

# One third of Patuakhali cyclone shelters need urgent renovation

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A large number of people in coastal district Patuakhali are highly vulnerable to natural disasters, especially during May to November every year, as the cyclone shelters in the district can accommodate only seven lakh of the 17 lakh people.

Over 200 chars (coastal islands) in 15 unions of three upazilas in Patuakhali district are most vulnerable to natural disasters like cyclones, floods and tidal surges while all

## A large number of people pass days in anxiety for lack of sufficient shelters

the seven upazilas of the district are more or less affected, especially during serious disasters.

After devastating tidal surges accompanied by the cyclone on November 12 in 1970 claimed lives of over one lakh people in Patuakhali district alone,

204 cyclone shelters cum educational institutions were built in the district.

But 90 of the shelters later became useless for want of renovation.

Of the useless cyclone shelters, 63 are in Galachipa, 16 in Kalapara, eight in Mirzaganj and three in Dashmina

upazilas, sources of District Relief and Rehabilitation Office (DRRO) said, adding that several letters were sent to the higher authority to take step for their renovation but in vain.

Super cyclones Sidr and Aila that hit the coastal areas on November 15 in 2007 and on May 25 in 2009 respectively claimed many lives in the district, as people did not take shelter during the disasters.

After the disasters, the government built 83 cyclone shelters in seven upazilas of the district at a cost of about Tk100 crore.

Now over seven lakh people can take shelter during disasters while the remaining 10 lakh people in the district are still under disaster risk, DRRO sources said.

"We pass days amid anxiety of disaster from May to November every year due to lack of sufficient cyclone shelters here," said Abdul Haque, a resident of Arojbagey village in Dashmina upazila, who lost all 12 members of his family during the tidal surge in 1970.

Siddiqur Rahman of Char Montaz in Galachipa upazila said the government should build sufficient cyclone shelters in the district especially in the coastal island areas so that people can save their lives during disaster.



PHOTO: STAR

This cyclone shelter in Chhotobaishtia union in Galachipa upazila of Patuakhali is one of dozens of such centres in the district that have remained virtually useless for years due to lack of renovation.



PHOTO: STAR

A billboard, left mangled at Satmatha intersection in Bogra town after a storm lashed the area Monday morning, remained in the same condition yesterday afternoon, showing the authorities' neglect to public safety.

# Storms hit several dists

## Three killed, 2 missing in boat capsizes

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Two people were killed in Nilphamari, another was in Rajshahi while two others went missing in boat capsizes in Brahmanbaria as storms hit those districts on Monday.

Storms also hit several other districts including Bogra and Manikganj on the day.

In Nilphamari, at least two people were killed, scores of houses razed and hundreds of trees uprooted as storm lashed eight unions of Domar, Dimla and Jaldhaka upazilas Monday evening.

Local administration and hospital sources said lightning killed Surobhi, 6, daughter of Babul of BOP Bazar of Dangapara village of Domar upazila during storm while Shilpi Begum, 20, daughter of Mahubar Rahman of West Golumunda village of Jaldhaka upazila died as a tree fell on her at 7:30pm.

A woman was killed and at least 10 others were injured in a nor'wester that swept some areas of Rajshahi district on Monday afternoon, reports BSS.

According to the local sources, Hazera Bibi, 45, wife of late Ahammad Ali of Hatra village under Mohanpur upazila, was killed on the spot while she was collecting fallen mango at a nearby orchard at around 3:45pm.

Besides, power supply, various standing crops including paddy, betel leaf, mango, maize and vegetables were damaged by the seasonal storm.

In Brahmanbaria, two people went missing as a boat caught in storm sank in the Meghna River at Tharakola in Sarail upazila Monday night, reports our correspondent.

The two were identified as Rupchand Begum, 28, and her daughter Sumaiya Akhter, 6, of Abdullapur village in Mithamoin upazila of

Kishoreganj district.

Local sources said the Bhairab bound mechanised boat carrying 1,400 maunds of paddy and 27 passengers met the accident while sailing for Bhairab from Koshoreganj.

Of the passengers, 25 swam ashore while the woman and her daughter remained untraced till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

Besides, a storm lashed Bogra on Monday damaging standing crops and thatched houses in many areas of the district.

In Bogra town, it mangled a huge billboard at Satmatha, threatening life of pedestrians.

A nor'wester in Manikganj on Monday night damaged crops, houses and uprooted many trees.

A 25-foot wall of Manikganj Zilla Parishad office fell with a huge bang on an adjacent two-storied building during the storm, damaging property of the owner.



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