

FRESH AREAS GO UNDER WATER IN MOULVIBAZAR, SYLHET

# Flood situation worsens as most rivers burst banks

STAR NATIONAL DESK

More areas reeled under flood in Moulvibazar and Sylhet yesterday as rivers in the districts burst their embankments at several points Monday night.

Our Moulvibazar Correspondent reports: At least 98 villagers were inundated in Kulaura, Rajnagar, Juri and Kamalganj upazilas as waters were gushing through breached embankments of Monu, Dholai and Juri rivers.

The Juri breached its embankment at five points and Monu and Dholai at one point each Monday night. The Dolai and Monu rivers earlier breached their embankments at 11 and two pints in the district.

According to flood control center at Water Development Board (WDB) in Moulvibazar, Monu was flowing .75 (point seven five) metres and .32 (point three two) metres above danger marks at Chadni Ghat bridge in Moulvibazar town and Monu railway bridge at 4pm yesterday. The Dholai river was flowing .52 (point five two) metres above the mark at Kamalganj.

In Kamalganj upazila, 45 villages in Adampur, Rahimpur, Patanusher, Islampur, Shamsernagar, Kamalganj, Alinagar unions and Kamalganj municipal have been inundated.

Kamalganj's road links with Moulvibazar, Srimongal, Adampur, and Patrakhola remained disrupted as the roads were under water at several points.

In Rajnagar upazila, at least 25 villages reeled under flood water as Monu breached its embankment at Murtikuna Monday night. The Kamarchak-Shamsernagar road link has been snapped.

Newly transplanted Aman seedlings in Karayar Haor is now under water.

In Juri upazila, 18 villages in Talimpur and Sujanagar unions were inundated following five breaches in Juri river embankment at Kapna and Botuli villages.

Monu river embankment is also threatened at several points in Kulaura



PHOTO: STAR

A man wading through flood water in Nawab Road area of Sylhet town yesterday.

upazila also, WDB sources said.

Water from Monu is entering Moulvibazar district town through several leakages in the town protection wall. WDB officials said they are trying to repair the leakages.

Our Staff Correspondent reports from Sylhet: More areas went under water in Companyganj upazila yesterday as waters continued to roll down the rivers from the upstream. The upazila complex was under three feet water, officials said over telephone.

In Sylhet city, fresh areas along Surma riverside were inundated yesterday, displacing about 1,000 people in Kolapara, Ghashitiola, Nabab Road, SheikhGhat,

Mendibag and Dakshin Surma areas.

The water level of Surma marked little rise at places while it remained unchanged at some other points, officials said.

The Surma was flowing 50 centimetres above the danger mark in Sylhet city and 65 cm above the mark at Sunamganj district town.

It was flowing 147 cm and 162 cm above the danger marks in Kanaighat upazila headquarters and at Amolshid, where Surma and Kushiara enter Bangladesh.

The Kushiara was flowing 92 cm above the mark at Sheolagaht.

Water Development Board engineer GM Shamsur Rahman

said work is going on to repair 15 breaches along the Surma Dyke and at 20 points along Kushiara Dyke in Zakiganj upazila.

The Sylhet Deputy Commissioner and joint forces officials yesterday visited the repair work.

The district administration has sanctioned 49 tonnes of rice, Tk

70,000 and 34 tins of biscuits for distribution among flood affected people in 10 upazilas.

Stone quarries in Jaintapur and Gowainghat upazilas remained under water yet.

## Dighinala UNO, two staff sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Dighinala Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and his two staff who were arrested on Monday from their office for allegedly taking Tk 2,500 bribe from a timber trader and keeping illegal arms were sent to jail yesterday.

Dighinala Police Station Officer-In-Charge Abul Hossain filed the cases. Sub-Inspector (SI) Kabirul Islam who is the investigation officer (IO) of the cases said he would submit a report after investigation as early as possible.

Dighinala Forest Office is also taking preparation to file another case against the UNO for keeping illegal wood in his residence. Police found more than Tk 5 lakh in his Sonali Bank personal account.

On search, joint forces recovered Tk 88,770 in cash, bullets, foreign made wine and 32 pieces of 'Segun' wood from his house.

