

# 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 Nurachala 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. Rugganj, Nawra, Dumni 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 Goulundo and Bhagyakul. "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 Taraghat 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 541,143 in cash and 2,758 packs of dry food items were distributed among the flood-affected people in the district yesterday.

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

# Road links cut

FROM PAGE 1 "I did not see such unusual increase in the prices of rice during the last few years," said a trader of Karwan Bazar wholesale rice market.

Traders said fearing more serious crisis due to severe flood, many customers are purchasing larger amount of rice than usual, which also contributed to the price hike.

"I was just astounded to see the price of rice today... the prices of essentials are going beyond our capacity. How can the middle and lower income families afford?" said bank officer Suman Rahman.

Garment worker Sathi, who was buying vegetables from Karwan Bazar, said, "I earn Tk 3,000 per month and my father who is a rickshaw puller earns about Tk 2500... how could I maintain our seven-member family with this small income when the prices of almost all essentials are skyrocketing."

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

The prices of leafy vegetables have doubled, rising to Tk 15-30 from Tk 5-12 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 8.

The prices of green papaya, green banana, pui 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

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 Shahjadpur upazila, Nurunnahar, 45, Hafizul Islam, 4, and Israt Jahan, 11, of Ullapara.

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

Our correspondent from Pabna reports: Over 100,000 people in Pabna, Ishwardi, Shahjadpur and Baghabari have poor gas supply as the under-river gas pipeline at Nolka-Sirajganj was damaged by raging floodwater Thursday.

The barge mounted power plants in Baghabari, Bijoyer Alo-1 and Bijaoyer 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 Baghia 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 south-western 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 Gaibandha reports: The strong currents of the Karotoa 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 Nasiragar upazila. They were identified as Jonaki Begum, 3, of Kathalkandi, Hamida Begum, 2, of Chandepara and Noor Uddin, 5, of Arurail village.

A correspondent from Faridpur reports: Ratan Matubbar, 60, of Char Manair in Sadarpur 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 Sadarpur, Charbhadrashan 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," 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 king 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

FROM PAGE 1 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

FROM PAGE 1 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 a Swiss bank.

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.

Taskforce officials said mayor's wife Hasina Mohiuddin could not show them any approved design of the under-construction five-storey building. The city corporation's generator was bought in 1996 and since then the mayor had been using it illegally at his residence.

"We are checking the amount of wealth of the mayor and we will get the final report by Sunday," said ACC Deputy Director Abu Mohammad Arif Siddique.

A total of four cases have so far been filed against Mayor Mohiuddin Chowdhury on various charges after he was arrested on March 7 this year.

# 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.

The injured had been transported to a hospital near the crash site, which is in the centre of the country.

State railway operator SNCC official Medard Illunga said the unusually high death toll for an accident involving a goods train had to do with "clandestine passengers who habitually travel aboard goods carriages unbeknownst to SNCC agents".

"Several bodies have been found crowded into the wagons," Illunga said.

The SNCC set up an inquiry to determine the cause of the accident, the second in Western Kasai province in the space of three weeks, while the government has asked the Transport Ministry to rapidly conduct its own probe.

The train linked the cities of Ilebo and Kananga, which are some 300 kilometres (188 miles) apart. It derailed when it met travelled over a slope near the Lwembe River, the SNCC said.

Train accidents are relatively frequent in the DRC, where the colo-

# Rangs Bhaban

FROM PAGE 1 been deployed to demolish the building.

Police and Rapid Action Battalion 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."

Dhaka Electricity Supply Authority, and Water and Sewerage Authority cut the electricity and water supply lines of the building as part of the demolition process, which is being supervised by Rajuk Magistrate Emdadul Dastagir.

Dastagir told the newsmen that they prepared a budget of Tk 1 crore to completely demolish the upper part of the building and it may take around three months.

The authorities broke the strong window glasses of the upper floors at 1:00am when public movement was thin as it was time for 'I'm a pray'ers.

"In absence of electricity, it was a bit dark inside the floor. We broke the glass sheets first so that the labourers working inside are not suffocated," said Raihanul Ferdous, superintendent engineer of Rajuk.

The traffic on the adjacent road was also restricted from 1:00pm to 2:00pm to avert any accident, as pieces of glasses were pouring down like rain.

The officials of the companies that purchased different floors of the building said the government had not provided enough time to remove their materials.

Shanin Group Chairman Ashikur Rahman Khan told journalists that as they received the Rajuk notice for removing the materials at 5:15pm yesterday, the time was too short to remove their furniture and goods.

# Mannan-Hannan

FROM PAGE 1 said while lambasting the dissident leaders for their remarks that their chairperson still favours having a dynasty in the party.

Hannan Shah criticised the dissident leaders for 'spreading misinformation about the party chief's remarks', and said she did not make any comment which might be construed as favouring a dynasty in the party.

Ashraf Hossain, a close aide to dissident leader Mannan Bhuiyan, on Thursday told reporters that Khaleda Zia still supports her dynasty in the party. He also said they do not give any credence to Hannan Shah's comments as he is not the spokesperson of the party.

