

Rain worsens flood situation in 3 districts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Heavy downpour worsened the flood situation in Sylhet, Sunamganj and Netrakona while river erosion has taken a serious turn for the worse in Nilphamari due to swilling of the Teesta. Around 1 lakh people are said to be marooned in Netrakona.

The situation is likely to worsen in the next couple of days.

According to Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC), flood situation in Sylhet and Sunamganj will deteriorate further as the region is experiencing heavy rainfall and more is likely.

Low-lying areas in Bogra, Jamalpur, Sirajganj, Tangail, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Faridpur, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Dohar and Nawabganj of Dhaka district, Shibganj and Sadar upazilas of Chapainawabganj district have been inundated due to continuous rising of water levels of different rivers.

More low-lying areas in the districts are expected to be inundated in the next 48-72 hours, FFWC bulletin said.

Low lying areas of Chittagong were also inundated due to non-stop

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Home secretaries of Bangladesh, India meet today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will again press for handing over its criminals hiding in India as the home secretaries of the two countries kick off a two-day meeting in Dhaka this morning.

An Indian delegation, led by its Home Secretary Madhukar Gupta, arrived in Dhaka yesterday afternoon to attend the 9th home secretary-level talks.

Killings on the borders, smuggling of illicit drugs, trafficking of women and children and the issue of insurgency will figure high at the talks, beginning at 10:00am at the Sheraton Hotel.

The two sides exchanged lists of criminals at the director general (DG)-level border conference between Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) and Indian border security forces (BSF) held in Dhaka recently.

Before the talks, Indian Home Secretary Madhukar Gupta will call on Bangladesh Home Secretary Abdul Karim at his secretariat

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Delhi urged to lift ban on non-basmati rice export

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Bangladesh has called on India to lift a ban on non-basmati rice export and remove all forms of trade barriers to help restore trade balance between the two countries.

The call came at a meeting between Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee in New Delhi on Thursday.

The adviser went to the Indian capital to attend a Bimstec foreign-minister level meeting.

He thanked Mukherjee for the rice that India has already shipped to Bangladesh from an agreed 500,000-tonne quota.

Mukherjee appreciated the current state of bilateral relations

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Draft Bimstec convention to combat terrorism, crime

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Echoing Bangladesh's concern over the increasing criminal activities in the region, Bimstec foreign ministers adopted a draft convention on combating international terrorism, trans-border organised crime and drug trafficking in New Delhi yesterday.

In a joint statement following a daylong meeting, they hoped to finalise the draft in time for the Bimstec heads of state and government to sign it at their New Delhi summit in November.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury told the meeting that increasing criminal activities pose threats to regional peace and stability.

He said Bangladesh "is commit-

ted to dealing with the issues firmly and decisively and the draft Bimstec convention...once finalised and concluded, would be an important tool at our disposal to deal with this menace effectively".

Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama said the Bimstec convention on terrorism would follow the pattern of the Saarc one adopted in Colombo last month.

Earlier on Thursday, Iftekhar discussed the menace with India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee at a bilateral meeting. He later said the two countries would cooperate in dealing with the problem.

Terrorism and trans-border crimes are also high on the agenda at the ninth home secretary level

talks between Bangladesh and India that began in Dhaka yesterday.

The ministerial meeting also agreed to set up a regional weather and climate centre and an energy centre in India.

Proposing to host a permanent Bimstec secretariat in Dhaka, Iftekhar said the people of Bangladesh will see it as an acknowledgement of their relentless contributions to regional cooperation and peaceful collaboration with neighbours for development.

Bangladesh, he pointed out, has been in the forefront of all efforts to institutionalise regional cooperation.

The meeting agreed to set up a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Infants, who stay with their imprisoned mothers in Dhaka Central Jail, enjoy a ride at Shishu Park in the capital yesterday. The prison authorities decided to give them a day of fun since they do not have any recreational facilities there.

Justice Fazlul Huq bribes Tk 24 lakh for acquittal

DB arrests 3 cheats for receiving the amount

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of police has arrested three cheats in the city for taking Tk 24 lakh from the family of former caretaker government adviser Justice M Fazlul Huq in return for getting Huq acquitted of corruption charges.

Earlier, justice Fazlul Huq was accused of taking Tk 1.25 crore in bribe while he was in charge of the forest, land and law ministries. He was allegedly given Tk 80 lakh by a forest officer for his transfer to a better place and to stop the transfer of another forest officer.

Sources said arrested chief forest conservator Osman Gani disclosed these to the law enforcing agencies.

Besides, Justice Huq allegedly took Tk 45 lakh from Basundhara Group in exchange for helping it take lease of 84 acres of land.

