

Dhaka among

FROM PAGE 20
SF Balica, NG Wright and F van der Meulen jointly conducted the research styled "A flood vulnerability index for coastal cities and its use in assessing climate change impacts".
The research appears in the journal *Natural Hazards*, a journal of the international society for the prevention and mitigation of natural hazards.
"A 1-in-100 year flood in Shanghai would lead to widespread damage, with serious consequences for the city, across China and, through wider economic links, for the whole world," lead researcher Nigel Wright said in a statement from the University of Leeds.
Wright and his team created an index to measure flood vulnerability, using 19 components that go beyond mere weather and environmental conditions. The risk factors include the level of economic activity in a city, its speed of recovery, the number of flood shelters and the population's awareness of flood risk.

"Vulnerability is a complex issue," Wright said. "It is not just about your exposure to flooding, but the effect it actually has on communities and business and how much a major flood disrupts economic activity."
Not only Shanghai is exposed to powerful storm surges and rising sea levels, but the populous city is also ill-prepared for a flooding disaster, with insufficient shelters for victims and a low resilience rating, the researchers said.
With large populations and exposure to storms, Manila in the Philippines and Kolkata in India made the top half of the list, too.
Meanwhile, Marseille in France and Rotterdam in the Netherlands were ranked the least vulnerable on the index because of efficient flood management infrastructure and strict building regulations.
"When a big flood hits, you will still get flooding, but these European cities will bounce back quickly," Wright explained in the statement from Leeds.

EC sits on redrawing

FROM PAGE 20
eight. But it stood at 15 in 2008 and the EC had to reduce the number of seats in rural areas to meet the capital's demand.
Considering the reality, the past EC had proposed for enactment of a new law and rules on delimitation of constituencies with a provision for fixing the number of parliamentary seats for the capital and three hill districts.
According to the proposed law, the three hill districts -- Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari -- will have one constituency each and the capital will have 10 regardless of population size.
Contacted by The Daily Star over telephone on Thursday, Election Commissioner Shah Nawaz however said they may not need any new law on redrawing boundaries of the constituencies.
Citing the Delimitation of Constituencies Ordinance, 1976, he said: "We will com-

plete redrawing the boundaries of parliamentary constituencies as per the existing laws."
According to the existing laws, boundaries of 300 parliamentary constituencies will be redrawn on the basis of the latest census. The current population of the country, as per the latest census, stands at 15.25 crore. Of them, more than one crore people live in the capital alone.
The size of population in each constituency in the country will be more or less 5.28 lakh on average.
On the basis of the latest census of 2011, the current EC must redraw the boundaries of constituencies as per the Delimitation of Constituencies Ordinance, 1976 before the next parliamentary polls.
The current EC has decided to hold talks in September with civil society personalities and media people seeking their opinions in this regard.

Target 3 MD

FROM PAGE 1
"The selection committee will recommend a panel of three candidates for appointment as managing director, and preference will be given to persons having knowledge and experience in rural economy and finance or in the field of microfinance."
A copy of the gazette notification would be sent to the Grameen Bank chairman who will set up the committee, said a Banking Division official on condition of anonymity.
The committee will then publish an advertisement seeking applications from candidates for the post of managing director.
The post of the bank's managing director fell vacant after Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus was forced to step down as its chief executive in line with the central bank's directive in May last year.
The cabinet on August 2 this year approved an amendment to the Grameen

Bank Ordinance that gave almost absolute powers to the government-appointed chairman to choose a managing director for the micro lender.
Meanwhile, Law Minister Shafique Ahmed said the government issued the notification to make sure that a competent and experienced person is appointed as the bank's managing director in a transparent manner.
The government wants that the bank runs well, Shafique told reporters after a meeting with the new Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Gregory A Wilcock at his Secretariat office.
Shafique also ruled out the concerns over the fate of the Nobel-winning organization.
The Australian high commissioner at the meeting expressed satisfaction over the government step to appoint a competent and experienced person as the bank's managing director, said a law ministry press release.

