

Heavy rain triggers fresh flood in several districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Countrywide heavy downpour in the last few days brought floods to many districts again, as the major rivers either crossed the danger levels or neared the marks.

A few lakh people were newly marooned in different districts while some fortunate ones took shelters on highlands and in flood shelters. The government flood forecasting centre warned that the situation is likely to worsen.

"The Brahmaputra-Jamuna River is rising alarmingly and the Ganges-Padma also rose. The prevailing flood situation in Sylhet is likely to deteriorate," the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre said in its bulletin yesterday.

A monsoon flood hit the country earlier this year, perishing around 1,000 people and displacing tens of thousands.

Our correspondents from different districts including Sylhet, Nilphamari, Rangpur, Patuakhali, Noakhali, Gaibandha, Rangamati, Khagrachhari, Lalmonirhat, and Sirajganj reported heavy downpour there for at least a couple of days.

Our Sylhet correspondent reported that the flood situation there worsened yesterday due to the rainfall and rolling water from the Indian upstream.

Newly transplanted aman paddies in five upazilas of Sylhet went under water while all the rivers in the region were flowing

above danger levels. The worst affected areas are in Gowainghat, Kanaighat, Zakiganj, Beanibazar, and in Golapganj upazilas.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reported that the Jamuna was flowing 6cm above the danger level near Sirajganj yesterday morning flooding at least 100 villages in five upazilas of the district, and marooning about one lakh people of the Jamuna basin. The affected upazilas are Kazipur, Belkuchi, Sirajganj Sadar, Shahzadpur and Chowdhali.

Our Gaibandha correspondent reported that onrush of water from upstream flooded a vast tract of 12 unions in Gaibandha sadar, Fulchhari, and Shaghata upazilas during the 24 hours preceding last

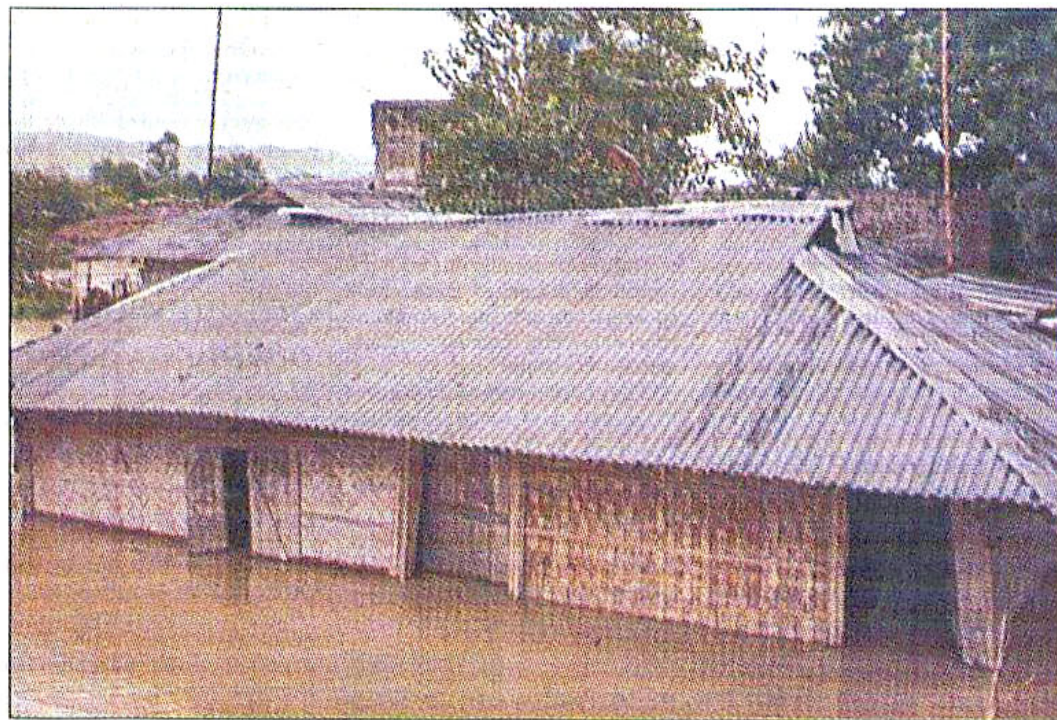
evening, for the third time in the season.

Recently transplanted aman seedlings on about 10,000 hectares of land were freshly inundated by the flood. Ghagao, Gideri, Boali, and Kholahati unions were flooded by gushing water through a breach on Gaibandha town protection embankment at Konarpara.

Our Patuakhali correspondent reported that monsoon rain continued in the district yesterday as a high tide accompanied by strong wind whipped up waters, paralyzing life in the coastal district.

Newly transplanted aman paddies went under water, while fishes worth about Tk 1 crore were washed away in seven affected

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



Heavy downpour triggers flash flood in Khagrachhari, inundating houses at Muslimpara and other areas in the district.

