

## Food, water

floods in Nolka-Sirajganj point Thursday.

Hasibur Rahman Bilu, our staff correspondent in Bogra, reports: Bogra Deputy Commissioner Humayun Kabir said 3.81 lakh people were flood affected in four upazilas of the district and 150 tonnes of rice was distributed among them. He has requested 200 tonnes more from higher authorities.

Based on the amount of rice distributed, each flood-affected person on an average received only 390grams of rice, while the amount is even poorer in Rangpur, standing at 280 grams. In the worst flood-affected district of Sirajganj, where 7.50 lakh people are flood affected, people are getting 320 grams of rice per head.

On an average, each flood-affected person in Bogra, Kurigram and Rangpur is getting 16 paisa.

Flood-affected destitute people in Kazipur of Sirajganj are looking for jobs as the flood has taken away their livelihoods.

Meanwhile, most of the eastern part of Dhaka, from Badda Police Station to Nurerchala and Beraid union, went under floodwater leaving over 70,000 people marooned.

According to Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC), small rivers surrounding Dhaka and Narayanganj continued swelling and the Balu at Demra, the Lakhya at Narayanganj, the Turag at Mirpur and the Tongi canal at Tongi are flowing 19cm, 30cm, 22cm and 18cm above danger levels.

"The Buriganga at Dhaka is likely to go over the danger level within the next 72-96 hours. Inundation of low-lying areas of eastern part of Dhaka city is likely to aggravate," the FFWC reported yesterday.

No shelter centres have been opened up nor any relief materials distributed to the flood-affected people of the eastern part of Dhaka district. The district administration directed local union parishad offices to make a list of 1,000 flood-affected people. Rupganj, Nawra, Dummi and Termoni have also been inundated by floodwater.

The Padma yesterday continued to swell at all points and was flowing 150cm and 106cm above danger levels at Goalundo and Bhagyaluk. "The river is likely to swell further at a lower rate in the next 24-72 hours," the FFWC said.

The water level of the Kaliganga at Tarashat is still rising and it was flowing yesterday 139cm above danger level and it is likely to rise further in the next two days aggravating the flood situation in Manikganj, Munshiganj, Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Shariatpur and Dohar and Nawabganj upazilas of Dhaka.

The Meghna continued to swell and was flowing 62cm above danger level at Bhairab Bazar yesterday. It is likely to rise further and inundate more low-lying areas in Narsingdi, Brahmanbaria, Kishoreganj, Gazipur and Narayanganj.

The flood situation in Jamalpur, Sirajganj, Pabna and Tangail may remain unchanged or even start to improve from today (Saturday), the FFWC said.

Our correspondent from Sirajganj reports: Many people made homeless and jobless by the flood are passing days without food, as the relief they received were insufficient.

District Relief and Rehabilitation Office (DRRO) sources said about 240 tonnes of rice, Tk 5,41,143 in cash and 2,758 packs of dry foods were distributed among the flood-affected people in the district yesterday.

"The distributed relief was insufficient, we could not provide it to all the

flood-affected people," a DRRO official told The Daily Star requesting anonymity.

At least four people including three children drowned in floodwater during the last 24 hours. The dead are nine-month-old Ayesha, of Khukni in Shahjapur upazila, Nurunnahar, 45, Hafizul Islam, 4, and Israt Jahan, 11, of Ullapara.

Law and Information Adviser Mainul Hosein yesterday visited flood-affected areas of Sirajganj. Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed is to visit Sirajganj today (Saturday).

Our correspondent from Pabna reports: Over 10,000 people in Pabna, Ishwardi, Shahjapur and Baghabari have poor gas supply as the under-river gas pipeline at Nolka-Sirajganj was damaged by raging floodwater.

The barge mounted power plants in Baghabari, Bijoyer Alo-1 and Bijoyer Alo-2, suspended power generation as the gas supply snapped. Western Zone Gas Company Ltd stopped the supply as cracks in the pipeline could not be repaired due to strong river currents.

Our correspondent from Manikganj reports: Shafuddin, 60, of Bagha and Shamim, 40, of Singair drowned yesterday.

