surge also affected salt production, he said.

Salt producer Abul Kasem said farmers who stored salt under ground for off-season are now facing a great loss as these may be washed away.

Dalghata of Moheshkahli island is worst affected as the area is unprotected as all the embankments have been destroyed. At least 8,000 people are now marooned there, district administration officials said.

Dalghata Union Parishad leaders said many educational institutions have been unofficially declared closed. Most embank-

ments in the area have been destroyed as the whole area was flooded by at least four feet high tidal water, they said.

This correspondent during a visit to the area on Saturday saw boats were the only means for people in seven villages to move from one place to another.

Shrimp firm owners in Chakaria said, 119 projects, each covering over 10 acres, were affected in Rampura area in the upazila as waters entered through most of the seven sluice gates.

No official of Water Development Board (WDB) visit the affected areas till yesterday, locals said.

When contacted, the WDB Executive Engineer said, "We have submitted a proposal to repair all the embankments and work will start as soon as funds will be available.

Extortion case against former BNP MP

A CORRESPONDENT, Meherpur

An extortion case was filed yesterday against former BNP lawmaker from Meherpur-2 constituency Abdul Ghani.

Ismail Hossain, headmaster of SKS Junior High School filed the case with the court of Magistrate Shahadat Hossain in Meherpur. The magistrate ordered police to investigate the case.

In the case, the complainant alleged that the former lawmaker demanded Tk 3 lakh from him to enlist the school under government's MPO (monthly pay order).

After bargaining, he handed over Tk 2.3 lakh to Abdul Ghani at his residence, the headmaster claimed in the complaint.

Ismail Hossain also alleged that he earlier lodged several complaints to higher authorities that Abdul Ghani extorted Tk 42 lakh from 28 educational institutions in the name enlisting those under MPO. But no one was enlisted, he said.

20 hurt as train derails in Lalmonirhat

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

At least 20 passengers were injured when a Lalmonirhat bound train derailed at Votmari under Kaligonj upazila yesterday.

Critically injured passengers Hasmot Ali, Jibon Barmon, Rahela Begum and Jalal Uddin were sent to Kaligonj upazila hospital.

Other injured passengers were admitted at local hospital.

Train communication between Burimari and Lalmoni was yet to be restored when the report was filed yesterday afternoon.

ATTACK ON MINORITY COMMUNITY IN AGAILJHORA

Police finally accept case, arrest 3 JCD men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At last police Sunday night recorded a case in connection with alleged attacks on minority community people in Askor-Dusmi village in Agoiljhora by JCD activists after several hundred people brought out a procession in the area earlier on the day.

The case was lodged by Pobitra Ballav, one of the victims, against 15 JCD activists. It was recorded under sections 143, 325, 379, 389, 435 and 448 of Penal Code, police sources said.

Police yesterday arrested three JCD activists -- Rubell Molla, Tuku Molla and Karim Molla.

The case was accepted after Circle Inspector Aktaruzzaman visited the area and ordered

Agoiljhora police station to record it, refused by police earlier.

Police sources said Aktaruzzaman during the visit found evidences in favor of the allegations made by members of the minority community.

When contacted, Agoiljhora Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Latif and OC Yusuf Hossain declined to make any comment in this connection.

In the case, it was alleged that a gang led by Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leader Abdul Qayum tried to abduct Upen Ballav's teenage daughter Namita on the night of May 5.

Local people caught Qayum but he was snatched by his associates.

Some people including Namita's uncles Gobinda Ballav and Amol

Ballav were injured in the attack.

But police recorded a case filed by the alleged attackers and arrested Gobinda, forcing many minority community people to go into hiding to avoid alleged police harassment.

On May 19, the hoodlums led by Qayum again attacked the village and torched the house of Upen Ballav.

This time also, when local people rushed to Agoiljhora police station to lodge a case, the on-duty constable allegedly misbehaved with them and drove them out of the compound.

Several hundred people of the area brought out a procession Sunday morning protesting the attack by JCD men and alleged police harassment and demanding security of life and arrest of the attackers.

Arms recovered in Khagrachhari

2 toll collector held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Army recovered more arms and ammunition from Hazachhara area under Dighinala upazila in Khagrachhari yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, army raided Hazachhara, a remote area of Dighinala upazila and recovered one gun and two magazines, sources said.

Sensing the presence of army, the criminals fled the den, leaving arms and ammunition.

Earlier on 19 May, army recovered three SBBL guns, two country made guns and explosive from Sadurkil, Shuknachhari and Chowdhury Ghat areas in Khagrachhari.

Another team of army arrested two persons from Shuknachhari area yesterday while they were collecting tolls. The arrested persons are Amio Bikash Chakma, 40, and Joyshanti Bikash Chakma, 28, sources said.

Outlaw held in Sirajganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) arrested cadre of Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) along with a pipe gun and four sharp weapons from Charmalshapara in Sirajganj town early yesterday.

Acting on a tip off, a team from Rab-12 raided Charmalshapara village and arrested Imran Ali when he and his accomplices were taking preparation for robbery. Imran's accomplices managed to escape.

Rab sources said Imran is accused in several criminal cases for robbery, kidnapping and other crimes.

Imran is son of son of late Abu Shama of Kalihati upazila.



PHOTO: STAR

Boats plying on shrimp enclosures flooded by last week's tidal waters and two days' downpour in Cox's Bazar.



PHOTO: STAR

Many areas in Sylhet city were swamped by knee-deep water after yesterday's rain as most of the outlets were clogged due to encroachment by land grabbers. The photo was taken from East Zinda Bazar.

Jadid al-qaeda suspect held in Barisal

Sent to Dhaka for JIC quizzing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Md. Ibrahim Sardar, a suspected activist of newly floated Islamist militant outfit Jaded al-qaeda and a former associate of notorious criminal Pichchi Hannan was arrested by police from Sreepur village near Durgapur Bazaar in Hizla upazila Sunday night.

Matiur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Hizla police station said Ibrahim was wanted by Rapid Action Battalion (Rab). Her was arrested from near a cinema hall at Durgapur Bazar and handed over to RAB-8 in Barisal yesterday. He is son of Safizuddin Sardar of Sreepur village.

Ibrahim was sent to Dhaka for interrogation by Joint Interrogation Cell (JIC), the OC said.

Sources in RAB-8 said after primary interrogation he was

handed over to RAB-3 at Mawa ferry ghat at about noon yesterday for taking him to Dhaka.

ASP Siraj, an official of RAB-3, said Ibrahim created a reign of terror in his area by using the political shelter of Awami League and Pichchi Hannan's protection.

After Pichchi Hannan was killed in crossfire, Ibrahim established links with Islamist militants, ASP Siraj said. Local people distributed sweets as news of his arrest spread, the Rab official said.

Police sources said Ibrahim confessed to his involvement with Pichchi Hannan and Islamsit militants but they declined to elaborate.

The sources said they, along with joint forces have launched drives in different areas on the basis of his confessions to nab criminals and Islamist militants.

12X3

9X3

6X2