BSF kills two Bangladeshis in Satkhira

UNB, Satkhira

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead two Bangladeshis at Kuskhali frontier under Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead are Ali Hossain, 25, son of Barakatullah of Satani village and Harun Mollah, 18, son of Anwarul Islam of Kuskhali village.

BDR sources said the Indian border guards opened fire on Ali and Harun while they were returning home along with their cattle through Dudli border, killing both of them on the spot.

BDR of Kuskhali camp also fired seven bullets in retaliation for BSF firing.

The BSF men took away the bodies. BDR sent a letter to its Indian counterpart demanding return of the bodies.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

2 former Bogra MPs sued

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Two former BNP lawmakers and their family members have been sued on criminal charges.

Assistant Director of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Ashis Kumar Kundu filed a case against detained former BNP lawmaker Helaluzzaman Talukder and his wife Shamsun Nahar with Bogra Police Station on Thursday night for concealing information in their wealth report submitted to the commission.

In the first information report (FIR), the complainant said Talukder and his wife concealed information about their properties worth Tk 1.86 crore in the wealth statement.

An extortion case was filed with a magistrate court here the same day against the former lawmaker.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2



Arafat Rahman Koko with DIG (Prison) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddique to his right is being taken to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University yesterday.

Koko admitted to BSMMU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka Central Jail authorities yesterday admitted Arafat Rahman Koko, detained younger son of former prime minister Khaleda Zia, to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) following suggestion by doctors.

"Koko was admitted to Coronary Care Unit of BSMMU at 4:15pm soon after the doctors advised his treatment at the hospital. Koko was suffering from pain in chest and shoulder," Deputy Inspector General (Prison) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddique said.

Before Koko was taken to the BSMMU, his wife Sharmila Rahman and her grandmother, told the reporters yesterday.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

Expelled 2 can rejoin party if they yield to Khaleda's lead

Says Hannan but Mannan claims his as real BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP leaders loyal to Khaleda Zia yesterday said the party might consider reinstating the primary membership of those expelled if they want so accepting the command of Khaleda Zia.

"We will reconsider the matter if Mannan Bhuiyan in writing seeks the primary membership," Brig Gen (ret'd) Hannan Shah, an adviser to the detained chairperson, told the reporters yesterday.

Meanwhile, sources said a

group of former lawmakers from Noakhali, Chittagong and Bogra have talked to newly appointed secretary general Khandaker Delwar Hossain over phone lately. Earlier, the same people had signed the joint statement against the expulsion of Bhuiyan.

An insider claimed that pro-Bhuiyan leader Lt Gen (ret'd) Mahbubur Rahman, who is also a standing committee member, is among those who have called Delwar.

Talking to The Daily Star,

Mahbubur, however, denied having talked to Delwar. "It's no big deal even if we had talked since he is my party colleague," he added.

Khaleda Zia expelled Bhuiyan and joint secretary general Ashraf Hossain and appointed Delwar as the new secretary general the day before she was arrested on graft charges.

At a meeting Wednesday Bhuiyan and his allies rejected the expulsion orders.

The same day the BNP formally

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

DU VIOLENCE Charges against all but 126 students likely to be dropped

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

In a bid to reopen Dhaka University (DU), the government will leave out names of most of the students from the cases filed in connection with the recent unrest on and around the campus.

Charge sheets in all 34 cases might be submitted in a day or two against among others 126 students who have been identified as having a role in the acts of vandalism, police officials told The Daily Star last night.

Earlier, the law enforcers had accused 82,000 unnamed people, mostly students, of being involved in the violent protests that broke out over an incident at DU gymnasium.

Of the cases, 11 were filed with Shahbagh Police Station, four with

Dhanmondi, five with New Market, four with Kotwali, two with Gulshan, two with Ramna, two with Sutrapur, one each with Mohammadpur, Paltan, Mirpur and Motijheel police stations.

"Except those identified, all the students will be cleared of the charges so that the government can reopen the university," an intelligence official told The Daily Star.

On August 25, the home ministry in a press release said no one will be arrested or harassed without specific allegation and evidence.

Photographs published in different newspapers and television footages have been used to identify the students, said another official.

"The ones identified will be

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

'Teachers do politics abusing autonomy of universities'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There is no place for free thinking in the universities nowadays, as the teachers have gotten involved in partisan politics abusing the autonomy of the institutions, they are even getting promotions wielding political clout, said Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday.

The renowned jurist was speaking as the chief guest at a roundtable on Education-Students and Expectations, organised by Sheba Bangladesh Foundation at the Press Institute of Bangladesh in the capital, where acclaimed academicians expressed their dismay about the low quality of education in the country.

Discussions at the roundtable unequivocally said due to a wrong national education policy the education system of the country, from the primary to university levels, is in a shambles.