Dhaka-Aricha Highway went under 14-inch of floodwater at several points, including Paturia intersection, threatening to snap road communication between Dhaka and 16 southwestern districts. Over 500 educational institutions had to be closed due to flood in Manikganj.

Our correspondent from Netrakona reports: The flood-affected people of the district alleged that they were not getting sufficient relief materials as non-government organisations and political parties were not distributing relief materials.

At least four lakh people are marooned and 34km of embankments and 310km of roads were damaged in the district, district administration sources said.

Our correspondent from Gaibanda reports: The strong currents of the Karota is threatening to wash away parts of Gobindaganj-Dinajpur Highway, while crops on 17,000 acres of land have been damaged by the flood.

Our correspondent from Brahmanbaria report: More areas of the districts are going under floodwater as the onrush of water from the hills across the border worsens the flood situation there. At least 32 villages of eight upazilas have been inundated.

Three children drowned in Nasirnagar upazila. They were identified as Jonaki Begum, 3, of Kathalkandi, Hamida Begum, 2, of Chanderpara and Noor Uddin, 5, of Aruril village.

A correspondent from Faridpur reports: Ratan Matubbar, 60, of Char Manair in Sadarup upazila drowned when his boat capsized in strong currents.

Two-thirds of Faridpur town was flooded yesterday after a part of an old railway line, which was holding the floodwater back, at Kamlapur area was washed away.

Road links between the district headquarters and Sadarup, Charbhadhrashan and Nagarkanda upazila towns have snapped, as bridges and roads were washed away. Dhaka-Barisal Highway went under two to three feet of water at five points.

A correspondent from Chandpur reports: Around 700 people of Chandpur town were marooned after the swelling Meghna flooded the town inundating many areas and roads.

### SUPPRESSING MASS PROTESTS

#### Nepal panel calls for legal action against king

AFP, Kathmandu

An official report released yesterday has recommended legal action against Nepal's king for his role in suppressing massive protests that forced an end to his direct rule last year.

King Gyanendra scrapped 14 months of authoritarian rule in April 2006 after three weeks of street demonstrations led by political parties in concert with rebel Maoists, which left 19 people dead.

"The government should prepare a necessary law to take action against the then chairman of the council of ministers (King Gyanendra) and other ministers," said the report written by a commission chaired by a former head of the supreme court, Krishna Jung Rayamajhi.

No law exists under current Nepali statutes to prosecute a monarch making any immediate action against the beleaguered unlikely.

During the April uprising, Gyanendra's government detained thousands of political activists, cut mobile phone connections and imposed daytime curfews across the country.

"All members of the cabinet including the chairman of the then government are responsible for the loss of life and property, misuse of power and state funds and violations of human rights during the people's movement in April," said the commission's findings put before parliament on Friday.

Within weeks of Gyanendra's climbdown, new Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala set up the commission under Rayamajhi to probe abuses of power during protests.

The panel submitted written questions to the monarch but he did not respond.

The findings were presented to the prime minister and cabinet eight months ago but were only made public after pressure from the interim parliament and civil society.

The report also urged that the former army chief of staff and the former head of the armed police force face prosecution for their role in putting down the April protests.

Gyanendra has already been stripped of most of his powers, including his position as head of state and army chief.

Former rebel Maoists and the government signed a landmark peace deal late last year and since then, the ultra-leftists have been given seats in parliament and five ministerial portfolios.

The future of the 238-year-old Shah dynasty is set to be decided in November polls that will elect a body to rewrite the country's constitution.

#### US, UK for boosting UN role in Iraq

4 more US soldiers killed

AFP, AP, United Nations

The United States and Britain Thursday presented a draft resolution in the UN Security Council to enhance and expanded the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI).

A copy of the draft resolution obtained by AFP calls for UNAMI's mandate, launched in August 2003, to be extended another year beyond its August 10 expiration date.

The US-British proposal also calls on the UN's representative in Iraq and UNAMI, "as circumstances permit," to "advise, support and assist" the Iraqi government on a range of issues including politics, elections, constitution, justice, economy, human rights and the return of refugees to their homes.

#### Former MP

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threatened him and 33 other teachers of the college to dismiss from services if they failed to pay him in full the sums.

