

Rain halts city life

FROM PAGE 16
 Monipuri Para.

People were seen wading through filthy water reeking of sewerage trying their best to ignore the overpowering stench.

Nizam Rahman, sales representative of a company, told The Daily Star that he tried to keep his mind focused on his destination as he walked through the waterlogged streets of Monipuri Para.

Hundreds of commuters including Eid shoppers were stranded on their way back home as the sudden waterlogging created traffic congestion in the city. "My children and I had to wait for an hour in front of the National Museum as three-wheeler and taxicab drivers refused to go to Farmgate due to flooding", said Nasima Begum, a shopper.

Incessant downpours over the past few days have also inundated the northeast regions of Sylhet, Netrokona and Sunamganj.

Weather experts however turned down possibilities of floods in the country, as there has been 36 percent less rainfall than expected in the last three weeks.

According to the Met office, the actual rainfall recorded this monsoon throughout the country was 6,788 mm, which

is much lower than the anticipated 10,604 mm. Sylhet was the only exception which experienced a 16 percent rise over the projected downpour.

Due to this unusual rainfall in Sylhet division, parts of Sylhet, Netrokona and Sunamganj were inundated, said Arifur Zaman Bhuiyan, assistant engineer of Flood Control Centre.

"We don't run the risk of floods yet, as the waters of Jamuna, Padma and Ganges are still below the danger level", Arifur said adding, the water level will start dropping soon by next week unless the downpour continues.

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED RAINFALL (AUGUST 1 TO 23)

	ACTUAL RAINFALL (in mm)	EXPECTED RAINFALL (in mm)
Dhaka	900	1148
Chittagong	2843	4955
Rajshahi	390	609
Rangpur	736	826
Barisal	439	1280
Khulna	675	1105
Sylhet	784	677

Furnace blows

FROM PAGE 1
 with a big bang and the melted iron sprayed around causing the injuries," said Madan Mohan.

The workers were exposed to the melted metal as they did not have any heat-tolerant or protective gear.

OC Kazi Aiyubur Rahman said the cause of the explosion is yet to be known.

In 2008, as many as 1,768 workers were reported killed and over 2,000 injured in accidents at work in different industries, says a newspaper survey.

Centre for Corporate Accountability Bangladesh and some other non-government organisations jointly conducted the study.

In 2000, the International Labour Office estimated that each year 11,700 workers die in Bangladesh in work-related accidents. In 2005, it also estimated that another 28,600 die from diseases caused by the industries they work in and 8.9 million suffer from work-related injuries.

With large number of casualties every year, successive governments just enacted laws but never monitored whether those were implemented.

There is nobody to inspect electric furnaces of steel mills, said steel mill owners.

When asked about any safety inspections, Sheikh Fazlur Rahman, owner of Bikrampur Steel Mills in the city, said, "No factory inspector visits

our factory."

"But officials from electric supply authorities sometimes visit our mills as we use electricity," he added.

There are only four inspectors in the boiler inspection office, under the industries ministry, to inspect nearly 6,000 boilers of sugar mills, textile and washing plants, cement factories, hotels and hospitals, said sources in the office.

The office has only 13 general factory inspectors in three categories--general, safety (engineering) and medical--for more than 15,000 factories, including about 5,000 garment factories in Dhaka and Narayanganj.

The Daily Star in 1998 reported that most steel and re-rolling mill industry workers wrap pieces of old vehicle tyres, cloths and plastic sheets to protect themselves from the heat and melted metal.

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Correction

The news headline "Govt asked to return Tk 397cr to 2 firms" published in The Daily Star yesterday should read "Govt asked to return Tk 297cr to 2 firms". We apologise for the mistake.

BSF kills cattle trader

A CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A cattle trader was beaten to death by Indian Border Security Force (BSF) along the Puthkhal frontier in Benapole early Wednesday.

The identity of the victim could not be known immediately.

BSF troops of Puthkhal camp caught and beat the cattle trader mercilessly while he was returning home from India through the border, leaving him dead on the spot, BDR sources said.

Later, the BSF troops threw the body into the Ichhamoti river.