Myanmar

FROM PAGE 20
SAAPE called upon the international community to raise their voices against the recent sectarian violence in Myanmar and use their diplomatic leverage for an immediate and just solution to the ongoing crisis.
The struggle of the Rohingyas for their rights is thwarted by the government attempt at ethnic cleansing of a community which makes up "approximately 25 per cent of the population" of Myanmar, said the statement.
The statement added "The Rohingyas have been continuously fighting against the persecution, discrimination and marginalisation by the state," which has denied them citizenship rights to date.
SAAPE called upon the Myanmar government to end the on-going violence "that has claimed countless lives of the Rohingyas".
It urged the democratic forces in Myanmar to unite and promote peace and harmony in the country.
SAAPE also urged the Bangladesh government to provide asylum for the Rohingyas fleeing Myanmar and take necessary steps to allow international aid groups to assist them.
The New York-based HRW, in a press release published on Wednesday, called upon the Bangladesh government to open its borders to the Rohingyas.
In late July, the Bangladesh government ordered three international aid organisations -- Doctors without Borders, Action against Hunger and Muslim Aid -- to stop providing assistance to Rohingyas living in Cox's Bazar and the surrounding areas.
"This is a cruel and inhumane policy that should immediately be reversed. The government should be welcoming aid organisations that provide life-saving aid, not shutting down their programmes to assist refugees," said HRW.
The sectarian violence in Arakan state broke out in early June between ethnic Arakan Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims, displacing over 100,000 people, said the rights body, adding that Myanmar authorities failed to protect both communities.

Govt action curtails

FROM PAGE 20
The Grameen Bank board, and have participated in its decision making over the years unlike any other bank in the world.
Of the 12 board members, nine are women members of the Grameen Bank and the remaining three, including the chairman, are nominated by the government. The amendment will allow the chairman to take undemocratic decisions, overriding the views of the majority of the board that represents its borrowers.
"The Grameen Bank chairman (instead of the board) would form a selec-

tion committee in consultation with the board for selecting the bank's managing director. The chairman will also be able to select a three-member panel for the appointment of the MD."
They said the government, through the amendment, aims to deny the bank's owners their right to have a say in the management of their bank.
Grameen Bank is a Nobel prize-winning organisation and its women borrowers have brought honour and glory for the country, says the statement.
"It should be noted that the power to appoint the

managing director of any bank lies with its board of directors. In the case of Grameen Bank, by effectively vesting powers in the chairman of the board to appoint the managing director, the government will create an example that is biased and arbitrary in nature."
It urged all to rally to discourage the government from taking over the bank, thereby jeopardising its future and depriving the majority board members of their role in decision making.
The signatories to the statement are Seema Ahmad, Yasmin Ahmed, Milia Ali, Monowara Hakim

Ali, Srabonti Narmeen Ali, Monowara Begum, Rukma Begum, Ameerah Haq, Prof Perween Hasan, Alipha Khan, Irene Khan, Fazila Bano Lily, Niloufer Manzur, Naheed Monover, Munira Naim, Nadina Perera, Mita Rahman, Sabina Faiz Rashid, Shireen Rahman, Shikha Saha, Naila Sattar, Dina Siddiqi, Tasneem Siddiqi, Nazneen Sultana, Razia Sultana and Parveen Chowdhury.
Earlier, 104 women leaders and professionals issued similar statements protesting the government move to have control over the Grameen Bank.

Gazipur-4 by-polls

FROM PAGE 20
Election Commissioner Kazi Rakibuddin Ahmad hoped that all political parties would join the by-polls.
The EC Secretariat has already completed all preparations for holding the poll, he said.
The main opposition BNP, however, has already announced that they would not contest in the by-polls.
It will be the first election under the current EC, which was constituted in early February.
According to the polls schedule, the last day for submitting applications is September 3 while the deadline for withdrawing candidature September 13.
The EC officials will scrutinise the applications on September 5.
A total of 2,11,884 voters including 1,11,489 women voters are expected to cast their votes at 102 polling centres.
It will be a government holiday in the constituency on the day of voting when votes can be cast between

8:00am and 4:00pm.
The Gazipur-4 constituency fell vacant following the resignation of ruling Awami League lawmaker Tanjim Ahmad Sohel Taj on July 7.
Sohel, the only son of the country's first Prime Minister Tajuddin Ahmed, also resigned as state minister for home on May 31, 2009.
Mihir Sarwar Morshed, regional election officer (Dhaka), has been appointed as returning officer while Mohammad Hasanuzzaman, district election officer of Gazipur, as the assistant returning officer.
About security during the polls, the CEC said like the other by-polls, sufficient number of members of law enforcement agencies would be deployed in the electoral areas for holding the polls peacefully.
He said police, armed police and Battalion Ansar would be deployed as striking forces while Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) would also be deployed as a striking force.
About the next parlia-

mentary polls, the CEC said the commission would follow the constitutional provision to hold the polls. It is the parliament that would decide what provision would remain in the constitution, he added.
"We hope politicians will do whatever needed to hold the next parliamentary polls in a free and fair manner because the countrymen want peace," Rakib Uddin said, adding, "All of us should raise our voices for ensuring free and fair polls."
AL PARLIAMENTARY BOARD MEETS TODAY
The Awami League Parliamentary Board (ALPB) sits today to start the process of picking party candidate for the Gazipur-4 by-polls.
The meeting will be held at Gono Bhavan at 7:00pm with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, also the president of AL, in the chair as the chief of the ALPB.
A number of local AL leaders have already started lobbying with the party high command to get nomination.

