

Swelling Padma

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areas of four upazilas in Gaibandha, which were flooded afresh recently, remained unchanged as the water levels of the Brahmaputra, Teesta, Ghagot and Karloa continued to rise at all points, reports our correspondent in Gaibandha.

The Gobindganj-Dinajpur highway is under threat of being eroded at Tarafmanu as the Karloa swelled 23cm there.

A correspondent in Chandpur reports: The state of the flooded Chandpur Sadar, Haimchar, Matlab, Hajiganj and Kochua upazilas remain unchanged.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reports: Around 5 lakh people in Sirajganj Sadar, Kazipur, Bilkuchi, Chowhali and Shahjadpur upazilas still remain in flood shelters and on embankments as fresh floodwater inundated low-lying areas. The district administration sources, however, claimed this number to be 2 lakh.

The Padma recorded a swell of 12cm at Pankha, 12cm at Rajshahi, 12cm at Hardinge Bridge, 11cm at Goalundo and 8cm at Bhagyakul. The Padma was flowing 36cm above danger level at Goalundo and 30cm at Bhagyakul yesterday.

The swell of the Padma at Goalundo and Bhagyakul is likely to continue during the next two days deteriorating the flood situation in Manikganj, Munshiganj, Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Gopalganj, Chandpur and Dohar and Nawabganj upazilas of Dhaka, FFWC reported.

A correspondent in Munshiganj reports: Around 10,000 labourers of rice mills in the district, who live from hand to mouth, are living in utmost distress, as the mills remain idle due to bad weather.

The millers claimed they incurred a loss of Tk 3 crore in 200 mills across the district as wet and boiled rice could not be dried for husking.

The price of rice also shot up in the area which supplies a large amount of rice to Dhaka and many other districts of the country.

Meanwhile, the spread of respiratory tract infections (RTI), skin diseases and conjunctivitis took a turn for worse, while the diarrhoea situation appeared to have improved slightly.

According to the control room of the Directorate of General Health Services, around 688 people were newly infected with RTI, raising the number to 15,048 since July 30. At least 12 patients died of RTI.

The number of patients with skin diseases stood at 15,000 yesterday with 717 newly infected and the number of patients with conjunctivitis stood at 3,659 with 257 newly infected patients.

A total of 2,575 people were infected with diarrhoea yesterday, the number was 3,400 Saturday. Since July 30, a total of 501 drowned and 36 people died of snakebites.

"The diarrhoea situation in the capital and on the outskirts of the capital, however, remained unchanged," Shahadat Hossain, scientist and head of Longer Stay Unit of International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) told The Daily Star yesterday.

"Since last evening [Saturday evening], a total of 700 new patients were admitted to the ICDDR,B and 60 to 65 of them are adults with severe dehydration," he said last evening.

Our correspondent in Rangpur reports: Two people died of diar-

rhoea and 30 others were infected with water-borne diseases during the last two days in Gagachara upazila.

EC proposal

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non-government financial institutions, or commercial or industrial establishments. Besides, they shall not engage themselves in activities of the labour organisations. Their registration shall stand cancelled for non-compliance with the provisions, sources said quoting from the EC proposals.

If the ordinance is amended in accordance with the proposals, both the Awami League and BNP will have to change their constitutions to de-link the wings to register with the EC.

Meanwhile, the government has not yet promulgated an ordinance to separate the EC secretariat from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), now the office of the chief adviser.

The council of advisers on June 23 approved in principle to free the secretary from the control of the PMO, and asked the law ministry to prepare a draft ordinance to that end.

Judicial service

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branch of the government. The judiciary will become "absolutely separate" from the day the SC fixes for implementation of an amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC), said Mainul.

Organogram of the Anticorruption Commission has also been approved during the meeting of NICAR, he added.

Under the Judicial Service organogram, 655 out of 4,500 posts will be of magistrates. Among them, 600 will be judicial magistrates and 55 metropolitan magistrates. The rest of the positions are reserved for 2nd, 3rd and 4th grade employees.

Meanwhile, law secretary Kazi Habibul Awal informed the media that a number of magistrates already expressed their desire to work permanently with the judiciary after applications were invited.

On December 2, 1999, the SC gave a 12-point directive to the then government for separation of the judiciary from the executive.

The successive governments on several occasions sought extra time for the implementation of the directives.

