

Dyke burst adds to their miseries

9 Aila-hit villages flooded in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Five hours into the completion, Patakhali embankment in Koira upazila of Khulna district collapsed under the pressure of strong current of Shibsha River on Sunday afternoon.

Over 20,000 people of nine Aila-hit villages in South Bedkashi union under Koira upazila have remained marooned as saline water flooded the area.

One person was seriously injured as solid chunks of earth hit him during the collapse.

Messers Mizan Enterprise, owned by Monirul Huq, son of former local lawmaker Awami League leader Nurul Huq, constructed the embankment at a cost of Tk 2 crore 6 lakh 25 thousand.

"The embankment collapsed shortly after its construction as it was done by an inexperienced contractor," said Koira upazila Chairman GM

Mohsin Reza.

Md Aliuzzaman, Water Development Board (WDB) section officer in charge of Koira upazila, said the contractor did not use proper materials for embankment construction.

"Of course, army men supervised construction work of this embankment," he added.

Chairman of affected South Bedkashi union Shamsur Rahman said fraudulence of the contractor and negligence in monitoring by WDB men are responsible for the collapse.

Contractor Monirul Huq could not be contacted for his opinion about the embankment collapse as his cell phone was found off despite several attempts since Sunday.

Meanwhile, a spokesman of the army claimed that all the embankments damaged by cyclone Aila in Kamarkhola and Sutarkhali unions

under Dakope upazila in Khulna district have been constructed properly and it will enable over a lakh people to go back to their homes from makeshift camps.

The WDB invited tenders for construction of seven damaged embankments in worst-hit Kamarkhola and Sutarkhali unions at a cost of Tk 50 crore 69 lakh.

The work began under supervision of the army on November 7 last year and it was fully completed on Sunday, sources said.

"Strict supervision by the army and monitoring of construction works by Food Minister Dr Abdur Razzak, Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen and several government high-ups during their recent visits largely contributed to completion of sustainable embankments in Dakope upazila," said lawmaker Nani Gopal Mandol.

4 JMB men get life in Chandpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Four militants of banned Islamist outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) were sentenced to life term rigorous imprisonment in separate cases in the district yesterday.

The court also acquitted eight members of the same organisation as the charges against them were not proved.

Judge Mohammad Motahar Ali of Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court in Chandpur passed the verdict in the afternoon.

Those sentenced to jail in three separate cases are Abul Kalam Azad alias Rashed, Shamim Hossain Galib, Sohrab Hossain Billal and Rahmat Ullah.

The court also fined Rashed and Galib Tk 30,000 each, in default, they are to suffer another year in jail.

70 fall sick due to food poisoning in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

At least 70 people fell sick after having meal at a marriage ceremony at Husnapara village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila on Sunday night.

Of them, 37 were admitted to Dinajpur Sadar Hospital while the rest given first aid, hospital sources said.

Those admitted to the hospital are Taslima Akhter, 40, Zakia Sultana, 25, Abul Kalam Azad, 40, Afsarul Islam, 60, Ismat Ara, 28, Ziaur Haq, 40, Rukhsana, 14, Safar Ali, 60, Saidur Rahman, 40, Masud Rana, 16, Nazmul Islam, 21, Selina Akhter, 13, Zaheda Akhter, 25, Armana Begum, 25, Shah Jalil, 23, Nazrul Islam, 45, Ismat Ara, 35, Abdur Rauf, 60, Shamsuddin, 55, Abdus Sattar, 25, Gausul Azam, 50, Batibullah, 80, Shirin Akhter, 30, Mollika Begum, 18, Shakhawat Hossain, 21, Kismat Ara, 25, Nizam Uddin, 60, Runa Laila, 30, Rumana, 14, Rubina Begum, 35, Farid Ahmed, 34, Shahidur Rahman, 50, Fulnaheer, 35, Safunnaheer, 20, Ansarul Islam, 42, Aziaul Haque, 51, and Solaiman Ali, 48.

They all attended the wedding of Israt Ara, daughter of Shasra UP member Mohiuddin at Husnapara village. "After having wedding meal, I returned to my house at the village and started vomiting at midnight," said Solaiman Ali, one of the patients.

Dr Shamsul Rahman Kajol, residential medical officer of Dinajpur Sadar Hospital, said the people fell sick due to food poisoning.

Dazzling days of Language Movement in Nilphamari

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

The then East Pakistan sub divisional town Nilphamari joined the Language Movement of 1952 on 4 February.

On that day, Muslim Chhatra League had centrally called a strike in all educational institutions of the eastern province demanding Bangla as a state language of Pakistan.