Indian police took away the body as it was floating on the Indian side of the river, the sources added.

A flag meeting was held between BDR men of Puthkhal camp and BSF of Angral camp in this regard, said Emdad Hossain, camp commander of 22 Rifles Battalion.

The team of experts included vice-chancellor of BAU Prof Dr M A Sattar Mandal, Head of Medicine Department Professor Dr Siddiqui Rahman, Head of Microbiology and Hygiene Department Dr Sukumar Saha and Chief Medical Officer of BAU Health Center Dr Fayed Ahmed.

The team is now conducting other tests including 'antibiotic sensitivity' of the disease to determine whether penicillin or ciprofloxacin would be more effective to cure the disease.

The outbreak in Sirajganj is the 8th incident in the country in one year, said Mahmudur Rahman, director of the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), adding that the disease was earlier diagnosed in Pabna, Dhaka and

other areas, and 99 people were found infected.

"But there is nothing to worry as the disease is curable and the treatment is available in the country. Anthrax doesn't spread directly from one infected animal or person to another," he told The Daily Star last week.

The first anthrax outbreak in the country was detected in 2004. Since then people across the country have been infected almost every year.

According to the Wikipedia, anthrax is an acute disease caused by the bacteria Bacillus anthracis. It commonly infects wild and domesticated mammals, which ingest or inhale the spores while grazing.

Affected animals can spread anthrax to humans, either by direct contact (e.g. inoculation of infected blood to broken skin) or consumption of a diseased animal's meat.

Most forms of the disease are lethal, and it affects both humans and other animals. There are effective vaccines against anthrax, and some forms of the disease respond well to antibiotic treatment.

Director of the Holy Family Hospital Shirajul Islam said they earn minimum profit from the hospital and the money received from patients is used for salary and maintenance.

The four-bed ICU at city's Care Hospital charges Tk 6,000 for daily seat rent, syringe pump and cardiac monitor. A patient has to count Tk 12,000 all-inclusive daily charge for ICU facilities, hospital sources say.

Assistant Director (Medical Services) of the hospital Dr GM Suman said many hospitals show reduced seat rent but take extra charges for other services.

"Some hospitals are making profit through ICU services as there are few or no patients in the general wards," he added.

A group of doctors say some private hospitals have agents who ask the doctors to refer patients to them. A doctor gets Tk 2,000 in commission for sending a patient to a selected hospital and Tk 500 per day for ICU service, they allege.

Mujibur Rahman who has recently retired from the post of director (hospital) of the Directorate General of Health Services said the government

Army deployed in tense Beirut after clash

AFP, Beirut

Lebanese soldiers deployed in force in tense Beirut yesterday as funerals began for three people killed in a clash between Shiite Hezbollah and a Sunni faction.

The clash between Hezbollah and Al-Ahbash -- both close to Damascus -- broke out late on Tuesday in the mainly Muslim west Beirut district of Burj Abi Haidar, a stronghold of parliament speaker Nabih Berri's Shiite movement Amal, which is allied with Hezbollah.

Information Minister Tarek Mitri said after a scheduled cabinet meeting on Wednesday that the government would form a committee to "remedy the phenomenon of arms in the hands of citizens in all regions across Lebanon".

Tuesday's clashes marked the worst violence to grip Beirut since May 2008, when 100 people were killed in battles between supporters of a Hezbollah-led alliance and those of Lebanon's pro-Western Sunni prime minister, Saad Hariri.

An army spokesman told AFP the situation was calm on Wednesday afternoon, although tanks and foot patrols could be seen across the capital throughout the day.

Bullet casings and broken glass covered Burj Abi Haidar streets on the morning after, as shopkeepers swept away rubble from their stores and most residents stayed indoors. Cars parked nearby were also badly damaged.

Supporters of the two movements used shoulder-fired rocket-propelled grenades and machine-guns in four hours of fighting that erupted at about 7 pm (1600 GMT) Tuesday and also left 11 people wounded.

Chinese firm

FROM PAGE 1
 The tender evaluation committee prepared on August 12.

