

Huge number of people vulnerable to cyclones, tidal surges in Khulna

AHSANUL AMEEN GEORGE, Khulna

A large number of people in the coastal district remain highly vulnerable to natural disasters like cyclones and tidal surges as 157 cyclone shelters here can accommodate only three lakh people among the 25 lakh inhabitants of the area.

Of the nine upazilas in the district, Digholia, Phultala, Rupsha and Terokhda are without any cyclone shelters.

The coastal area saw onslaught of super cyclones Sidr in 2007, Aila in 2009, and Mahasen in 2013, and the storms accompanied by tidal surges claimed a number of lives and destroyed huge quantity of valuables including crops, cattle and dwelling houses.

There are 17 cyclone shelters in Batiaghata, 8 in Dumuria, 27 in Paikgachha, 57 in Dakope and 48 in Koyra upazila under Khulna district, said sources at district rescue and rehabilitation centre.

Four other cyclone centres, two each in Dakope and Koyra upazilas, are under construction.

Being adjacent to the coast, Dakope and Koyra upazilas bear the brunt of natural disasters and so, they have more cyclone centres than other upazilas.

However, 12 of the existing cyclone shelters in the two upazilas are in dilapidated condition.

Bijoy Sarkar, chairman of Moheswaripur Union Parishad (UP) of Koyra, said inhabitants of the upazila become the worst victims

during any natural disaster in the coastal area and so, more cyclone shelters should be built in the upazila and the existing ones should be repaired.

GM Ashraf, chairman of Suterkhali UP of Dakope upazila, said, "Cyclone shelters are not sufficient here. Several times we informed the LGED for repairing the shelters, but to no effect."

Deputy Commissioner of Khulna Anis Mahmud said, "Recently 14 new cyclone shelters have been built. More cyclone shelters will be built gradually, especially at places without any such structures."

Locals have urged the government authorities to take necessary steps for saving the lives and livelihoods of the people of the coastal region from natural disasters.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers of seven state-owned jute mills in Khulna-Jessore area block a rail route in Khulna yesterday, protesting a government move to turn the mills into a holding company.

SNIPPETS

Two drown in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two people drowned in separate incidents under Birganj upazila of the district yesterday. The deceased are 11-year-old Md Tusher Ahmed, son of Mominur Rahman of Rakhali para and Md Sukur Ali, 55, of Sebarupara in the area. Police said Tusher went to take a dip in a nearby pond and went missing. Later, locals recovered his body from the pond. In another incident, Sukur Ali went to bathe in the River Bhuli in the upazila and drowned.

Fertilizer dealer stabbed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A fertilizer dealer was seriously injured as criminals stabbed him to take away Tk 1.2 lakh from his possession in Akkelpur upazila of Joypurhat district on Monday night. The victim is Md Abdul Jalil, 42, son of Belal Hossain of Awalgarhi village. Police and family sources said, a gang of 6/7 swooped on Jalil and took away the money when he was returning home from his business centre at Kuranu Bazar in the upazila around 9:00pm.

Elderly woman murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

An elderly woman was killed allegedly by her grandson following a family feud at Poratena village in Bakerganj upazila yesterday. The dead is Setara Begum, 60, wife of Ismail Sharif of the village. Sub-Inspector Mosharrar Hossain of Bakerganj police station said Sujana, 18, killed his grandmother Setara Begum following an altercation over a trivial matter in the morning. Sujana went into hiding after the incident, said the SI.

Expatriate found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police recovered the body of a Dubai expatriate from beside a canal at Gabla village in Shaikupa upazila of the district yesterday. The deceased, Faruk Hossain, 37, son of Mokbul Hossain was a resident of Cinema Hall area in the upazila headquarters. Iqbal Bahar Chowdhury, officer in-charge of Shaikupa Police Station, said Faruk went out of his residence on Sunday afternoon and did not return since. Locals spotted his body lying beside the canal around 7:00am and informed police. Faruk returned to the country about five months back and might have been killed for ransom, said the OC.

Outlaw, Jamaat men held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police arrested a cadre of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party (BCP) from Poltadanga village in Harinakundo upazila early yesterday. The arrestee, Faruk Hossain, 38, son of Afsar Sardar of the village is an accused in a number of cases including seven for murders. Meanwhile, police in separate drives arrested six Jamaat activists, accused in Constable Omar Faruk murder case from different areas of the upazila.

14 'extortionists' sued in Pirojpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A case was filed with Pirojpur Police Station on Monday night, accusing 14 extortionists who attacked eight houses at Dhuliyali village in Sadar upazila the night before.