During the strike, Urdu speaking sub divisional officer (SDO) Monwar Hossain misbehaved with Model High School headmaster Asiruddin Ahmed and Girls' High School headmaster Abu Nazem Mohammad Ali as they 'failed' to keep the students away from participating in the agitation.

In protest against the verbal abuse by the SDO, students and teachers of all educational institutions in the town called a fresh strike for next three consecutive days on 8, 9 and 10 February. The protesters demanded Bangla as state language and removal of the SDO for his misbehaviour.

On 21 February, in line with the central programme, all-out strike was observed in all the educational institutions of the town. A big rally was held on the premises of Muslim Hostel of Nilphamari High School.

The entire scenario changed after the news of killing Rafiq, Salam, Barkat, Jabbar, Shafiq and others on 21 February in police firing in Dhaka reached Nilphamari on night.

Thousands of people burst into protest on 22 February. Defying warning by the SDO, the town was abuzz with processions and



Khairat Hossain



Shafiar Rahman

meetings.

The agitation flared further when the then government arrested Khairat Hossain, the Nilphamari opposition member of East Pakistan provincial assembly, in Dhaka, on 22 February.

The Pakistani government was angered by Khairat Hossain, as he along with renowned political personality Moulana Abdur Rashid Tarkabagish, had walked out of the provincial assembly protesting the killing of 21 February.

Khairat Hossain used to give directions to the local Language Movement leaders in Nilphamari from Dhaka.

To suppress the uprising, police arrested convener of local unit Awami Muslim League Advocate Dabiruddin Ahamed and teacher Abu Nazem Mohammad Ali on 26

February.

Agitated people besieged the local police station. As the situation deteriorated, the police authorities appealed to the two arrestees to calm down the protesters.

Later at a joint meeting of Awami Muslim League and Muslim Chhatra League, a decision was taken to observe strike in the town on 28 February.

Police, in an anti-agitation move, arrested local Muslim Chhatra League general secretary Shafiar Rahman and Jubo League convenor Shamsul Haque on 27 February. This triggered further protests.

Khairat Hossain was released from Dhaka Central Jail after being imprisoned for about two years. Dabiruddin Ahamed and Abu Nazem Mohammad Ali were released after six months from Rangpur jail.

Muslim Chhatra League leader Shafiar Rahman and Jubo League leader Shamsul Haque were released from Dhaka Central Jail after about one month. All the five leading Language Movement veterans of Nilphamari suffered immense mental torture in jail. However Bangla was finally declared as a state language.

Four of the five leading language movement veterans in Nilphamari have passed away.

Contacted, lone surviving veteran Shafiar Rahman, the youngest of them said, "Four of us have left but Allah has kept me alive to narrate the role of the district in the Language Movement to the new generation."



PHOTO: STAR

Construction of the embankment at Golbunia on the border of Sutarkhali and Kamarkhola unions in Dakope upazila under Khulna district completed on Sunday, much to the happiness of around one lakh people who fell victim to persistent waterlogging following onslaught of cyclone Aila on May 25 in 2009.

SNIPPETS

Five pirates jailed in Bagerhat

UNB, Bagerhat

A court here yesterday convicted five pirates and awarded them 17 years' imprisonment each. The convicts are Ishaq Uddin, 50, Monir Hossain Sarder, 30, Akram Gazi, Monir Hawlader, 22, of Bagerhat district and Shaheed Khandaker, 35, of Barguna district. According to prosecution, forest guards arrested the five pirates from a trawler in Chandershar area in Sharankhola upazila on August 22, 2007 when they were taking preparation for committing piracy. They also recovered two firearms, nine rounds of bullet and arms making materials from the trawler.

Night guard beaten to death

UNB, Bogra

A night guard was beaten to death by unidentified criminals in Barpur area in the district town early Sunday. The deceased was identified as Shahadat Ali, 65, son of Mozibor Rahman in the area. Police said Ali resisted the criminals as they tried to take away goods from a welding workshop. At one stage, they picked up altercation with the guard and beat him mercilessly, leaving him critically injured. Locals rescued him and took him to Bogra Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital where the doctors declared him dead.

Three held with arms

UNB, Gazipur

Three alleged muggers were arrested along with arms and bullets at South Chalna village in Sadar upazila Sunday evening. The arrestees were identified as Harun-ur-Rashid alias Thandu, 35, of Bhaawal Mirzapur village, Abul Hossain, 27, and Badol, 27 of Kathora village in Sadar upazila. Acting on a tip-off, police conducted a drive in the area and arrested the three when they were taking preparation for mugging in the evening. Later, a foreign made pistol and four bullets were recovered from their procession.

