

DEADLY FLOODS  
China  
evacuates  
tens of  
thousands

AFP, Beijing

China said yesterday it had evacuated more than 60,000 people in the nation's southwest after torrential rain triggered floods that killed one and left another 15 missing. The floods in Guizhou province also damaged or destroyed thousands of houses, the Ministry of Civil Affairs said in a statement.

During the downpours, water levels on a river in Guizhou's Wangmo county rose over three metres above the safe level, before dropping back to a normal range, the official Xinhua news agency said.

State television broadcast images of water raging through towns, cars piled up and motorbikes covered in brown sludge. It also showed people being evacuated in the eastern province of Jiangxi, also hit by floods.

In neighbouring Hunan, meanwhile, around 16,000 people were evacuated in Loudi city during rainstorms, Xinhua said in a separate report.

The province has recently been hit by a severe drought, and the recent rains had helped alleviate the situation, the report said.

China suffers from serious summer rainfalls every year. In 2010, torrential downpours across large swathes of the country triggered the nation's worst floods in a decade.

50 hurt

FROM PAGE 20

Tower area at around 4:45pm. The clash began when police barred the procession in front of its Nasim Bhaban office. Police claimed that the BNP activists pelted the law enforcers with brickbats leaving around 25 police men injured.

Police charged baton to disperse the activists. The clash then spread to other adjacent areas at Lalkan Bazar Road and New Market Road as small processions were heading towards the party office.

The clash also reached SS Khaled Road, Kazir Dewry and Love Lane areas when police barricaded those streets.

The law enforcers later lobbed teargas shells and fired several rounds of rubber bullets to bring the chaos in control, said Manjur Morshed, assistant commissioner of Kotwali Police Station.

Thousands of commuters remained stranded for hours in parts of the port city as pickets went berserk on streets.

City BNP President Amir K hosru Mahmud Chowdhury and Secretary Shahdat Hossain were among the injured who were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital and different other hospitals and clinics, reported UNB.

During the fights, three journalists -- Didarul Alam of The Independent, Mohammad Alamgir of Channel-i and Mohammad Nasiruddin of Diganto TV were injured.

The clashes ended at around 7:00pm when additional police forces were deployed, Manjur Morshed said.

Meanwhile yesterday in a separate incident in Narayanganj, police charged batons on a BNP protest procession without provocation leaving at least 40 opposition activists injured, reported news agency UNB.

Police charged the procession when it was proceeding towards Mandalpara leaving 100 activists injured at 5:00pm, claimed Narayanganj BNP leader Taimur Alam Khandakar.

The procession was brought out against police atrocities during Sunday's hartal, demanding release of detained party activists and withdrawal of false cases against them.

Shut illegal sawmills

FROM PAGE 20

petition as public interest litigation yesterday on the basis of a report headlined "52 MILLS sawing reserve forests" published in The Daily Star on June 5, and sought court directives to protect the reserve forest.

The HC bench of justices A H M Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Gobinda Chandra Tagore ordered the government officials concerned to submit in 10 days a report on actions taken in compliance with the court order.

It issued a ruling upon the government to explain in three weeks why it should not be directed to remove the sawmills from the reserve forest area and why its inaction to protect the forest should not be declared illegal.

Secretaries to the prime minister's office, environment and forest ministry, chief forest conservator, deputy and assistant forest conservators (development), director general of Department of

Environment, deputy commissioner (DC), superintendent of police (SP), divisional forest officer of Tangail, Sakhipur range officer (forest) and officer-in-charge (OC) of Sakhipur Police Station have been made respondents to the ruling.

According to the HC directives, DC, SP and divisional forest officer of Tangail, Sakhipur range officer and OC of Sakhipur Police Station have to shut down the sawmills and submit a report to the court.

The SP and OC have to file criminal cases against the people responsible for chopping down trees in the forest, and the SP, divisional forest officer and range officer have to monitor the forest area to prevent further cutting of trees, said the court.

During hearing, petitioner's counsel Manzill Murshid told the court that trees in the Sakhipur reserve forest are being felled illegally causing severe damage to the environment.

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Teesta draft

FROM PAGE 20

A joint official statement mentioned the two sides "positively discussed the developments since their last meeting held in January this year."

According to Wahid-uz-Zaman, the water resources ministers of the two countries would approve the framework agreement when Indian Water Resources Minister Salman Khurshed visits Bangladesh soon.

Asked how Bangladesh looked at the inking of the interim treaty after the historic 1996 Ganges water-sharing accord, he said since it's a lower-riparian country, river water-sharing is always significant for it.

Both the governments now have the political will to sort out the water-sharing of common rivers, observed the official.

"We tried to understand each other's positions on various related issues," noted Dhruv Vijay Singh, water resources secretary of India.

Talking about the prospect of reaching an understanding, Dhruv Vijay Singh said a lot of work has to be done on that as the data has to be collected on usage and availability of water in those rivers.

"We are positive and

confident of overcoming the difficulties by understanding the concerns and requirements of each other," he added.

The meeting also discussed issues relating to sharing of waters of Feni, Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dharala and Dudhkumar rivers and the dredging of Ichamati river and embankment protection work along the common rivers.

The secretary-level meeting was held as part of the groundwork the two countries are engaged in before the Indian prime minister undertakes his first visit to Bangladesh sometime later this year.