On January 16, the interim government framed four sets of new rules. On Feb 11, it announced the CrPC (Amendment) Ordinance in line with the Supreme Court directives.

Meanwhile, ACC Secretary Mokhles-ur-Rahman said the government has approved the proposed ACC organogram, increasing its manpower from 650 to 1,281, including 6 director general posts.

According to the new organogram, there are 19 posts of director, one system analyst, 81 deputy directors, 10 prosecutors, 133 assistant prosecutors, one public relations officer, 124 sub-assistant directors, 21 public court inspectors and 130 assistant inspectors.

The organogram also has a provision for six divisional offices and 22 district offices.

Khaleda

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Khaleda said and urged the people to work together to restore political and democratic environment in the country.

The former prime minister said democracy was established at the cost of martyrs' blood. "So the country's independence, sovereignty and democracy cannot be allowed to be destroyed."

She called on her party workers to stand by the thousands of flood victims and also asked them to continue their work to free her detained son Tarique Rahman, the party's senior joint secretary general.

Presided over by Sharafat Hossain Babu, the teleconference was attended by BNP leaders and activists of its London, Canada and USA units.

Two representatives from Amnesty, USA and American Human Rights also spoke in the teleconference.

Adviser claims

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sugar price that went down despite increase in import duties and said it happened due to its price fall on the international market.

"We have not been successful in other cases as the world price is the most dominant factor," he explained, adding that the inflation aggravated further when growth in demand outstripped the growth in supply and depreciation of local currency against dollar.

He said the government was trying to increase domestic supply through boosting production.

The adviser further explained that the demand increased on per capita increase in money income, 11 percent in the last two fiscal years which was substantiated by increased inflow of wage earners remittance, private sector credit growth and there are some people who come out of the poverty line.

The adviser, however, expressed his concern for the poor who have been hit hard by the inflation and said, "Most probably the government would go beyond the safety net budget for the poor."

About Bangladesh Bank's cautious monetary policy that drew heavy criticism at the seminar, Aziz asked why the commercial banks have such huge excess liquidity. "Why has this [interest rate] spread remained so high for many years despite so many private banks?"

He called upon the commercial banks to give a serious look at their interest rates and cut it at least for a temporary period. "I am also giving a serious look at the spread," he warned.

Sources at the central bank said some 27 commercial banks maintain a spread of 5-10 percent between the deposit and lending rates, making high profits and investment fund expensive.

The adviser also instructed the central bank to look into the problem of excess liquidity in the banking system.

Outlaw

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area at dawn in a bid to arrest his accomplices and recover hidden weapons.

Soon after the Rab personnel reached an embankment in the area at about 6:00am, Rafiqul's men opened fire on them, ensuing a gunfight.

"Rafiqul was caught in the crossfire while trying to flee and died on the spot," said a spot account of the incident.

Rab later recovered his body and sent it to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy. Two shutter guns were also recovered from the spot.

Anisul Huq

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2001. Sujana and Kazal are also former prosecutors of the case.

Confirming his appointment, Anisul yesterday evening told The Daily Star, "I feel honoured. I will do my duty to the best of my ability."

Anisul is son of advocate Sirajul Huq, former chief counsel for the state in the Bangabandhu murder case. Sirajul Huq died in 2002.

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Syed Haider Ali has been attending the court as counsel for the state in the case since the hearing of the Bangabandhu murder case resumed in the Supreme Court on August 7.

The DAG will now assist the newly appointed state counsel, said a government official.

Anisul has also been attending the court during the hearing of the case since August 7.

Sources said following a request from the government Anisul and a few other lawyers, who had dealt with the case earlier, have been assisting the DAG since the hearing began. Now the government has completed its official process to appoint some of them as lawyers in this case for the state.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated along with most of his family members on August 15, 1975. A case was filed on October 2, 1996.

A trial court on November 8, 1998, handed down death penalty to 15 retired and dismissed army personnel for the multiple murders. The High Court upheld the death sentence of 12 of the condemned. Five of them are now behind bars, one died, and the rest are still at large.

Leave petitions of the four condemned have been pending due to shortage of judges in the Appellate Division since August 2001.

Huda, Taimur sued

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(NBR) Rezaul Karim filed the case against Abbas for evading income tax on Tk 2,24,68,058 for the last seven years.

The court also framed charges against detained former BNP lawmaker Salahudin Ahmed and his family in connection with a graft case. It fixed August 21 for hearing of the trial.