UP chairman arrested

UNB, B'baria

Police arrested Paharpur Union Parishad chairman at Aowlia Bazar in Bijoynagar upazila on Sunday night. The arrestee was identified as Mahbubur Rahman alias Mia Bali. Police said they arrested Mahbubur as a warrant of arrest was issued against him in the morning following a case filed by Anti Corruption Commission for misappropriation of rice of Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) and Vulnerable Group Development (VGD).

BGB returns body of BSF man

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) handed over the body of a member of Indian Border Security Force (BSF) to the BSF authority through a flag meeting on Baghbhandar border in Bhurungumari upazila of Kurigram district yesterday noon.

Chotu Singh, 26, of Lotaphela BSF camp of India, was on patrol duty Saturday night but he did not come back to his camp on Sunday morning, sources said.

"Body of the BSF man was found in a fishing net in Dudhkumar River at bordering Shaljhori village of North Dhaladanga union

under Bhurungumari upazila at about 12:30pm on Sunday when some fishermen were catching fish there near border pillar No 988," police said.

Informed by the fishermen, men from Uttar Dhaladanga BGB camp and police recovered the body at about 5:00pm on Sunday. Police sent the body to a hospital at Kurigram.

"After post mortem in Kurigram, BGB handed over the body to BSF authority through a flag meeting in Baghbhandar border area at about 3:00pm on Monday," said Officer-in-charge (OC) of Bhurungumari police station Md Kafil Uddin.

Mother, 2 daughters murdered in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Unknown assailants killed a woman and her two daughters at Bhatta village in Phulpur upazila of Mymensingh yesterday, police said.

The dead are Khodeza Begum, 44, and her two daughters Zohora Khatun, 22, and Murshida, 10.

Police recovered the bodies of Khodeza and Murshida, a class III student, from a nearby pond around 6:00am.

Physically challenged Zohora's body was found in a room of their house.

S Alam, officer-in-charge of Phulpur Police Station, suspected that the murder was premeditated and the victims were strangled to death.

Locals said Khodeza's husband Ali Hossain had a brawl with his neighbour Sufia Begum over a family matter on Friday. Ali beat up another neighbour Emdad

Hossain on Saturday following a quarrel with him over the same issue, they added.

Police said Emdad was admitted to Phulpur Upazila Health Complex and was transferred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital last night.

Ali Hossain went into hiding after Emdad filed a case against him on Sunday.

However, Ali's brother Mujibur Rahman said Sufia had a quarrel with her (Sufia's) in-laws over the rent of a shallow machine.

An arbitration was held to resolve the issue when Emdad created obstruction resulting in a brawl with Ali and his three brothers, who supported the arbitration.

At one stage, Emdad and his in-laws beat up Sayeda, Mujibur's sister-in-law, and threatened with dire consequences.

Mujibur said Emdad and his accomplices may be behind the killings.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The prime accused in the case for killing Atiqur Rahman Atique, managing director of Hotel Anurag of Sylhet city, was arrested in the capital yesterday.

Rab members arrested the accused, Shafiqur Rahman Shafique at a house at Banani in the morning and later handed him over to Sylhet Kotwali police.

On November 29 last year, Atiqur was found dead in room No 322 of the hotel where Shafiq, a businessman from Ganakutli Lane of the capital, had been staying since November 23. The body bore injury marks.

Shafique used to visit Sylhet and stay at the hotel as he had business relations with Atique. He was not found in the room at the time of recovery of the body, a police official said.

A murder case was filed with Kotwali Police Station the same day.

Atique came out of his residence at Kumarpara in Sylhet city in the afternoon of November 29 and came to the hotel room where Shafique and two others were staying, the official added.

At a press briefing at Rab-9 headquarters in Sylhet yesterday, commanding officer Syed Anagh said as their relations went worse, Shafiqur decided to kill

Atique and hired two men from the capital.

On the day of incident, Shafique called Atique to his hotel room and hacked him to death with the help of the two, he said.

Soon after the incident, Shafique and the two left Sylhet for the capital. On the following day, Shafique left the capital for Dinajpur by a bus and went to India through Hill border, the Rab official told newsmen.

Shafique returned home February 5. After staying at a hotel in Dianjpur for five days, he returned to the capital, the official further said, adding that Rab men arrested him in Banani area of the capital.



PHOTO: STAR

Illegal 'note books' and 'guide books' openly sell at different bookshops on Baramosjid Lane near the Sadar police station in Bogra town. Sellers claim they regularly bribe a section of district administration staff to make the business 'hassle-free'.