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PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

When city dwellers are relishing the weekend, these pushcart pullers strive with their loaded cart on a flooded street. In knee-deep water, they try hard to pull out the stuck wheels of the cart from a pothole near Shantinagar yesterday. The area gets waterlogged like many other streets in the capital due to incessant rain and poor drainage system.

Ceaseless rain paralyses life

4 die as house, wall collapse in Dhaka, Barguna; another dies in tidal surge

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Incessant rainfall all through the day drenched the entire country yesterday, flooding many streets and neighbourhoods of the capital, and ushering tidal surges in coastal districts.

At least five people were killed in the coastal district of Barguna and the capital in accidents linked to the inclement weather caused by a depression in the Bay of Bengal that has been sweeping over the country for the last three days.

Thousands of people were marooned as many parts of the southern districts and Cox's Bazar were inundated, destroying numerous mud houses and standing crops, and washing away fish ponds and shrimp enclosures.

Numerous flood protection dams were breached by gushing rainwater in the southern districts. Many villages in last year's Aila affected areas were inundated anew. All over the country normal life was severely disrupted.

The Met Office advised the maritime ports

of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, and Mongla to keep hoisted the cautionary signal number three.

The depression over the northwest bay and adjoining West Bengal-Bangladesh coast moved northeastwards and crossed the coast near Mongla at 6:00pm yesterday, and was lying over Barisal, Noakhali and the adjoining area as a land depression, said a special bulletin of the Met Office.

It is likely to move in a northeasterly direction further inland, and gradually weaken by giving precipitation. Squally weather may continue over the north bay and coastal areas, the bulletin added.

The low-lying areas of the coastal districts of Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Noakhali, Feni, Laxmipur, Bhola, Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Chandpur, Pirozpur, Jhalakathi, Bagerhat, Khulna, Satkhira and their off shore islands and shoals are likely to be inundated by wind driven surges of heights 2 to 4 feet above normal astronomical tides, the bulletin cautioned.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

From today we launch a special column titled "Tangents" by Ihtesham Kabir. Consumed by our daily grind, and perhaps too busy and distracted we fail to notice life's beauty and kindness of the ordinary people around us. The writer takes us on a tangent and draws our attention to them through his sensitive writing and innovative photography. We believe Kabir's write ups will remind us of the human face of Dhaka, and of the countryside, that most of us no longer have the eyes to see. His columns will be published every Saturday on page 2. We hope our readers will enjoy this unusual and sensitive column. We invite our readers to send us stories of similar experience and observation. We will publish a select number of them.

EDITOR

'AL MEN' ATTACK BNP PROCESSION

Boraigram upazila chairman killed

BNP calls hartal on Sunday in Natore

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Awami League activists yesterday beat to death Sanaullah Noor Babu, BNP-backed chairman of Boraigram upazila, during a BNP procession in Bonpara Bazar, Natore.

BNP has called a full-day hartal in Natore on Sunday along with three-day mourning and protest programmes from tomorrow following the incident, said Aminul Haque, general secretary of BNP Natore district unit.

Around 30 others including Bonpara Municipality Mayor Ishaq Ali and three jour-



Sanaullah Noor Babu

nalists were injured in the attack launched around 11:00am.

Babu, also the president of BNP Bonpara municipal unit, was admitted to a local hospital at Bonpara and later shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital as his condition deteriorated. The doctors declared him dead at 3:30pm, said police, witnesses and hospital sources.

Around 50 AL activists equipped with firearms, sticks, iron rods and machetes swooped on the BNP procession and started beating the opposition men leaving many severely injured.

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Power crisis likely to end in 2012

Outages start to ease in Dec; govt eyes 11,000MW power during its tenure

SHARIER KHAN

A quarter of the persisting electricity crisis is likely to go by December with five new rental power projects coming into operation.

The government expects that by the end of next year, bulk of the load shedding will be averted and by the end of 2012, there will be no load shedding as dozens of new power plants will go into production by then.

This improvement will take place irrespective of an unchanged gas supply situation as most of the new plants will operate using heavy fuel oil or diesel.

According to Power Secretary AK Azad, the target would be achievable as the ministries

and government agencies linked with implementation of power projects are now working together, as never before, by reducing typical bureaucratic bottlenecks.

The combined drive is visible from the fact that a British company -- Aggreko -- signed two rental power deals in May for generation of 200 megawatts of power and succeeded in launching the two diesel-fired plants by August, he said.

Chairman of Power Development Board Alamgir Kabir said the government has added nearly 900 MW of power since January last year. But this was not enough to address the continuing power crisis due to gas supply shortfall and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4



Jailed Chinese dissident Liu wins Nobel Peace prize

BBC ONLINE

Jailed Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo has been named the winner of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize.

Making the announcement in Oslo, Nobel Committee

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

Military rulers used them as weapon

Local govt bodies helped Zia, Ershad to consolidate power at grassroots level

SHAKHAWAT LITON

Military dictators Ziaur Rahman and HM Ershad craftily used local government bodies to consolidate their power at the grassroots.

These local bodies helped them build power base at union and upazila level. They formed BNP and Jatiya Party that went on to win parliamentary elections and helped them indemnify their illegal regimes.

Both the autocrats desperately tried to transform themselves into populist politicians and attained success -- to a large extent -- to

that end, thanks to the assistance from local government representatives.

At the beginning, the two, like military dictator Ayub Khan in the Pakistan period, gave priority over securing the support of local body representatives.

LOCAL GOVT SYSTEM IN DISARRAY 4

Capturing power in 1958, Ayub Khan promulgated the Basic Democracies Order in 1959 to establish a four-tier local government system with union, thana, district and divisional councils.

Polls to union council were held in January 1960. A total of 80,000 councillors were elected.

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