Rahima Begum, wife of Abdul Mannan of the village, filled the case. Amin Khan, who led the attack on the houses, has been made the main accused in the case. Police arrested one of the accused named Malek soon after filing of the case.

Victims alleged that Amin Khan on Monday night threatened them over mobile phone for filing the case.

"We have arrested one of the accused in the case and are trying to arrest the remaining 13, including the main accused Amin Khan," said officer-in-charge (OC) Md Abdur Razzak Mollah of the police station.

A gang of extortionists vandalised the houses at Dhuliyali village on Sunday night.

The gang led by Amin Khan, 30, son of Chan Khan of Chalisha village under Tona union of the upazila, first came up to the house of Md Rafikul Islam at around 9:00pm and demanded Tk 15,000 from him, but he refused to oblige.

The gang, equipped with sharp weapons, again came to the house at around 11:00pm, vandalised the house and took away Tk 17,000, the victim told newsmen at the local press club on Monday morning.

Later, the extortionists swooped on the houses of Motiur Rahman Sheikh, Sobhan Sheikh, Shah Alam, Rob Shikder, Mohsin Sheikh, Nasir Sheikh, and Ripon Sheikh of the village and looted money and other valuables from the houses, victims alleged.

KURIGRAM, BOGRA DISTRICTS

Erosion renders over 600 families homeless

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Erosion by the River Brahmaputra took a serious turn in the last two weeks, rendering over 300 families homeless in Ghogadaha and Jatrapur unions under Kurigram Sadar upazila.

Besides, Jatrapur Government Primary School is facing serious erosion threat, reports our correspondent.

The erosion-hit people have taken shelter on high lands and roads, said local Water Development Board (WDB) sources.

Of the families, 28 were rendered homeless in Char Jatrapur, 22 in Ghaneshampur, 25 in Garuhara, 25 in Char Parbattipur, 150 in Bhagabatipur and 15 in Porerchar under Jatrapur union while 45 in Char Raulia, Rasulpur and Khamar village under Ghogadaha union during the period, said the UP

chairmen.

During a recent visit, this correspondent found many villagers leaving their homesteads for safer places in fear of further erosion.

Headmaster of Jatrapur Government Primary School said "If immediate steps are not taken to save the school from the erosion, academic activities of 505 students will be hampered badly."

The school might go into the water anytime as the river is flowing around 18 meter near the institution, said Abdul Gafur, chairman of Jatrapur Union Parishad.

Contacted, Lalmonirhat WDB Executive Engineer Abdul Kader said, we wrote to the higher authorities for fund to thwart the erosion but no response yet to come.

Away in Bogra, at least 300 families in Kutubpur and Chandanbaisha unions under Shariakandi upazila shifted their homesteads to safer places as erosion by

Jamuna River took an alarming turn in the last couple of weeks, reports our correspondent.

A vast tract of cropland, several homesteads and government and non-government establishments in Dhalirkandi, Nijkornipara, Boyrakandi, Chandanbaisha, Baluchar, Rohodoha and Kamalpur areas of the upazila were devoured by the river, said locals.

The mighty Jamuna eroded Chaluabari Primary School. Besides, Kashiahata, Kamalpur and Chandanbaisha government primary schools are now under threat of erosion.

Rouhodoho Bazar, the only market of the area, is also facing serious erosion threat, said the villagers.

Bogra WDB Executive Engineer Nurul Islam said we wrote to the higher authorities for fund to check the erosion but no response yet to come.



PHOTO: STAR

Char Chaluabari Government Primary School under Kutubpur union in Sariakandi upazila of Bogra is almost engulfed by the Jamuna as erosion by the river has taken a serious turn in the upazila.

Indian cattle trader shot dead by BSF

UNB, Naogaon

An Indian cattle trader was shot dead and another injured by members of Indian Border Security Force (BSF) on Bamonpara border in Sapahar upazila early yesterday.

Both the deceased, whose identity could not be confirmed yet, and the injured hail from Dakshin Dinajpur of India.

Lieutenant Colonel Rafiqul Islam of Naogaon BGB 46 Battalion said a BSF patrol team opened fire on a group of Indian cattle traders while entering Bangladesh with cattle from India through Bamonpara border point at about 5:30am, leaving one of them dead on the spot and another, identified as Zillur, injured.

BGB members later arrested Zillur for entering Bangladesh territory without any valid documents.

Two more arrested in Ekram killing case in Feni

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Police on Monday arrested two Jubo League men from separate areas in Sadar upazila in connection with the murder of Fulgazi upazila chairman Ekramul Haque on May 20 this year.