Salahuddin, who faces a series of criminal cases, was sent to jail after he surrendered to the CMM court on February 12.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case against Salahuddin, his wife Shamsunnahar and sons Imran Ahmed, Shahriar Ahmed and Tanvir Ahmed on April 11 for concealing about Tk 6.5 crore in

the wealth statement submitted to the ACC.

The members of his family will be tried in absentia, as they have been absconding.

ABBAS-LOBI CASE
The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) will interrogate detained former housing and public works minister Mirza Abbas and former BNP lawmaker Ali Asgar Lobi in connection with a graft case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mizanur Rahman yesterday passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Afzal Hossain submitted a petition to show them arrested in the case and interrogate the accused at Dhaka Central Jail.

The case was filed with Shahbagh Police Station against them on July 15 for allotting 19.44 kathas of land illegally to Pacific Chemical Ltd in Tejgaon industrial area.

HARRIS CASE
Another Dhaka court yesterday fixed August 22 for hearing on charge framing against former premier Khaleda Zia's political secretary Harris Chowdhury, and another person in a graft case.

The case was filed with Paltan Police Station against Harris and Amin Badal on March 25.

Meanwhile, deliverance of verdicts of eight cases against detained former BNP lawmakers, Awami League (AL) leader, DCC ward commissioner and their wives will commence from today.

The persons facing trial in the cases include detained former communications minister Nazmul Huda and his wife Sigma Huda, detained former BNP lawmaker Mosaddak Ali Falu's wife Mahbuba Sultana, Swechhasebak League General Secretary Pankaj Kumar Devnath and his wife Monika Devnath, former minister Shahjahan Siraj's wife Rabeya Haider, Dhaka City Corporation Ward Commissioner Dipjol and his wife Rumana Dipjol.

DIPJOL CASE
Meanwhile, the verdict of an arms case against Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) Ward Commissioner Monwar Hossain Dipjol and his wife Rumana Dipjol will be delivered today.

Judge Nuruzzaman of Metropolitan Special Tribunal-7 will pronounce the verdict of an arms case against Dipjol and his wife today.

The court set the date of verdict after completion of arguments from the prosecution and the defence.

The case was filed against them on March 8 for possessing illegal firearms and ammunition at their Mirpur residence.

Police arrested Rumana while Dipjol is on the run.

Earlier, the court recorded statements of 11 prosecution witnesses.

Dipjol was awarded 17 years' rigorous imprisonment on July 26 for possessing illegal firearms and ammunition at his residence.

FALU'S WIFE'S CASE
Judge Firoz Alam of the First Special Judge's Court set up at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar MP Hostel will deliver the verdict of the tax evasion case against Mahbuba Sultana in her absence on August 22.

Senior Special Judge Mohammad Azizul Haq of Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court issued an arrest warrant against Falu's wife on July 5 after NBR Deputy Tax Commissioner Mohammad Masudur Rahman Masud filed the case.

Hasina

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withdrew a large amount of money from Gulshan branch of Southeast Bank and Mottijheel branch of Standard Chartered Bank in six cheques on different dates.

Examining the signatures on the cheques, Jahangir Alam, a handwriting expert of Criminal Investigation Department (CID), confirmed that Hafiz signed the cheques.

The same IO submitted charge sheet against Hasina, Rehana and Selim to the same court on July 24 showing 24 people as prosecution witnesses.

Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of Eastcoast Trading Pvt Ltd, filed the case against Hasina and Selim on June 13 for extorting Tk 2.99 crore from him.

Rehana's name was included in the charge sheet as her involvement with the extortion was found during investigation.

The joint forces arrested the AL chief in connection with the case on July 16 and produced her before a magistrate's court that sent her to a sub-jail.

The case was filed against her for evading income tax of Tk 1,58,05,733 from fiscal year 2001-02 to 2005-06.

The complainant said Mahbuba repeatedly gave false information to NBR about her income and expenditure and did not show her income tax return.

Although Mahbuba withdrew Tk 9,60,000 as salary from Ntv, she did not mention it in her statement, Masud added.

HUDA-SIGMA CASE
Judge AK Roy of Second Special Judge's Court will deliver the judgement of the graft case against former communications minister Nazmul Huda and his wife Sigma Huda on August 23.

ACC Deputy Director Shafiqul Islam filed the case with Dhanmondi Police Station against them on March 21 for taking bribe of Tk 2.4 crore from Mir Zahir Hossain, owner of construction firm Mir Akter Hossain Ltd.