However, Hena later removed Nazrul and some other teachers of the college, as they could not provide the rest of the money.

#### Mayor Mohiuddin

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assets. They also seized the documents of 23 bank accounts following a court order.

An official wishing anonymity said they have also found the evidence of two bank accounts of mayor's son at Tk 550 a kg.

The official said the value of the building has been shown as Tk 73 lakh in the wealth statement of the mayor, but its real value would be Tk 4 crore according to the estimate of the Public Works Department.

Wholesalers of edible oil in Karwan Bazar said the price of soyabean oil may rise further as its supply was very limited yesterday.

The price of oil also rose by Tk 2 per hal (four pieces) as eggs of different types were sold at Tk 18 to Tk 20 a hal per kg in a few days.

Potol sold at Tk 28 to 32 per kg yesterday in different retail markets, which was sold at Tk 15 a week back. Price of papaya also rose to Tk 15 from Tk 5 per kg in a few days.

The prices of leafy vegetables, spices, rice, edible oil, flour and lentil - all saw a rise in their prices.

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The prices of green papaya, green banana, pu shak and lal shak and other vegetables rose by Tk 5 to 15 during the last week.

Local onion sold at Tk 25 per kg in retail market last week and is now

selling at Tk 35.

The price of soyabean oil has risen to Tk 82 per litre from Tk 78 two days back.

The price of flour rose sharply during the last two days. The price of 1kg pack, which was Tk 30 last week, has now risen to Tk 35 in last two days.

Lentils, which were selling at Tk 72 per kg two days ago, are now selling at Tk 75.

Prices of cumin and cardamom saw a sharp rise in the last few days as the prices of cumin rose to Tk 320 from Tk 270 per kg. Cardamom is being sold at Tk 700 which was sold at Tk 550 a kg.

The price of green chilli has doubled during the last few days, reaching Tk 200 per kg at different retail markets.

Wholesalers of edible oil in Karwan Bazar said the price of soyabean oil may rise further as its supply was very limited yesterday.

"I had to pay double the price for vegetables and as such I bought less than my requirement," she said.

Abdul Latif Miah, president of the wholesalers' association at Karwan Bazar market, said many customers could not buy essentials due to shortage of supply yesterday.

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## 100 dead in DR Congo rail crash

AFP, Kinshasa

At least 100 people were killed when a goods train jumped the tracks in the Democratic Republic of Congo overnight Thursday, with illegal passengers thought to be among the dead.

"According to our information, at least 100 passengers have perished and dozens have been injured in the derailment of a goods train," said government spokesman and information minister Toussaint Tshilombo Send.

The United Nations mission in Congo (MONUC) said earlier that at least 68 people died and 120 were injured when the train derailed some 170 kilometres (105 miles) north of Kananga, the capital of Western Kasai province.

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"All members of the cabinet including the chairman of the then government are responsible for the loss of life and property, misuse of power and state funds and violations of human rights during the people's movement in April," said the commission's findings put before parliament on Friday.

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The officials of the building were deployed around the building to ensure security, while Fire Brigade units were ready at the spot for any emergency.

Three hundred labourers are working in two shifts one from 8:00am to 2:00pm and the other from 2:00pm to 10:00pm as Rajuk planned to remove the internal walls, doors, windows of the 22-storey building in two days.

After removal of the internal structures of the building, demolishing the main structure will start on Sunday, Rajuk's authorised officer Fazlul Kabir said, adding, "We will need heavy machinery like rod cutters, cranes and ladders to cut the concrete beams, slabs and columns of the building."

"The cost of our floor is Tk 20 crore. Only the decoration cost us over Tk 1 crore. What is our fault that we are counting such a huge loss?" Abul Hasan questioned.

AK Sheikh Abul Hasan, executive director of Appollo Ispat Complex Ltd, said they started shifting materials to their Tejgaon office at 4:00pm, but could not complete it in time.

Rangs Bhaban authorities did not even allow us to use the lifts. Some of our labourers got injured while carrying the goods through the staircase," he said.

Rajuk Authorised Officer Fazlul Kabir however said they allowed the companies housed in the building to remove their articles of use even after the time was over.

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