Khagrachhari Superintendent of Police (SP) visited the spot.

## Darshana municipality chairman held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kusthia

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) yesterday arrested Matiur Rahman, chairman of Darshana municipality and general secretary of Alamdanga upazila Awami League (AL).

A BDR team FROM 32 Rifles Battalion raided the municipality office at about 11:00am and arrested Matiur.

After arrest he was taken to Chuadanga BDR camp and interrogated and then handed over to Chuadanga police.

Police said Matiur was arrested for alleged involvement in smuggling, extortion and other crimes.

Earlier on Monday, joint forces arrested Chuadanga district BNP vice-president Saidur Rahman from his house in the town on charge of extortion, abduction and arms smuggling, police said.

## EXPORT OF NINE ITEMS RESUMES

# Akhaura land port earns a lot, gets little attention

SHEIKH SHAHIDUL ISLAM , B'baria

Export of nine items through Akhaura land port that came to a halt on Saturday following Indian importers' refusal to take delivery protesting price increase, resumed yesterday.

The deadlock was resolved after Bangladesh authorities reverted to the prices of the items including Hilsha fish, small fishes, dry fish, stone chips, poultry feed, water pump spares, waste cotton and Chitagur (molasses).

Six tones of fish, five tones of plastic goods, 1,000 bags of cement and a truckload each of dry fish and jute rope were xported through the land port yesterday.

Akhaura land port in Brahmanbaria earned a revenue of about Tk 70. 86 crore in the current financial year till May.

According to port sources, at least 35 varieties of goods were

exported through the land port during last one year. Stone chips, fish, cement and dry sweets are at the top of the list of exported items.

This is a very good performance for the land port though there has not been any development of infrastructure at the port, port officials said.

The earnings could be much more had the port been modernised, they claimed.

Customs Officer Md. Khurshid Alam said Bangladesh exports more than it imports through Akhaura land port.

Most of the exports through Akahura port go to the seven north east Indian states called 'seven sisters'. Few Indian items including coal are imported through the port, he said.

Bangladesh's exports to the seven sisters will increase if road links are improved and facilities developed at Akhaura land port, he

said.

The facilities are as they were two decades ago. There is no spacious place for loading and unloading goods. The port also lacks bank and large goodown. If anybody wants to open a letter of credit (LC), he is to go to Akhaura upazila Sadar or Brahmanbaria district headquarters.

The condition of the road to the land port is also precarious. It is so narrow that two trucks or two buses can not pass in running conditions, the officials said.

Government acquired 15 acres of land for creation of infrastructure facilities and installation of modern equipment. But work on the development work is yet to start.

On June 4, joint forces led by Akhaura upazila Nirbahi Officer Md. Kamrul Alam took possession of the acquired lands by evicting houses and shops.

## Ex-Satkhira MP accused of grabbing water body

Complaint filed with ACC

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Complaints were lodged with the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Satkhira Deputy Commissioner and law enforcement agencies on Monday against former BNP lawmaker Habibul Islam Habib and his brother Rajibul Islam for allegedly grabbing an 135-acre water body in Kalaroa in 2001.

The water body--Khordo Baor--was earlier leased by Khurdo Matsyajibi Samabaya Samitty (fishermen's cooperative society) in April 2001 for two years.

Soon after the four-party alliance came to power, Habib's cadres and his brother forcibly occupied the water body on December 12, 2001 by driving out genuine fishermen, the complaint said.

Dulal Chandra Biswas, president of the 250 member fishermen's cooperative body submitted the complaints.

The occupiers looted fishes worth about Tk one crore in last five years and the vast water body is still under their possession, the complaint said.

Habibul Islam Habib was elected from Satkhira-1 (Tala-Kalaroa) constituency in 2001.

When contacted yesterday, ACC sources said that they sent the complaint to the Dhaka office and were awaiting an order to start investigation.

Satkhira Deputy Commissioner Kefayetullah when contacted said

the administration will take due steps after investigation.

Biswas told this correspondent that they did not complain earlier as Habib and his cadres threatened them with dire consequences and false cases.

He alleged that Habib formed a co-operative society with non-fishermen members with the help of the then upazila administration just to keep the water body under their possession.

