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Aila-hit farmers set to miss Aman season

Lands still waterlogged as repair of all damaged embankments will take time

PORIMOL PALMA

Cyclone Aila-hit farmers after suffering huge loss in Aus production may miss the Aman season because of saline waterlogging in large coastal areas as the damaged embankments are yet to be repaired.

Officials and experts fear the Water Development Board (WDB) would not be able to fully repair the embankments before the rainy season as it is difficult to collect necessary soil to repair huge breaches.

Agriculturalists say marginal farmers would become very vulnerable if they miss the coast's main crop Aman after the Aila. They suggest that the government take very special and immediate care to ensure these farmers' livelihood and rehabilitation.

According to official figures, the cyclone on May 25 damaged 1,742.53 kilometres embank-

ments, crops on about 3.23 lakh acres of land, 157 bridges and culverts and about 1.5 lakh livestock.

Vegetables, oil seeds and moogdal were also damaged in the most affected Sathkira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Barguna, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Bhola, Barisal, Noakhali, Laxmipur and Chittagong districts.

The government immediately released Tk 41 crore and 25,000 tonnes goods for WDB to repair the embankments before the rainy season. The army also joined the task in Sathkira.

"We have completed around 30-40 percent of repairing work and hope to do the rest by July 15 if there is no strong tidal surge," WDB Director General Azad Abul Kalam told The Daily Star.

However, it became very difficult in some areas to find necessary soil. As a result,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



A large number of cars park illegally on the roadside in Motijheel area during office hours, much to the chagrin of Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) which has a parking lot in the area. DCC has taken a firm hand in the matter, engaging a private firm to collect toll (picture L) from parked vehicles.

PHOTO: SHAFIQUEL ALAM



Parking on streets, not on multi-storey facility

DCC itself encouraging the practice by collecting parking toll from streets

HELEMUL ALAM

Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) assigned a firm to collect toll from parking vehicles in Motijheel and Dilkusha area despite an existing multi-storey parking facility at Sadharan Bima Corporation constructed in 2006 to ease traffic congestion.

The parking facility at Sadharan Bima Corporation at Dilkusha has a capacity of accommodating 575 vehicles but around 185 vehicles are parked there on an average every day as the charge is more than parking on the road.

The DCC on June 15 issued the work order to Nawal Construction to maintain the parking in Motijheel and Dilkusha area. Nawal will pay Tk 18 lakh to DCC for one year.

Interestingly, the firm is also collecting tolls from vehicles parked in front of Sadharan Bima, said locals.

According to the work order Nawal will collect Tk 10 from a private car and Tk 8

from a CNG-run three wheeler and motorcycle for the first two hours, said an official of DCC.

The firm, however, is taking Tk 10 from a private car for the first two hours and Tk 20 for the whole day.

A top official of DMP said around five months back at a meeting with DCC they suggested taking three times higher toll from street parking than that of the parking space to encourage people to park

SEE PAGE 12 COL 5

Shajahan Siraj surrenders, lands in jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent former forest and environment minister Shajahan Siraj to jail in a tax evasion case in which he was earlier sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in absentia.

Judge Jesmin Anwar of the Special Court-4 passed the order after Siraj along with his lawyers Ashraf-Ul-Alam and Jakaria Haider surrendered before the court in the case.

The lawyers submitted three petitions—one for surrender to send him jail, another for giving Siraj with first class division while yet another for providing him proper treatment in jail.

On August 30 of 2007, the same court sentenced Siraj to eight years' imprisonment and fined Tk 2 lakh, in default, to suffer one year more imprisonment.

Assistant Commissioner Rahima Khatun of National Board of Revenue (NBR) filed the case against Siraj on July

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Verdict stayed in 3 cases against Manju

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday stayed the trial courts' verdicts against Jatiya Party (JP-Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju in three cases in which he was convicted and sentenced to 27 years' imprisonment.

The HC bench of Justice MA Wahhab Miah and Justice Md Abdur Razzak passed the orders after separate appeals were filed by Manju's counsel barrister Rafique-Ul-Haq.

Sources said the HC orders would remain in force until disposal of the pending appeals.

Earlier, separate trial courts convicted and sentenced Manju for 13 years' imprisonment in a case of amassing illegal wealth and concealing information, and for seven years' imprisonment in each of two bribery cases filed during the last caretaker government.