The deadline for submission of bids expired on April 13.

The World Kaihatsu Kogyo Co Ltd quoted Tk 285 crore and Nippon Road Co Ltd Tk 299 crore.

"The CRBC has been selected for repairing the cracks as it quoted Tk 165 crore, about 20 percent less than the estimated cost," said the report of the six-member evaluation committee.

The Bridge Division on August 19 sent a summary to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council for disbursing funds for the repairs.

A committee of experts headed by Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury in 2006 detected cracks in the multipurpose bridge that connects the capital with the country's northern region.

The committee suggested repairing the cracks immediately but the government failed to find a capable firm for the task. Later the government put restrictions on both speed and freight for vehicles crossing the bridge.

South Korean Hyundai Engineering and Construction Co Ltd built the Tk 4,000-crore bridge in 1997 with an expected lifespan of 100 years.

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The CID has so far interrogated around 60 people, including former ministers, secretaries and top officials of different law-enforcing and intelligence agencies in this connection.

Incineration

FROM PAGE 1
 Prof Khan and his team visited the affected regions of Pabna and Sirajganj on Monday and collected swab samples from the infected people and confirmed it to be anthrax after primary examination at the BAU laboratory.

The team of experts included vice-chancellor of BAU Prof Dr M A Sattar Mandal, Head of Medicine Department Professor Dr Siddiqui Rahman, Head of Microbiology and Hygiene Department Dr Sukumar Saha and Chief Medical Officer of BAU Health Center Dr Fayed Ahmed.

The team is now conducting other tests including 'antibiotic sensitivity' of the disease to determine whether penicillin or ciprofloxacin would be more effective to cure the disease.

The outbreak in Sirajganj is the 8th incident in the country in one year, said Mahmudur Rahman, director of the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), adding that the disease was earlier diagnosed in Pabna, Dhaka and

other areas, and 99 people were found infected.

"But there is nothing to worry as the disease is curable and the treatment is available in the country. Anthrax doesn't spread directly from one infected animal or person to another," he told The Daily Star last week.

The first anthrax outbreak in the country was detected in 2004. Since then people across the country have been infected almost every year.

According to the Wikipedia, anthrax is an acute disease caused by the bacteria Bacillus anthracis. It commonly infects wild and domesticated mammals, which ingest or inhale the spores while grazing.

Affected animals can spread anthrax to humans, either by direct contact (e.g. inoculation of infected blood to broken skin) or consumption of a diseased animal's meat.

Most forms of the disease are lethal, and it affects both humans and other animals. There are effective vaccines against anthrax, and some forms of the disease respond well to antibiotic treatment.

Director of the Holy Family Hospital Shirajul Islam said they earn minimum profit from the hospital and the money received from patients is used for salary and maintenance.

The four-bed ICU at city's Care Hospital charges Tk 6,000 for daily seat rent, syringe pump and cardiac monitor. A patient has to count Tk 12,000 all-inclusive daily charge for ICU facilities, hospital sources say.

Assistant Director (Medical Services) of the hospital Dr GM Suman said many hospitals show reduced seat rent but take extra charges for other services.

"Some hospitals are making profit through ICU services as there are few or no patients in the general wards," he added.

A group of doctors say some private hospitals have agents who ask the doctors to refer patients to them. A doctor gets Tk 2,000 in commission for sending a patient to a selected hospital and Tk 500 per day for ICU service, they allege.

Mujibur Rahman who has recently retired from the post of director (hospital) of the Directorate General of Health Services said the government

FROM PAGE 16
 special superintendent of the department.

Sources also said Duke, a former naval officer, was being interrogated by the CID investigators till filing of this report at 10:00pm.

"We have cross-checked the information Duke provided yesterday [Tuesday]," said an assistant superintendent of police (ASP) of the CID seeking anonymity.

When the grenade attack had taken place at an Awami League rally that killed 24 leaders and workers in 2004, Duke was the personal secretary to the then prime minister Khaleda Zia.

According to officials, the interrogators asked him how Khaleda had learned about the blasts and what measures she had taken in the aftermath.

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