

2 killed, 75 hurt as storm hits several districts

STAR NATIONAL DESK

At least two people were killed, 75 others injured and over 800 houses damaged as nor'wester lashed five districts--Patuakhali, Noakhali, Gopalganj, Madaripur and Barguna--early yesterday.

Our Patuakhali correspondent reported that storm swept over Dashmina

and Sadar upazilas of the district at around 4:00am, killing one person and injuring at least 50 others. Over 200 houses in the five upazilas were also damaged during the storm.

The deceased was identified as Aleya Begum, 55, wife of Abdul Barek of Bogra village under Dashmina upazila. She

died in house collapse.

Of the injured, 15 are from Dashmina, 10 from Bauful, Galachipa and Kalapara each and five from Sadar upazila. Five of them were admitted to Dashmina Upazila Health Complex while the rest given first aid at different hospitals and clinics.

Power supply to the affected upazilas remained

cut as of filing of this report at 5:00pm yesterday as the storm uprooted a good number of electric poles.

In Gopalganj, a shop owner was killed and at least 50 houses were damaged as a violent storm accompanied by heavy rain lashed Kashiani upazila at around 3:30am, reports our correspondent.

The deceased was identi-

fied as Wahid Sheikh, 32, a grocery shop owner at Kashiani Bazar. He was killed when a banyan tree fell on his shop. Locals said Wahid was asleep in his shop during the storm.

According to our Madaripur correspondent, nor'wester hit several villages under Sadar and Kalkini upazilas of the district early yesterday.

At least 450 houses were damaged and 15 people injured during the storm. Of the injured, Hamida Begum, wife of Lokman Bapari of Sadar upazila, was admitted to Madaripur Sadar Hospital in a critical condition while the rest were given first aid at the hospital.

In Noakhali, 25 shops were damaged and at least 15 people injured as storm lashed Nalchira ghat area in Hatiya upazila early yesterday.

Hatiya Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Harunur Rashid visited the storm-hit area.

In Barguna, nor'wester injured at least 15 people damaged over 130 houses in two upazilas of the district early yesterday, reports UNB.

The affected upazilas are Barguna Sadar and Amtoli. Local sources said at least 70 houses were damaged at Locha and Basuki village in Amtoli upazila while over 56 houses in different areas of Sadar upazila.

Vegetables and Boro paddy were also damaged in the storm-hit upazilas.



PHOTO: STAR

Nor'wester damaged at least 200 houses in five upazilas of Patuakhali district early yesterday. Photo shows two battered houses at Bogra village in Dashmina upazila of the district.

11 injured in Natore pre-election clash

Nominations filed in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

At least 11 people were injured in a pre-poll clash between the supporters of two chairmen candidates at Kolabaria village under Faguyar Diyar Union of Bagatipara upazila on Wednesday night.

Pro-AL candidate Shariful Islam and BNP backed candidate Jahangir Alam Manik are contesting for the post of chairman in the upcoming election to Faguyar Diyar Union Parishad.

Locals said the campaigners of the two candidates clashed at Kolabaria village at around 10:30pm on Wednesday, leaving at least 11 people from both sides injured.

Chairman candidate Shariful Islam alleged that the supporters of his rival candidate Jahangir Alam

Manik equipped with lethal weapons swooped on his men after a rally at the village, leaving at least six of them injured.

AL men injured in the clash are Omar Faruk, 40, Tahir Uddin, 45, Shahidul Islam, 25, and Ainal Haq, 30, Rabiul Islam, 35 and Enamul Haq, 25. Of them, four were admitted to Bagatipara Upazila Health Complex while the rest given first aid at the hospital.

Jahangir Alam Manik claimed that Shariful's supporters attacked his campaigners and injured five of them.

Two of the injured BNP men--Anisur Rahman, 35, and Abul Bashir, 32--are now undergoing treatment at Natore Sadar Hospital and the remaining three took first aid at a clinic, he added.

Shariful filed a complaint with Bagatipara upazila nirbahi officer (UNO),

accusing Manik of violating election rules. He also lodged a case with Bagatipara Police Station. Meanwhile, Candidates for mayoral and nine councillor posts of Ramgarh Municipality submitted their nomination papers on May 16.

Our Khagrachhari correspondent quoted district election office sources as saying that three mayor aspirants, 47 councillor candidates and eight women candidates for reserved seats submitted nominations to contest the polls scheduled for June 12.

District Election Officer Md Nurul Hassan said as many as 15,056 voters are expected to cast their votes in nine polling booths.

Necessary measures are being taken to ensure a free, fair and peaceful municipal election, he added.

SONADIA, MOHESHKHALI CHANNELS Pirates loot Tk 1cr goods from 14 trawlers in 5 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Pirates attacked at least 14 trawlers in Sonadia and Moheshkhali channels and looted fishes and fishing nets worth Tk 1 crore in the last five days.

Fishermen in the area said that pirates swooped on them while they were returning through the two channels with trawlers full of fishes.

Mujibur Rahman, president of Cox's Bazar Fishing Boat Owners Association said that incidents of piracy have recently increased to an alarming level in the area.

"Fishermen cannot return to the shore safely with their fishes and trawlers. The pirates are attacking them in the deep sea and looting their everything", he said.

In the last five days, the pirate gangs have looted at least 14 trawlers and beat up more than 60 fishermen

while they were returning to the shore, Mujibur added.

Several trawler owners yesterday painted a grim picture how they were looted in mid-sea by the armed pirates.