ACC pressed charges against them on June 4.

In the charge sheet, the IO mentioned that Zahir, elder brother of current FBCCI President Mir Nasir Hossain, gave the money to the former minister in three cheques for getting a Roads and Highways Department's work order of Tk 30 crore.

SHAHJAHAN'S WIFE CASE
Judge Shamsunnahar of Fourth Special Court will pronounce the verdicts of four tax evasion cases against former minister Shahjahan Siraj's wife Rabeya Haider in her absence on August 23.

The cases were filed against her on July 16 for evading income tax.

PANKAJ CASE
Judge Firoz Alam of First Special Judge's Court will deliver the verdict of the graft case against Pankaj and his wife Monika on August 26.

The case was filed with Dhanmondi Police Station against them for giving false wealth statements to ACC. Pankaj was arrested while his wife is on the run.

Meanwhile, deliverance of verdicts of eight cases against detained former BNP lawmakers, Awami League (AL) leader, DCC ward commissioner and their wives will commence from today.

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Fair elections

FROM PAGE 1
particularly its institutional reforms and anti-corruption drive aimed at holding a fair election in Bangladesh.

Mentioning the background of the present government's taking of office in last January, the CA said his government is accountable to the people and is being tested every day.

He said the anti-corruption drive is on to build a corruption-free society in the country.

The government and the EC are on track to hold the polls in line with the timeframe declared, he said, according to the CA's Press Secretary Syed Fahim Munaim, who was present at the meeting.

He recalled that the Netherlands was one of the first few countries to have recognised independent of Bangladesh and bilateral relations between the two countries have been growing since then.

The Netherlands is an important destination to Bangladesh's exports and the country is grateful to Amsterdam in that it has identified Dhaka as one of the priority countries for long-term bilateral assistance, the CA said.

Fakhrudin hoped that Dutch investors would invest more in Bangladesh by taking opportunity of its investment-friendly atmosphere and incentives offered to foreign investors.

Ambassador Beemsterboer said the Netherlands is working closely with Bangladesh in water management and health sector and shares a priority concern of water management with Bangladesh.

He hoped that the new Dutch government, which takes office in March next year, would also work closely with Bangladesh in those areas.

Appreciating the various socio-economic achievements of Bangladesh, the ambassador, who served in Dhaka for last three years, remarked that Bangladesh is now on the road to progress, adding that Dhaka's dependence on foreign aid has also come down.

Wazed Miah

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possibility for Wazed to be cured completely," he said.

The doctor said Wazed can walk and move freely without the help of others. "He (Wazed) feels well when he meets his near and dear ones."

Asked whether Wazed wants to see his wife Hasina, Dr Millat answered diplomatically saying when anyone falls sick they want to meet their near and dear ones.

Hasina repeatedly longed to meet her ailing husband at daytime. But the government wants to permit Hasina at early hours or at night.

3 die as bus

FROM PAGE 16
Hati. Locals said the injured were rushed to Kishoreganj Sadar Hospital and Tarail Upazila Health Complex.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Tarail Police Station Kazi Abul Hossain said the bus, which was heading for Dhaka from Tarail, had around 28 people on board when it sank in deep water. The police along with firefighters from Kishoreganj and Iswarganj of Mymensingh were conducting the rescue operation.

The bus remains underwater as of filing of this report late in the evening.

Police detained the conductor of the bus Ratan, who was driving the bus when the accident happened. They fear that the 18 missing might have perished inside the bus.

He said the people of Sirajganj faced this year's floods with great courage, adding that an arrangement has been made to construct a permanent embankment with an estimated budget of Tk 250 crore to rein in river erosion and flooding.

Senior district administration officials and army personnel accompanied the army chief during his relief mission.

Witnesses said the gang of muggers, riding in two motorbikes, left the scene spraying bullets indiscriminately on people.

Bashir Uddin, a worker at nearby Ronny Lime Factory, received bullet injury during the firing. Babu received two bullets in his back.

Both the injured were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

In a separate mugging incident at Nitaiganj, locals beat up two muggers as they attempted to rob a trader of Tk 1 lakh, reports our Narayanganj correspondent.

Ahsanullah, 65, owner of Ahsan Traders, and his son, Jasim, 30, were stopped by a band of armed muggers at around 10:30am while the traders were on their way to their office.