

POST SIDR REHABILITATION

Over two lakh families still live in tents in Patuakhali

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

With the monsoon adding to their sufferings, over two lakh Sidr-hit families still live in tents in Patuakhali as the cyclone damaged their houses.

Government initiative to rebuild the damaged houses is too inadequate, the victims said. On the other hand, house building for the victims with assistance from 13 donor countries is also progressing very slowly they said.

Khabir Howlader, 40, whose wife and daughter were swept away by tidal waves along with the house, lives in a tent at Charkhali in Mirzaganj upazila.

"I appealed to the local administration for help to rebuild my house but in vain. Rain water enters by tent", Khabir said.

Like Khabir, Abdul Maleq, Rashid Howlader, Rabey Begum, and Dulu Begum have the same complaint, like many others.

Over 1000 houses were damaged by Sidr in the village. Muslim Aid, an NGO, is building only 400 houses", said local Union Parishad (UP) Mobarak Ali Munshi.

Mirzaganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Wadud, when contacted, said two more Ashrayan projects will be built in the upazila with financial help from Japanese government to accommodate about 1000 shelterless families.

Sources at the district relief and rehabilitation office (DRRO) said



A family at Charkhali village in Mirzaganj is still living in a tent erected beside their battered house, yet to be rebuilt.

they distributed Tk 40.5 crore and 2,262 bundles of CI sheets among Sidr victims to repair their houses. But many victims did not get the assistance as the allotment was too little to the demand.

The victims said the government house building assistance was too insufficient. Each affected family got up to two bundles of CI sheet and Tk 3,000 to Tk 5,000, which is too meager for building a

house now, they said. According to official sources, 2,200 bundles of CI sheets and Tk 24.27 crore were distributed in Patuakhali district till December 30 while over two lakh families lost their houses.

Thirteen donor countries and agencies are building 23,206 houses in seven upazilas of the district. Of them, Saudi government is building 8,500 houses in seven upazilas, Islamic Relief, Bangladesh 3,346,

Ahsania Mission 6,300, Uniliver 75, Humanity First Canada 200, British Red Crescent 1,000, Narayanganj Lions Club 25, Habitat 3,000, Brac 200, Muslim Aid 400, Caritas 50 and Labaid is building 30 houses in Patuakhali Sadar upazila.

Local administration sources said about 50 per cent of the houses have been handed over to the victims and the rest will be completed within this month.

'Implement nat'l women dev policy'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Speakers at a discussion held here Saturday night urged the government to implement the national women development policy-2008 for establishing women's rights.

'Amorai Pari Jote', Pabna, an NGO, organised the discussion. Held at 'Banchte Chal' office, the discussion was chaired by Abdul Motin Khan, convenor of 'Amorai Pari Jote' here.

Speakers urged all to build unity for establishing women's rights. Secretary of Pabna Mohila Parishad Advocate Kamrunnahar Joli presented a key-note paper.

Among others, NGO activists Abdur Rob Montu, Abdul Baten Rushdi, Sultana Razia, Rupa Barman, Hena Goswami, Mostafa Abdul Ahad and Mostafizur Rahman Baka took part.

2 minor boys drown in Ctg, Rajshahi

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Two minor boys drowned in Chittagong and Rajshahi yesterday and the day before.

Our CU Correspondent reports: Biswajit Nath, a seven-year-old son of Sukumar Nath and a student of Class-I of Chittagong St Placid's School drowned in a pond at Asadganj in the port city yesterday.

Sources said Biswajit went to the pond situated on the premises of Sobhania Alia Madrasa to take bath at around 11.00am. He was accompanied by two friends, Ullas and Emon.

Ullas said they felt as if something was pulling them. However, luckily they got up but Biswajit drowned, he said.

Locals informed the matter to fire fighters. Later, a five-member diving team recovered the body after two-hour frantic search at about 1.45pm.

Our RU Correspondent reports: Masud, a seven-year-old son of Mohidul Islam hailing from Gorhanga area in Rajshahi city drowned in a pond of the locality Saturday evening, family sources said.

Masud was playing in front of the pond. Suddenly he fell down the pond.

Northern Jute Mill workers on strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Production at Northern Jute Mills in BSIC is suspended as workers stopped work on Saturday demanding increase of their salary and other facilities.

Workers get a meagre Tk 60-70 a day while they had been demanding increase of the payment to Tk 100 to 150 per day for last several months. But the mill authorities did not make any positive response.

On Saturday, the workers came out of the factory and staged sit-in programme in front of the mill gate demanding immediate realisation of their demand.

Mill officials said they started discussion with senior workers of the mill in a bid to solve the problem.

The discussion was going on as of yesterday evening, sources said.

VDP member takes life in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A member of Village Defence Party (VDP) allegedly committed suicide at Sobahan Sarder Para village in Matrangay yesterday.

Victim Fazul Islam, 38, took Tk 2 lakh loan from his neighbours in last 10 years to maintain his family. But he failed to repay the money.

"He committed suicide because the money-lenders used to harass him off and on", said his wife Mariam Bibi.

Incentive for investment in Uttara EPZ

BEPZA chairman holds meeting with chamber leaders of greater Rangpur-Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Chairman of Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) Brig. Gen. Zamil Ahmed Khan yesterday called upon businessmen in northern districts to set up agro-based industries at Uttara EPZ in Sayedpur.