Trawler owner Abul Kashem said the fishermen could not resist the attacks as pirates carry illegal arms and lethal weapons. Most of the pirates seem to be Myanmar nationals, he said.

Vice president of the boat owners association said over 80 thousand fishermen of about six thousand trawlers are now suffering from insecurity.

They cannot go to mid-sea for fishing for fear of life during the hilsa season, he said.

Ranjit Barua, officer-in-charge of Teknaff police station said although they lack vessels to conduct drives on water, but they are raiding different areas in the shore to arrest the pirates.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Agriculture University in Mymensingh has developed several varieties of eye-catching bell fruits, a summer fruit locally known as 'Jamrul'.

SYLHET-MEGHALAYA BORDERS

Joint survey bid stumbles again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Follow-up

The joint survey of disputed Sylhet-Meghalaya borders, scheduled to resume on Wednesday in Noljur area close to Tamabil-Dauki point, did not start even yesterday, a member of the survey team said.

The Indians were pressing for survey ignoring the border pillars set in 1947, he said. However, there will be a fresh bid to resume the job on Protappur-Padua borders in Gowainghat on 21 May, the official added.

Officials of the directorate of survey and land administration last week visited different places of Sylhet-Meghalaya borders, where the joint survey had to be suspended time and again

since December last year.

Resumption of the survey would end the stalemate, prevailing for months as Bangladesh officials could not agree with the Indians who had pressed for ignoring 1947 pillars on the adversely possessed lands (APL) on different borders in the region.

Coordinator of the joint survey Ahmed Shamim Al Raji, also additional deputy commissioner, revenue, here said the survey this time would be done by two teams on 12 points of the border.

The joint survey could not be resumed even weeks after the schedule as the officials had to suspend it in

December last year due to a trouble created by the Indian Khasia tribesmen and others on the much talked about Padua-Protappur borders.

Again it stumbled on 5 April as the Indians failed to bring any substantial documents in support of their claim for lands inside the Bangladesh territory, officials said.

In the wake of repeated incidents of intrusion by Khasias for looting paddy crops and fishing in Sylhet region as well as killing of Bangladesh nationals by the BSF, the authorities decided for a joint survey of the Jaintapur, Gowainghat and Kanaighat borders.

Accordingly, it began on 7 December last year.

'Withdraw false case against Limon, punish culprits'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Follow-up

A rally was held in the town yesterday afternoon demanding withdrawal of 'false' cases against Limon, his rehabilitation and punishment of the alleged Rab men who maimed him.

The speakers at the rally also condemned the move by a vested quarter to brand him as a terrorist gang member.

Progatishil Chhatra Jote organised the programme in front of Ashwini Kumar Hall, demanding an end to all extra-judicial killings, kidnappings and 'tortures'.

Among others, Henoara Begum, mother of Limon, Rezaul Islam, Manisha Chakraborty, Abdullah Mahfuz, Advocate Lila Rani Datta, Albert Ripon Ballav,



Principal Mizanur Rahman, Dulal Majumdar, Nabila Alam, Mithun and other activists of different students, socio-cultural-political-human rights organisations, addressed the rally.

Limon Hossain's mother Henoara Begum, while addressing the rally, burst into tears and said, if Rab had arranged imme-

diated treatment of Limon, the hapless boy's leg could be saved from amputation.

"We requested the Rab personnel several times for his immediate treatment after shooting on March 23 afternoon, but they did not pay heed to our request.

The other speakers, condemning the alleged attempts to brand Limon as a terrorist gang member by a section of government investigation agencies, demanded free, fair and speedy investigation into the case filed against six Rab personnel for maiming Limon.

On March 23, 16-year-old college student Limon Hossain of Chhaturia in Jhalakathi was shot in the leg by Rab men who later filed two cases accusing him of possessing arms and obstructing the law enforcers.



PHOTO: STAR

Members of Coastguard in a drive seized around one lakh metre banned current net from the Meghna River in Munshiganj district, left, and destroyed it by setting it afire on the riverbank on Tuesday.

Natore Jubo League leader shot, another injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A local leader of Jubo League was shot and seriously injured by criminals in the town on Wednesday night.

Victim Afzal Hossain, 25, son of Selim Hossain of Kanaikhal in the town, is Jubo League press and publication secretary of the town unit.

Police said, a gang opened fire on Afzal at Kalurmor at about 8:30pm while he along while another Jubo League leader Omar Ali was going to Chukirpar of the town by a motorbike.

The criminals also beat up Omar, Jubo League sports secretary of the unit, as he tried to save Afzal.

Local people rushed Afzal, hit by bullet in his chest, to Natore Sadar Hospital from where he was shifted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

Contacted over mobile phone, Afzal said a gang of eight to ten led by Anis, Azia Ripon and Afaz attacked them and shot him with a pistol.

"All the attackers are supporters of Shohel Sarker Babu, son of youth and sport minister Ahad Ali Sarker," said Afzal adding they shot him and snatched the motorbike as he protested their extortion in the Rasuler Mor area of the town.

Shohel Sarker Babu, refuting the allegation said, some corrupt people were trying to tarnish his social image.

"I do not know who attacked Afzal and Omar," Babu said.

Nasirul Islam, additional superintendent of police of Natore, said Afzal might have been shot because of previous enmity.

Police recovered the motorbike from Choukirpara area on the same night, Nasirul said adding, "We are trying to identify and arrest the culprits."