Rebutting Ashraf Hossain's remarks Hannan Shah retorted, "She (Khaleda) is more sincere about the party than others, she made great contributions to the organisation, and she is more successful as a leader than others."

"Is he [Ashraf] a spokesman of the party?" Hannan asked adding, "I am the party chief's adviser and I am

nial-era rail network has undergone little maintenance since independence in 1960.

Send said that President Joseph Kabila and Prime Minister Antoine Gizenga had decided to send a government delegation to the area to evaluate the situation and assist victims.

The team would include the ministers of interior, health, humanitarian affairs and transport, the information minister added.

The senior officials were to make their way to the scene Friday morning, according to the Humanitarian Affairs Minister Jean-Claude Muyambo.

Twenty people were known to have been killed when a freight train derailed in southeast Democratic Republic of Congo in February.

The victims were also described as stowaways in that accident, but it had not been clear at the time if they were fare-dodgers or included people who had illegally entered DR Congo from neighbouring Zambia.

The train, which was transporting mostly food supplies derailed at Katanga, about 75 kilometres (45 miles) from the Zambian border. About 15 people were injured, a Red Cross official said.

In November 2005, dozens of passengers were killed in a rail accident in the DRC when the train they were riding crossed a bridge that knocked them off the top.

A local official said at the time that people sitting on top of the train, as often happens in African nations and other poor countries, were swept into the air when some of their luggage snagged on the beams of the bridge across the Lufulu river.

"Rangs Bhaban is not in the flying zone for aircraft, but it is being demolished. But what will happen to the Novo Theatre and Bashundhara City Complex, which fall in the flying zone?" he said.

AK Sheikh Abul Hasan, executive director of Apollo 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.

"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.

Several locals however termed demolishing the building 'a right step' as the highest court found corruption in its construction process. "However big the men are, they must be punished, if found to be corrupt," said Abdul Wahid, a local.

Abdur Rahman, a general manager of the Rangs Group, earlier told the press that companies with 35,000 officials and employees used to operate from the commercial building, which costs around Tk 700 crore.

Meanwhile, Sohana Rouf Chowdhury, a director of Rangs Group, yesterday criticised Rajuk for starting demolition of the building without giving enough time to the companies housed there for shifting their equipment.

Talking to the journalists at a city hotel, she also said they were yet to receive the Rajuk notice announcing the demolition of Rangs Bhaban.

Rangs Properties Manager (Sales) Enamul Haque said the damage caused by the demolition would be around Tk 1,000 crore.

"We shall go to the court for review petition on Sunday," he said.

## Six mosques demolished in Islamabad

PTI, Islamabad

Pakistani authorities have demolished six mosques for violation of law in the federal capital, Interior Minister Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao has said.

Interior Minister Sherpao informed the National Assembly that six illegally constructed mosques had been demolished in the capital during the past three years.

The authorities in Islamabad has issued notice to the radical Lal Masjid for encroachment of public land that had been ignored by the hardline clerics, leading up to the bloody military operation last month.

The issue of the demolition of the mosques was raised by lawmaker Shabbir Ahmed Khan of the Islamist alliance Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal.

Sherpao said two of the mosques, both named Amir Hamza mosque, had been constructed on Murree Road and Sector F-10/4.

The Minister said Masid Syedna Abbas, which was built on Orchard Road, was demolished because it was occupying land meant for orchards and farms.

The Interior Minister said Masjid Syedna Ali was demolished because it was constructed on land allocated for a judicial and administrative complex.

Sherpao said Masid Umer, located in Sector G-8, was razed because it had been illegally constructed on a planned parking area.

The Minister said the Al-Shufa mosque in Sector I-8/3 was demolished on the complaints of residents of the area, the Daily Times reported Thursday.

## 139 Sylhet malls

FROM PAGE 1 shopping mall owners and the officials of the joint forces attended the meeting.

About 50 of the city markets do not have parking arrangements, while the rest have rented their parking places for shops or restaurants, breaking the approved plans.

Although the SCC had earlier issued several notices asking the owners to remove shops and restaurants from their parking places, they did not pay heed to the authorities' directives.

Due to narrow city roads and absence of parking places, acute traffic jams take place in the city areas almost every day, causing great inconvenience to the city dwellers.

The market buildings, which had set up shops at their basements meant for parking places, have been asked to free the spaces within a week. The markets, which managed to get their plans approved without keeping provision for parking spaces, have been given 15 days' time to arrange parking places at their establishments, meeting sources said.

The meeting also decided to shift the wholesale markets of fish and vegetables and cattle market to other places outside the city.

## Musharraf

FROM PAGE 1 challenges to his authority including an appeal lodged by Sharif on Thursday for an end to his seven-year exile from Pakistan.

Musharraf overthrew Sharif in a coup in 1999. Sharif was sentenced to life in prison on tax evasion and treason charges but was allowed to go into exile in Saudi Arabia the following year.