BNP keeps door

FROM PAGE 20
government to make it cave in and reinstate the caretaker government system.
However, it will be cautious with its steps as it does not want to shut the door on the government over talks, party insiders said.
They said opposition policymakers would sit on Sunday to figure out a strategy for action. They said the strategy would have the option for talks but would still be able to put pressure on the government with agitation programmes.
"The chairperson [of the BNP] will finalise the agitation programmes in consultation with top leaders of the 18-party alliance and the BNP standing committee within a

few days," a senior leader of the party told The Daily Star.
After finalising the agitation programmes, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia might announce them at a rally in the capital.
Before declaring the agitation programmes, Khaleda will visit a few districts to drum up support in favour of the demand for a restoration of the caretaker government system.
"We don't want to see any chaos. We will sit in dialogue once the government agrees in principle that the next election will be held under a neutral administration. We can even withdraw our programmes," BNP standing committee member Khandaker Mosharraf

Hossain told The Daily Star.
He said the BNP would have no objection to a dialogue to find an acceptable head of the neutral government.
Rafiqul Islam Mia, another member of the standing committee, said the party wanted to keep the door for discussions open so that the continuity of constitutional government was not hampered. "The discussions can be held in or outside parliament," he added.
On June 11, 2011, Khaleda Zia at a public meeting declared that she would go for tougher agitation programmes after Eid-ul-Fitr if the government failed to restore the caretaker government system.
Parliament scrapped the

caretaker government provision from the constitution last year following a court ruling in this regard. But the BNP said it would not take part in the national elections if they were held under a partisan government.
Meanwhile, the prime minister recently proposed a small cabinet, with BNP representatives included, to oversee the next election. The BNP rejected the idea saying that the interim government must be non-partisan.
Against this backdrop, the BNP is preparing to go for a movement, but policymakers believe the ruling party will finally agree to a neutral administration and that is why it wants to keep the door for talks open.

ATM Azharul

FROM PAGE 1
allegations against his client with mala fide intention.
"To create a vacuum in Jamaat's leadership, the government has brought allegations against Azhar," the counsel said, adding that Azhar has been carrying out his duties of acting secretary general after the arrest of former secretary general of the party Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojabeed, who has also been accused of war crimes.
Razzak prayed for his client's bail and claimed that Azhar has several illnesses.
Opposing the bail plea, Prosecutor Zead Al Malum said there was no provision of bail in the International Crimes (Tribunal) Act, 1973.
He, however, mentioned

that the tribunal gave bail to BNP leader and war crimes accused Abdul Alim as his health was worse than Azhar.
Azhar, who hails from Badarganj of Rangpur, was arrested at his Moghbazar home just over two hours after the tribunal issued an arrest warrant against him on Wednesday.
In response to a prosecution petition, the tribunal issued the arrest warrant and directed police to produce the Jamaat leader before the tribunal within 24 hours of his arrest.
It is alleged that the Jamaat leader had direct involvement in the killing of 1,200 unarmed Bangladeshis in Badarganj of Rangpur on a

single day during the Liberation War.
SAYEDEE'S PETITION
The tribunal yesterday rejected two time petitions of Jamaat nayeab-e-ameer Delawar Hossain Sayedee.
Sayedee's counsels placed the petitions seeking more time to submit the defence witnesses list and for their own preparation for the trial.
Defence counsel Tajul Islam said for the sake of justice, Sayedee's presence at the tribunal was necessary.
He said since the tribunal fixed the number of defence witnesses, the defence was yet to decide which witness would serve their purpose the most.
Opposing the petitions,

Prosecutor Haidar Ali said the defence had agreed to carry out the trial proceedings without Sayedee being present.
Tajul instantly opposed the prosecutor's claim and said they had never agreed to that.
Hearing the submissions from both sides, Justice Nizamul said, "These two applications filed today stand rejected."
Justice Nizamul said they were all professional lawyers and that they should know how to tackle the matter. The tribunal then suggested that the defence initially submit a list of five witnesses instead of the 20.
The tribunal on August 14 fixed the number of defence witnesses to 20 for Sayedee.

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