They said, they submitted an allegation to the land ministry and Satkhira Deputy commissioner on April 5 for action against the grabbers.

As there was no action, they submitted fresh complaints to ACC, Deputy Commissioner and law enforcement agencies on Monday demanding transfer of the water body to genuine fishermen and punishment of the illegal occupiers.

On contact over cell phone, Habib denied the allegation and said he does not know anything about the matter.

But he remained mum when asked about his younger brother's involvement in it.

Habib is now on the run to evade arrest, sources in law enforcement agencies said.

## BDR, BSF trade fire on Satkhira border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira.

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) and the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) traded gunfire on Hijaldi border in Kalaroa upazila early morning yesterday.

BSF of Gunarajpur camp in Swarupnagar police station under North 24 Parganas district opposite to Hijaldi border in Kalaroa upazila fired three shots at Hijaldi BDR camp at about 4-30 am , forcing BDR to retaliate with 7 shots.

Maj Kamrul Hasan of 41 Rifles Battalion said BSF men fired three shots without any provocation.



PHOTO: STAR

A proud Abdur Rouf with his parents.

## Poor but meritorious Rouf needs a boost

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Young Abdur Rouf was away when the headmaster of his school went to his home to tell that he scored Golden-A+ (over 80 percent marks in all subjects) in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination.

'Rouf is now in Comilla. He has gone there to work as a day labourer,' Rouf's mother Nuran Nahar Begum told Chouradangi High School headmaster Abul Hossain who later informed Rouf about his brilliant result over cell phone on June 12.

A delighted Rouf returned home hurriedly. He met his classmates who were preparing to get admission in good colleges. But Rouf became worried as he faces an uncertain future as his poor, day-labourer father Fazlul Karim cannot afford to bear expenses of his education.

Karim maintained a big family of seven by sewing old torn jute sacks in shops in Jaldhaka town.

Rouf used to help his father in supplementing the family income. He went to distant places like Comilla, Noakhali, Feni and Sylhet to work as a day labourer.

But, braving all odds, Rouf continued his schooling and scored a brilliant result.

This correspondent met Rouf's mother who said they are now worried about their son's future due to their financial condition.

'How shall we bear the expenses of education of our son?', she said narrating that Rouf's father is now sick and unable to go for a work as before making even the daily income uncertain.

However, Jaldhaka Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Muhammad Salehuddin came forward to help Rouf continue his education. He urged the wealthy people to come to the aid of the poor, meritorious boy.



## Relief for landslide victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Nishkriti and Concern Bangladesh jointly distributed relief among the affected people of landslides in Chittagong.

The two non-government organisations distributed the relief of Tk 28 lakh among 4,000 families in the port city.

They gave 15kg rice, two kg pulse, one-litre oil, one kg salt and

five pieces saline to per family at West Bakalia, Jamal Khan, Firingee Bazar, West Madarbari , Halishahar, Mansurabad and Pahartali.

Chittagong Press Club President Ali Abbas, Nishkriti Chief Executive Khurshid Anwar and Concern World Wide Bangladesh Country Director Kiron Crowley were present during the distribution of relief.

## Noakhali Poura chairman, 4 others sued

A CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

Noakhali Pourasabha chairman Hanunur Rashid Azad and four others have been sued for allegedly demanding illegal toll.

Haji Abul Hashem, an expatriate in Qatar, filed a case with Sudharam Police Station Monday night. The accused included two BNP leaders, Abul Kalam Azad and Ismail Haque Tipu.

In his complaint, Hashem said the accused demanded toll from the owners of under-construction Bismillah Tower at Majidi Bazaar. The accused also created pressure on the owners to allocate two rooms of the market for them, he said.

## Hundi trader held: Tk 4 lakh recovered

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Members of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) yesterday evening arrested a hundi trader and recovered Tk.4 lakh from his possession at a check post in Benapole.

The arrested is Abdul Aziz, son of Abdul Rajjak of Shikri village under Benapole port station.

BDR sources said Aziz was returning to Bangladesh from India with Tk 4 lakh which were strapped with his body.

On suspicion, BDR members searched his body and recovered the money.

7x3

8x3