Wahid-uz-Zaman also called on Salman Khurshed and extended him an invitation from Bangladesh Water Resources Minister Ramesh Chandra Sen to visit Dhaka.

Meanwhile, Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao arrived in Dhaka yesterday afternoon on an official visit to review bilateral relations between the two countries.

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Money laundering

FROM PAGE 1

framing against BNP Senior Vice President Tarique Rahman and his business partner Giasuddin Al Mamun will also be held today in connection with another money laundering case.

The charges against Koko and Saimon were reframed under Money Laundering Prevention Act 2002 to avoid legal complications as they were indicted for activities which occurred before 2009.

Earlier on November 30 last year, the same court indicted Koko under Money Laundering Prevention Act 2009.

Judge Mozammel Hossain of the Special Judge's Court-3 framed the charges after Special Public Prosecutor Mosharrar Hossain Kajol submitted an application.

The court set June 15 for the next hearing of the case.

In his petition, Kajol pointed out the Supreme Court's (SC) verdict on February 9 which said the case against Tarique and Mamun will run under the Act of 2002 as the offences were committed before 2009.

It is also applicable to Koko's case, he mentioned.

Earlier the court recorded statements of 18 prosecution witnesses, including the complainant Deputy Director Abu Sayeed of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

The ACC filed the case against the duo on March 17, 2009 under the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2009 on charge of siphoning off Tk 19.7 crore to Singapore.

According to ACC's deposition the accused had laundered money they received as

payments from China Harbour Engineering Company Ltd and Siemens Bangladesh Ltd (SBL) for helping them win government contracts.

China Harbour got a Tk 351 crore contract to set up New Mooring Container Terminal while SBL a Tk 239 crore contract to supply and install equipment for Teletalk, the state-run cell phone operator.

The ACC pressed charges against Koko and Saimon on November 15, 2009.

Koko had earlier gone abroad for his treatment while Saimon has been absconding since filing of the case.

Meanwhile, hearing on charge framing against Tarique and Mamun in connection with a money laundering case will be held today.

The same court will hear arguments from the prosecution and the defence.

Earlier the SC rejected Tarique's writ petition challenging the legality of the case.

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Mir Kashem

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During the question-answer period, Nurul Islam, an Awami League MP, said Mir Kashem in 2010 laundered the money to sign a contract with a USA consultancy firm.

"We came to know that Jamaat through Mir Kashem hired lobbyists to assist the party in the government's ongoing process of trying war criminals, under which several top Jamaat leaders are now behind bars," he told parliament.

About loan defaulters, the finance minister said Tk 23,306 crore was at the hand of loan defaulters until March 31, 2011. They took loans from 47 banks.

Of the money, the government has so far realised Tk 4165.19 crore. Various steps including alternative dispute resolution have been taken to realise the rest of the amount, said Muhith.

About the share market, he said, situation of the country's capital market is stable now.

Replying to another query, the minister told the Jatiya Sangsad that the government had signed nearly \$8,000 million deals of grant and loan with donor countries in the last two years. Of the amount, \$6825.83 million had been taken as loan while \$1,015.96 million as grant.

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27 Tahrir men

FROM PAGE 20

with the organisation and wanted to establish Khilafat state abolishing the present ruling system.

Of them, seven were accused on charge of their involvement with the activities of the Hizb ut-Tahrir at different points in the capital.

Legal action against them was underway as per the anti-terrorist act-2009 by supporting and taking membership of the banned organisation, posing threat to the sovereignty and security of the state.

Hizb ut-Tahrir continues their mission secretly even after the government banned it on October 22, 2009.

109 BGB men

FROM PAGE 1

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The court altered punishment of a convicted jawan twice while delivering the verdict at the Pilkhana headquarters.

It at first awarded signalman Sirajul Islam six months' imprisonment but changed the prison term to six years before adjourning the proceedings around 10:05am. Ten minutes later, the court again summoned the signalman and restored his earlier punishment term.

The court mentioned it as "clerical mistake" and apologised for that.

Among the four acquitted jawans, sepoy Wazed Ali Mollah and sepoy Kamor Uddin earlier pleaded guilty before the court and sought mercy.

Havildar Delwar Hossain and Lance Nayek Yusuf Ali were acquitted as their guilt could not be proved.

The BGB director general said the court considered jawans' work performance, achievement during their working life, family condition and their participation or their family members' participation in the Liberation War in giving punishment.

The jawans were accused of carrying firearms, taking part in the mutiny, dumping bodies of slain army officers and not informing the higher authorities of the mutiny that killed 73 people including 57 army officers.

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Nayeb Subedar Abdul Matin Mia filed the case on May 6, 2010 against 113 BDR men including former RSU JCO Subedar Saidul Haque.

jawans were sentenced to highest seven years in prison while the others got shorter prison terms.

The court altered punishment of a convicted jawan twice while delivering the verdict at the Pilkhana headquarters.

It at first awarded signalman Sirajul Islam six months' imprisonment but changed the prison term to six years before adjourning the proceedings around 10:05am. Ten minutes later, the court again summoned the signalman and restored his earlier punishment term.

The court mentioned it as "clerical mistake" and apologised for that.

Among the four acquitted jawans, sepoy Wazed Ali Mollah and sepoy Kamor Uddin earlier pleaded guilty before the court and sought mercy.

Havildar Delwar Hossain and Lance Nayek Yusuf Ali were acquitted as their guilt could not be proved.

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