

Teesta dyke collapses flooding seven villages in Rangpur

STAR NATIONAL DESK
A Teesta river embankment in Gannarpar area under Gangachara upazila of Rangpur district collapsed yesterday morning, flooding seven villages and aman paddy fields.

Meanwhile, flood situation in five upazilas of Lalmonirhat district further worsened as fresh areas went under water yesterday. A correspondent quoted local people of Gannarpar area in Gangachara upazila as saying that the embankment collapsed at around 11:00am due to heavy pres-

sure of water as the Teesta continued to swell. Sources in the Water Development Board (WDB) said the water level in the Teesta marked a further rise yesterday and the river was flowing 4 centimetres above its danger mark. Gangachara Sadar Union

Parishad Chairman Asaduzzaman said the dyke, built by Water Development Board, collapsed during last year's flood. Local people repaired the dyke through voluntary service to protect around 10 thousand people living along the riverside in

the upazila, headed. He further said local people urged the Water Development Board to build a spur to protect the embankment, but the board did not do the job on the plea of fund shortage.

Contacted, Executive Engineer Anwar Hossain of Rangpur WDB said they could not repair the dyke due to shortage of fund. He said the authorities concerned will sanction money this year to repair the embankment.

Rival transport bodies start indefinite strike in 16 dists today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A joint body of transport owners and workers announced an indefinite strike from today in 10 districts of Khulna division and five districts of Greater Faridpur to press home their two-point demand.

transport strike from today on all routes of 10 districts of Khulna division and five districts of greater Faridpur. Both the rival groups expressed their determination not to allow movement of transports as long as the strike continues.

The demands are expulsion of Mir Abu Saeed from the post of president of Magura road transport owners' body and implementation of the agreement for ensuring undisturbed movement of transports of all other districts via Magura.

Magura road transport owners alleged that the leaders of the joint body are involved in extorting money from Dhaka-bound passenger buses.

Convenor of the joint body Shah Alam Mukul and president of Jessore bus owners' association Md Ali Akbar said no transport would be allowed to ply from today on any road in southwestern region during the strike till the two-point demand is met.

Meanwhile, Khulna divisional unit of Bangladesh Petroleum Dealers' and Petrol Pump Owners' Association observed a three-hour strike from 8:00 am to 11:00 am yesterday demanding increase in dealers' commission and fare of tank lorries.

Magura road transport owners and Khulna divisional unit of road transport owners-workers body are locked in rivalry and mud slinging over various issues, sources said.

The strike programme was fixed in an emergency meeting of the association held at 9:00 am on Monday with its president Md Siraj Gazi in the chair.

As a sequel to this rivalry, Magura road transport owners called for a 72-hour strike with effect from today to press home their six-point demand.

During the strike lifting of petroleum products from filling stations of Padma, Jamuna and Meghna oil companies remained suspended.

To counter their call the joint body announced the indefinite

Khulna unit of Bangladesh Tank Lorry Owners' Association and Khulna Divisional Unit of Tank Lorry Workers' Union also expressed solidarity with the programme.



PHOTO: STAR

This embankment at Gannarpar in Gangachara upazila of Rangpur collapsed due to heavy pressure of swelling Teesta river water yesterday, flooding seven villages of the upazila.

Transport workers beat up students triggering protest

Vehicles vandalised, road blocked in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Students of Pabna Edward College vandalised five vehicles and blocked Dhaka-Pabna highway after transport workers beat up students of the college at Chatmohar bus stand in the district yesterday morning.

Meanwhile the college administration and the district transport workers association held a meeting on the premises of Pabna Edward College but it ended inconclusively.

The students demanded punishment of the culprits while transport workers and owners association suspended vehicular movement in Chatmohar, Bhangura and Faridpur upazilas under the district.

The agitated students ransacked five public buses on Pabna-Chatmohar highway at Rail Bazar in Chatmohar upazila and Debottar Bazar in Atghoria upazila under the district from 10:00am to 12:00am.

Our Dinajpur Correspondent reported that students of Birganj Degree College blocked Panchagarh-Dinajpur highway demanding a speed breaker in front of the college after a college student was critically wounded in a road accident in Birganj upazila under Dinajpur district yesterday morning.

Unruly transport workers attacked a Pabna-bound college bus carrying the students when its driver stopped at Chatmohar bus stand for a while at about 9:00am.

As the news of attack on the students reached Pabna Edward College, several hundred students blocked Dhaka-Pabna highway at Singa Bypass intersection in Pabna town at noon. At a demonstration rally on the highway, they warned of tougher agitation programmes if the culprit transport workers are not punished.

About two hours later, the students agreed to withdraw their blockade upon assurance of setting up a speed breaker there, police said.

As the students protested, the transport workers beat up the students with iron rods and sticks, injuring at least 10 of them, said Md Ataur Rahman, an honours first year student, also a passenger of the college bus.

Later the teachers of the college, student leaders and police persuaded the students to withdraw the road blockade at about 2:30pm.

Md Abu Tayeb, 18, a second year business management student of Birganj Degree College, got down from a bus in front of the college but a Thakurgaon-bound passenger bus hit him when he was crossing the road, police said. He was rushed to Birganj Health Complex in a critical condition.

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