The arrestees are Amalendu Das of Shamsheernagar village under Kamalganj upazila in Moulvibazar, chairman of Amalendu Foundation for Research and Study and Spectrum Consultancy firm, sacked VAT inspector Golam Ambia and sacked police constable Mohammad Nuruzzaman alias Iqbal.

Golam Ambia of Tikapara in Rajshahi city was sacked as a VAT inspector in 1997 for corruption while Mohammad Nuruzzaman was sacked in 2003 during his deputation in the then Rapid Action Team (RAT). Nuruzzaman later joined Bangladesh Television

(BTV) as an additional producer.

According to DB sources, Justice Fazlul Huq's son Dr Afzal Hossain Raj gave them the amount in several installments after they assured him of getting his charge-sheet, father acquitted of the ACC charges through armed forces members.

DB Assistant Commissioner (AC) Nasiruddin Khan told The Daily Star that Raj gave the money to Golam Ambia through his friends Abdul Gaffar Titu and Toufiq. Later, Golam introduced them to Amalendu and Iqbal.

"As a BTV journalist Iqbal collected secret documents from some officials of the Anti-Corruption Commission about Fazlul Huq's wealth information," AC Nasir said.

"Intelligence agencies came to

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

Prices of several items rise as Ramadan nears

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the month of Ramadan only a day or two away, prices of onion, aubergine, ginger, green chilli, sugar and milk that are used in preparing 'iftar' items have already marked a rise in kitchen markets in the capital.

Demand for these goods increased significantly in the last few days, and traders say it would go up further during Ramadan with the upward trend in their prices continuing throughout the month.

Prices of some other popular iftar-related items like puffed rice, gram and 'bason' (powdered pulses), already very high, remained stable till yesterday.

Meanwhile, prices of rice and edible oil came down in the city markets over the last one week.

Both local variety and imported

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES BY WOMEN ON RISE Police raise new corps of female sleuths

KAILASH SARKAR

Bangladesh Police introduced a special intelligence branch comprised of only women.

Special Women Police Contingent (SWPC) deals with criminal activities by women, which have been on the rise.

The police department introduced the new branch recently with a view to curbing sex trade, drug peddling, and trafficking of women and children.

According to police sources, women are being used for trafficking other women and children, drug peddling, smuggling, and for swindling people, as crime lords feel safer to employ women for those jobs since traditionally they raise less suspicion.

Sources said to deal with women criminals Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) already set up an office for SWPC at the office of detective branch (DB) initially with 24 women police led by an assistant commissioner (AC).

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Nur Mohammad told The Daily Star, "Currently, the number of women in the police department is around 2,000, which is less than two percent of the total force. One third of those women are under DMP."

The IGP said, "We will hire 3,000 more women police soon and then we will consider setting up SWPC branches across the country."

DMP Commissioner Naim Ahmed said, "In many cases, male detectives do not have access to the world of women criminals. To deal with those criminals, women police and detectives will be helpful."

"Through the introduction of SWPC, women have been put in commanding positions for the first time in the history of the police department," the DMP commissioner said adding, "Introduction of SWPC will also help bring gender balance to the department and will make policing conform to international standards."

Director General of the Directorate of Narcotics Control (DNC) Humayun Kabir on June 25 said around one lakh people are engaged in illegal drug trade, 40 percent of whom are women.

According to intelligence sources, women criminals are also engaged in swindling people of money, and are forcing under-aged girls into prostitution.

Talking to The Daily Star, AC Sadira Khatun, chief of SWPC, said, "Women are getting involved in various criminal activities like sex trade, women and child trafficking, drug peddling, swindling, and even killing in increasing numbers."

SWPC has been applying various intelligence tactics to infiltrate the world of women criminals, Sadira said adding that the newly set up branch of female sleuths was already successful in unearthing evidence in several cases and in arresting a number of criminals.

She mentioned that SWPC helped DB to arrest suspects who

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

MOVE TO FREE KHALEDA, TARIQUE Thaw in BNP-govt ties in the offing EC invites Delwar to talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Release of former prime minister Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman will help the caretaker government thaw relations with BNP and ensure its participation in talks and the election, said party insiders.

Following an 'understanding' between the two sides, the mother and son, detained on corruption charges, are now expected to be freed in less than a week, they added.

BNP leaders claim the way the military-backed administration had been treating them since January 11 last year was quite 'discriminatory', and led to a growing gulf between the party and the

government.

BNP Vice-president MK Anwar, however, yesterday told reporters that their Chairperson Khaleda Zia would not be released on government orders, but through a legal process. Tarique will be freed once all papers on his bail reach the jail authorities.