On May 6, the fugitive

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Man shot at, Tk 5.5 lakh mugged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Armed muggers snatched Tk 5.5 lakh from a staff of a cooperative house by firing gunshots in the city's Moghbazar area yesterday.

The victim was identified as Swapan Kapali, 44, assistant accountant of Dhaka Christian Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd at Dilu Road in Bara Moghbazar.

Sub-Inspector (SI) Shafiqul Islam of Ramna Police Station said a gang of three muggers on a motorbike intercepted Swapan firing blank shots at the intersection on Tongi Diversion road at around 11:45pm and snatched the bag containing the money.

The snatchers shot in Swapan's left leg as he tried to resist them and fled the scene, he said.

Locals rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where he was undergoing treatment.

SI Islam quoting John Bikram Biswas, manager of the cooperative, said after

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

UP chairman Monir held for firing on crowd

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch (DB) of police yesterday arrested Sultanganj Union Parishad Chairman Monir Hossain on charge of firing gunshots on a crowd in Keraniganj on June 9 that left a man dead and another wounded.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of DB police arrested Monir who is also the president of Kamrangirchar thana unit

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Chinese firms dominate bidding for Khulna plant

Seven companies bid for 150MW power project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Only seven power companies have dropped their technical and financial bids in the tender for a dual fuel 150 megawatt (MW) power project in Khulna under the newly formed North-West Power Generation Company Ltd (NWPGL).

Five of these seven bidders are Chinese companies. The bidders include China National Electric Equipment (CNEEC), Shanghai Machinery Ltd, Shandong Electric, Sinohydro Corp and CMC of China, Isolux of Spain and Cobra of Singapore.

The NWPGL will take six weeks to scrutinise technical qualification of the bidders and then open the financial offers, which are sup-

posed to remain sealed till then.

While all the bidders dropped financial bids sealed in envelopes, CMC dropped its one without any. Sources said an NWPGL official later put the offer in an envelope amid protest from other bidders who pointed out that this was a violation of tender rules.

This project along with another 150MW peaking power project in Sirajganj will be financed under loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

This power project was designed with an output range of 150MW capacity back in 2006. Such generators are manufactured mainly with Siemens gas turbines of Germany. As a result, popular 100MW generator manufacturers like

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

9 HC judges take oath

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The newly appointed nine additional judges of the High Court (HC) took oath yesterday. Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin administered the oath at the judges' lounge of the Supreme Court.

The new HC judges are M Moazzem Hossain, Showmendra Sarker, Abu Bakar Siddiqui, M Enayetur-Rahim, Naima Haider, M Nuruzzaman Nani, Obaidul Hassan Shaheen, MR Hassan and Moynul Hossain Chowdhury.

President Zillur Rahman on

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

Taliban scrap peace deal in tribal zone

Bomb kills four in Pakistan

AP, AFP, Mir Ali Quetta

Taliban militants in a tribal region bordering Afghanistan say they have pulled out of a peace deal with the government, raising the prospect of wider unrest as the Pakistani army extends its efforts to eliminate insurgents.

The militants in North Waziristan blamed continuing US missile strikes and

army offensives against the Taliban for their decision, which was announced in the wake of a Taliban ambush that killed 16 soldiers.

Government leaders and Taliban representatives reached the deal in February 2008, but few details have been released about it.

US officials have criticised peace deals with militants or tribes representing them in the border region, saying

they allow the insurgents to gain strength. The agreement in North Waziristan had appeared to keep things relatively peaceful there calmer than in neighbouring South Waziristan, where the army is preparing for a major offensive aimed at Pakistani Taliban chief Baitullah Mehsud.

The deal was struck with a Taliban faction led by Hafiz Gul Bahadur.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Preliminary test of 29th BCS exam on Aug 14

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Public Service Commission (PSC) will hold the preliminary test of the 29th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations at 10:00am on August 14 in all centres of Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Sylhet simultaneously.

Seat plans for the test will be published in newspapers in time, says a press release yesterday.

OnlinePoll

Do you think the government should take stern measures to control the violence in garment industry?

Yes (89.6%)

No (9.3%)

No Comments (1.0%)

Total votes: 1435

TODAY'S POLL

Do you see a government failure behind the escalation of violence in Ashulia-Savar industrial belt in which dozens of factories were burned down and vandalised?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing		
July 1		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-05	5-40
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	6-00	6-15
Maghrib	7-54	7-57
Esha	9-20	9-45

Source: Islamic Foundation