BEPZ is ready to provide all possible facilities to those who want to set up industries at Uttara EPZ, he said at a view exchange meeting with chamber leaders from greater Rangpur-Dinajpur region.

Held at Uttara EPZ, the meeting was organised to motivate entrepreneurs in the region to invest at the EPZ.

The BEPZA chairman said, "Besides government, businessmen can play a vital role in eliminating munga from the area by setting up industries at Uttara EPZ". President of Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mostafa Azad Choudhury told the meeting that businessmen of the region do not know ABIUT agro-based industries and also the technical knowhow.

Azad proposed that the government take steps for business delegates from northern region to visit some foreign countries to explore markets of agro-products.

Explaining the possibilities for setting up agro-based industries at Uttara EPZ, the BEPZA chairman said, raw materials of potato crackers, potato flakes, potato chips, mango juice, pineapple juice, banana chips, processed spices, carpets, mats, textile products, jute products and many other items are available in the northern region.

He also mentioned that the government would consider many other facilities for entrepreneurs. Tax evasion for import of industrial machinery, 10 years' tax holiday and other attractive packages can be thought for entrepreneurs at Uttara EPZ, he added.

Advertisement for RIRA (Reforms in Revenue Administration) project, featuring the website www.riraproject.org.bd and a 'NEW LOOK' graphic.

Courtesy: RIRA (Reforms in Revenue Administration Project), Implementing Authority National Board of Revenue (NBR)

Table with 2 columns: Question/Topic and Answer/Details. Includes information about the RIRA project, budget speech, and contact details.

4 die, 50 fall sick after eating potka fish in Natore

A CORRESPONDENT, Natore

Four persons including a mother and her son and a child died and at least 50 people fell sick after eating puffer fish (Potka fish) in some villages in Singra upazila of the district yesterday.

The deed were identified as Angury Begam, 45, her son Rana, 22, and Arif, 25 of Chowgram village and Anannya, 5, of Godownpara village.

Locals said, people of Sthapondighi, Kaliganj, Rampara, Chowgram, Haripur, Rakhlagacha and Godownpara bought Potka

fishes from market in the morning. They took the fish in lunch and soon fell sick.

Many of them were taken to hospitals in Singra, Natore and Rajshahi. Four of them died at Natore General Hospital.

Abul Kalam Azad, RMO of Natore Hospital, said 11 persons were admitted to the hospital. Another patient-Ajay was sent to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Nature Civil Surgeon Habibur Rahman said, at least 37 people were admitted to Singra hospital.



Anti-drug committee brings out a large rally as part of their campaign against addictive substance in Shibganj upazila in Chapainawabganj yesterday.

Acid violence rises in Satkhira

11 incidents in last 6 months against 3 last year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

At least 11 incidents of acid violence were recorded in the district in last six months while only three such incidents were recorded in last year, speakers said at a view exchange meeting yesterday.

At the meeting on 'Control acid, stop violence' jointly organised by National NGO Action Aid and local NGO Swadesh at Satkhira deputy commissioner's conference room, speakers urged all especially the civil society members to build social movement against the acid throwers.

Expressing determination to resist acid throwers at any cost, they urged people from all walks of life to stand by the acid survivors and help them to lead a normal life.

Acid throwers not only harm the victims but also ruin their families and so, the criminals who commit the heinous act should be brought to book, they said.

Economic independence is crucial to saving the acid victims from social trauma and ostracism and ensure a normal and dignified life, they said.

In general, the number of acid violence decreased noticeably over the last three years due to awareness programme but its increase in areas like Satkhira during the recent months is a matter of concern, they added.

Urging all to work for ensuring punishment of acid terrorists, acid attack survivors Nurunnahar and Rabiul Islam stressed the need for treatment and rehabilitation of the survivors.

They also emphasized the need for launching united campaign to resist acid violence at the grassroots level.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Delowar Haidar was the chief guest while Satkhira Poursava Chairman Sheikh Ashraf Haque and Nayeem Enam Chowdhury of Action Aid were the special guests at the meeting presided over by Swadesh Director Madhab Dutta.

It was addressed by, among others, Public Prosecutor advocate Tapan Kumar Chakraborty, Social Welfare Department Deputy Director Luci Ashru Nath, journalists Prof Abu Ahmed, Abdul Bari

and Kalyan Bannerjee, Ziaul Karim of Brac and Satkhira Jewellers Association General Secretary Nityananda Amin.

Brac schoolteacher killed after rape in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

A Brac schoolteacher was killed after rape at Lalchhari under Ranggarh upazila on Saturday.

She was identified as Hazera Begum, 21, daughter of Abdul Momin of the village.

The post-mortem of the body was done at Khagrachhari Adhunik Sadar Hospital yesterday.

Ranggarh police said Hazera remained missing since Friday afternoon. Police recovered the body from a canal at Lalchhari Saturday noon.

On contact, sub-inspector (SI) Safiul Azam said the victim's father filed a case yesterday. "I shall start an investigation soon", he said.



Schoolchildren line up along the road to receive the convoy of road show 'Let's build Bangladesh' that reached Rajshahi city yesterday.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Rice Marketing Board (BRB) tender. Includes title 'বাংলাদেশ ধান গবেষণা ইনস্টিটিউট (ব্রি)', contact info '৯৮-৮৮(২০০৭-২০০৮)', and a list of items for tender.