Meanwhile, in an about-face in its stance on BNP factions, the Election Commission (EC) yesterday sent a letter to Khandaker Delwar Hossain, inviting him to talks on registration of the political parties. In the invitation, he was addressed as the BNP secretary general.

The time limit for registration with the EC ends on October 15.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

AL might be forced to change stance

Leaders allege govt's undue favour to BNP-Jamaat alliance

HASAN JAHIID TUSHER

Awami League (AL) is viewing the military backed caretaker government's manoeuvring for releasing detained BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and her son Tarique Rahman as an undue administrative favour towards BNP-Jamaat alliance, according to party insiders.

AL also feels that the government's move might necessitate a change in the party's earlier position of co-operating with it, the sources said.

Meanwhile, with Khaleda's possible release on the threshold, AL President Sheikh Hasina might return to the country from the US on September 22 or 23.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



PHOTO: PID

Iceland president Olafur Ragnar Grimsson arrived in Dhaka on a three-day visit last night. Home Adviser MA Matin received him at Zia International Airport while a child presented a bouquet to the guest.

Iceland president arrives

UNB, Dhaka

Iceland President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson arrived in Dhaka last night on a three-day official visit.

He landed at Zia International Airport (ZIA) by an aircraft of Arab Emirates Airlines at about 8:15pm.

Grimsson met President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban last night. He will also meet Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus and other government high officials during his visit.

He is also schedule to attend the concluding session of an international conference on climate change at Sonargaon Hotel today.

The Iceland president will leave Dhaka tomorrow.

FEAR OF ATTEMPT ON LIFE Zardari's security beefed up

AFP, THE DAWN, Karachi

Pakistan presidential hopeful Asif Ali Zardari has moved to a top security location in Islamabad due to fears of attacks being made on his life, the country's prime minister said yesterday.

Zardari, the widower of assassinated former premier Benazir Bhutto, plans to run in the September 6 poll to succeed Pervez Musharraf who resigned the presidency earlier this month under threat of impeachment.

"Asif Zardari has shifted to the prime minister's house because of security concerns," Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani told reporters in the southern port city of Karachi.

"He has shifted there because of

dangers involved to his life especially at present when his political activities and mobility is hectic."

Zardari had been living in his family home in another area of Islamabad.

Former premier Bhutto was killed in a gun and suicide attack in December last year moments after speaking at a campaign rally in Rawalpindi near the capital.

Violence has spiked in Pakistan in recent weeks in reaction to the military's crackdown on Taliban-inspired militancy in the country's northwest.

Zardari is seen as close to the United States which is putting Pakistan under pressure to crush rebels who have taken sanctuary

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

জন্ম নিবন্ধন

শিশুদের বিনামূল্যে জন্ম নিবন্ধনের সুযোগ নিন

৩ জুলাই ২০০৮ থেকে ৩১ ডিসেম্বর ২০০৮ পর্যন্ত ১৮ বছরের নিচে শিশু-কিশোরদের জন্ম নিবন্ধন সনদের জন্য কোন ফি দিতে হবে না। ১৮ বছরের উপরে সাকল ব্যক্তির জন্ম নিবন্ধন সনদের জন্য সরকার ৫০ টাকা হারে ফি ধার্য করেছে।

জন্ম ও মৃত্যু নিবন্ধন ফি-এর হার:

বিষয়	১ জানুয়ারী ২০০৯ হতে কার্যকর ফি-এর হার	৩ জুলাই ২০০৮ হতে
ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ ও পৌরসভা এলাকায়	সিটি কর্পোরেশন ও ক্যান্টনমেন্ট বোর্ড এলাকায়	৩১ ডিসেম্বর ২০০৮ পর্যন্ত ফি-এর হার
জন্ম বা মৃত্যুর তারিখ হতে ২ বছরের মধ্যে জন্ম বা মৃত্যু নিবন্ধনের ক্ষেত্রে	বিনা মূল্যে	বিনা মূল্যে
জন্ম বা মৃত্যুর তারিখ হতে ২ বছর পর জন্ম বা মৃত্যু নিবন্ধনের ক্ষেত্রে	প্রতি বছরের জন্য ৫ টাকা	প্রতি বছরের জন্য ১০ টাকা
জন্ম বা মৃত্যু সনদের ইংরেজী কপি জন্য	৫০ টাকা	১০০ টাকা
জন্ম বা মৃত্যু সনদের বাংলা কপি জন্য	২০ টাকা	৪০ টাকা
তথ্য সংশোধনের জন্য	১০ টাকা	২০ টাকা

অধিকতর ফি প্রদান এড়াতে ৩১ ডিসেম্বর ২০০৮ এর মধ্যে জন্ম নিবন্ধন করুন।

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