"We got justice because the judiciary got independence after the chief justice events," Farooq said.

Pakistani opposition parties were outraged when Hashmi was arrested in October 2003 on charges of defaming the government and the army, incitement to mutiny and document forgery.

Hashmi, a senior vice president of the Muslim League and its effective leader in Sharif's absence, was sentenced in April 2004.

A senior member of Sharif's party, Raja Zafar ul-Haq said the release of Hashmi, whom he said was held on "baseless" charges, would "encourage political forces ahead of elections."

General elections are due in Pakistan by early next year. Musharraf is also expected to seek reelection as president-in-uniform by parliament, defying the constitution, which says he should quit his military role by the end of 2007.

Musharraf, beset by growing Islamist violence as well as political opposition, held hushed-up talks in Abu Dhabi last week with another former premier, Benazir Bhutto, on a possible power-sharing deal.

"The order has sent a wave of happiness not only among the party workers but there is joy in other opposition parties also," Haq said. "There is no doubt that the judiciary played the role we expect from it now."

# Dhaka-Delhi talks

FROM PAGE 16

reciprocity and mutual confidence.

Noting that terrorism is a common threat, both sides reiterated that the use of the territory of either country would not be allowed for terrorist and criminal activities against the other country and that sustained cooperation and information sharing would benefit both the countries.

Both sides agreed on the necessity for exchange of actionable information between security agencies of the two countries, in addition to existing mechanisms of information sharing between the BSF and BDR, said the statement.

The modalities of designation of nodal points would be decided separately by mutual consultations.

The Indian delegation at the meeting was led by Home Secretary Madhukar Gupta and the Bangladeshi team was headed by his counterpart.

Both sides agreed to initiate swift action on information received about groups and elements and other fugitives from the law of either country taking shelter in the other country, the statement said.

India assured all possible assistance to the request made by Bangladesh in tracing criminals wanted for criminal activities in that country and are reportedly taking shelter in Indian territory.

The Indian side repeated its request to Bangladesh to take deterrent action against Indian insurgent groups and their members.

The Indian delegation wanted expeditious action on red corner notice subjects through enhanced interaction between the Interpol designated points. The Bangladesh delegation noted the request.

India wanted an early and positive response on its long-pending request to permit construction of fence within 150 yards of the border with Bangladesh to fill the gaps in about 250 places, which would help in effective border management and checking movement of criminal elements and illegal migrants.

In this context, India appreciated Bangladesh's response after a meeting between directors general of BSF and BDR in February-March this year in permitting small development work posed by BSF within 150 yards of the border.

The Bangladesh home secretary apprised the Indian delegation about his country's position in this regard and said this issue is being examined.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the joint visit to a few enclaves and territories under adverse possession

on May 29-30 this year.

The two sides agreed to hold the next meeting of the joint boundary working groups at an early date.

On the issue of riverbank protection works, both sides recognised the humanitarian dimensions of this and some other rivers-related issues and agreed to address them at the forthcoming meeting of the water resources secretaries of the two countries here on August 7-8.

Regarding early commencement of a passenger train service between Dhaka and Kolkata, India pressed for an early response to its request for building a protective structure to sanitise the rail line between zero point and Gede railway station on Indian side.

Bangladesh conveyed the Indian request was under consideration and they would get back with a response soon.

On the issue of incidents of border firing and death of unarmed civilians during such firings, both sides expressed satisfaction at the improved situation along the border in recent months and agreed to take appropriate steps to further improve the situation.

India noted with appreciation the clearance given by Bangladesh to its pending request to take a floating Border Outpost to Dhubri (Assam) through Bangladesh.

The talks ended on a note of satisfaction and commitment on both sides to carry the process of further widening and deepening bilateral relationship between the two countries forward in a significant and meaningful manner, the joint statement said.

## Jute workers

FROM PAGE 16

"I have sent my son to Dhaka to see if there were any jobs there," said former CJML worker Mohsin Talukder. His son Hemayet Hossain was a student of class IX in Rotary High School. Hemayet dropped out of school since he could not pay school fees in the last three months.

"I advised him to get a job anywhere in Dhaka. I hope he gets a job soon as I have heard there is no scarcity of jobs in the capital," said Mohsin, who has never been in the capital.

The PIJML, CJML and Star Jute Mills Ltd (SJML) closed on April 19 and laid off around 2,000 workers while the PJML alone laid off 3,000 workers.

The government shut down Daulatpur Jute Mills Ltd in Khalishpur on December 7, 2002.

# Mining in Germany

FROM PAGE 16

individuals must give up their lands for the greater benefit of the nation. Therefore, they lost legal battles and had to settle with their compensation.

The vast open-cast mining areas, where miners have completed mining and filled up 300 to 400 metre voids with soil, have now been converted into deep forests and agricultural lands.

The country annually produces 100,000 million tonnes of 'lignite' coal. Some of its open-cast mines can be as big as 20 square kilometers. The country still has a reserve of 50 billion tonnes