The dismal state of the education system thwarted the people's equal access to education giving rise to discriminations in the sector, they added.

Quality education does not exist at any level because the importance of primary education has been ignored, because of the practice of educating secondary level students in three different mediums -- English, Bangla, and Madrasa, and due to a vice-grip of political partisanship over higher education, especially in public universities.

"They blamed teachers' and students' affiliations with political parties for the downward slide of education."

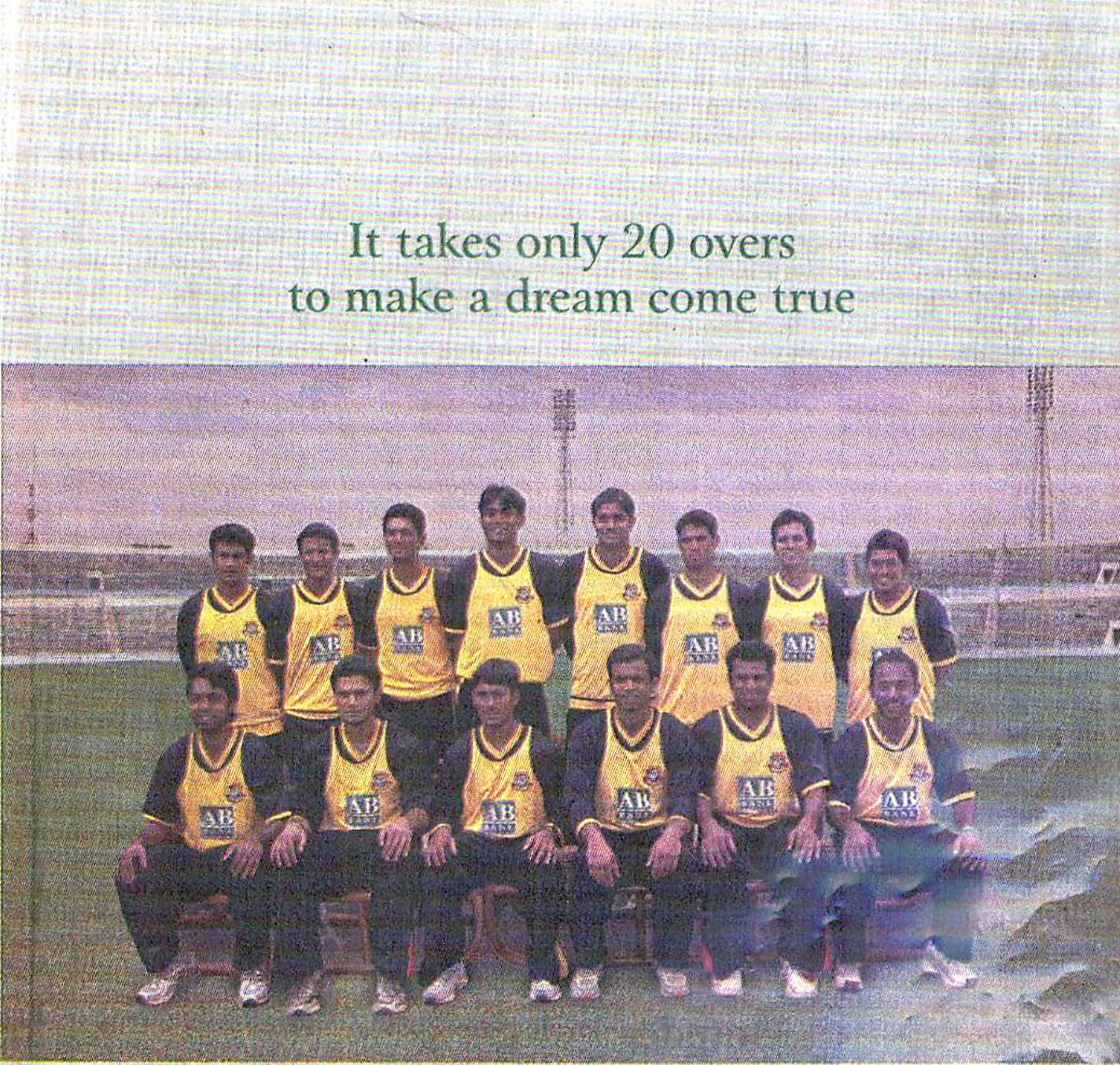
A failure to hire competent teachers at all levels of the education system is the main reason for the abysmal quality of education in the country, Dr Kamal Hossain said.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



A farmer collects vegetables from the same field while his companion sprays insecticide at Phultala in Shahjahanpur upazila under Bogra district yesterday, unaware of the health hazards such vegetables cause to consumers.

PHOTO: HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU



Best wishes to Bangladeshi Tigers in the ICC World Twenty20 South Africa 2007.



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