The arrestees Abdul Qaiyum and Md Masud, two activists of local Jubo League, youth front of Awami League, were produced before a court yesterday that granted the duo a three-day remand.

Abul Kalam Azad, inspector of Feni Model Police Station, also the investigation officer (IO) of the case, said police arrested those two after, raiding two spots in the town, following the confession of the accused arrested earlier.

Police yesterday afternoon, produced the duo before the Senior Judicial Magistrate's Court seeking a seven-day remand. The court, however, granted a three-day remand for each.

A total of 30 people have been arrested so far. Of them, 16 made confessional statements regarding their involvement with the killing, said the IO.

Fulgazi upazila chairman Ekramul Haque, 45, also the president of Awami League upazila unit, was shot and burnt to death in his car on May 20.

Rezaul Haque Jasim, brother of the victim filed a murder case against 30 to 35 people, including Minar Chowdhury, a local BNP leader, with Feni Model Police.

Tablets

FROM PAGE 16

2015, 321 million tablets will be shipped worldwide, up from 256 million in 2014.

By contrast, 31.7 million PCs (including desktops, notebooks and 'ultramobile' devices) will be shipped in 2015.

Despite this shift, analyst firm Gartner believes that there will be "a relative revival" of the PC market in 2014, driven by business upgrades from Windows XP and the general business replacement cycle.

"After declining 9.5 percent in 2013, the global PC market is on pace to contract only 2.9 percent in 2014," explained Ranjit Atwal, research director at Gartner.

Sales of tablets will see a "relative slowdown" in 2014, with lower demand from users for tablets with smaller screens. In particular, the shift towards 'phablets' in South-East Asia is slowing global tablet penetration.

"The next wave of adoption will be driven by lower price points rather than superior functionality," said Atwal.

Meanwhile, sales of mobile phones are expected to reach 1.9 billion units in 2014, a 3.1 percent increase from 2013.

Gartner predicts that smartphone sales will represent 88 percent of global mobile phone sales by 2018, up from 66 percent in 2014.

Android and iOS are driving the growth with a 30 percent and 15 percent increase, respectively, in 2014.

Windows phones will also exhibit strong growth in 2014, with the operating system projected to reach a 10 percent market share by 2018.

One arrested in Kushtia acid throwing case

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Police on Monday night arrested one of the accused in a case filed for throwing acid on three people, including two women of a family, in Gopalpur village in Sadar upazila on Saturday night.

Md Babu, 20, son of Amjad Ali of Harinakundo upazila of Jhenidah is one of four accused in the case filed by Ayub Ali.

Mir Shariful Haq Janak, officer-in-charge of Islamic University Police Station, said a team of law enforcers raided the house of one Baten Ali at Gopalpur village around 10:00pm and arrested Babu.

Babu, a second-year student at Jhousdia College near the village, is a nephew of Baten and had been staying at Baten's house for the last few years to carry out studies.

During primary interrogation, Babu gave us some vital information regarding the acid attack. However, he denied his direct involvement with the incident, he

added.

Criminals threw acid on Ayub's daughter Sonia, 20, son Titumir, 13, and widowed sister Saleha while they were asleep on Saturday night.

Sonia, a second-year student of Jhousdia College, who sustained burn injuries on her face and left hand, is now undergoing treatment at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, while her brother Titumir is being treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

According to police, there had been a longstanding conflict between two local Awami League leaders--Swapan Biswas and Golam Mostafa--over establishing supremacy in the area.

Police suspected the incident was a sequel to the longstanding feud between the rival groups.

Following the acid attack on his children, Ayub Ali, a supporter of Swapan, filed a case with Islamic University Police Station, accusing 8 people in this connection on Monday afternoon.

ILLEGAL VEHICLES ON HIGHWAYS

Indefinite transport strike begins in Rajshahi today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Transport owners and workers will enforce an indefinite strike in Rajshahi district from today, demanding a ban on plying of unauthorised vehicles on highways.

The strike call came from a rally of bus-truck owners and workers held at Seroil bus stand in the city yesterday afternoon.

District Motor Sramik Union President Mahtab Uddin said if the demand

not met immediately, they will enforce an indefinite transport strike in Rajshahi division.

He said the district administration in its June 9 meeting with transport owners and workers agreed to impose a ban on plying of Nasimon, Karimo and easy-bike on highways, but the unauthorised vehicles are still plying the roads.

On Monday, Bus-Truck Malik O Sramik Oikya Parishad threatened to go for strike if the demand

was not met immediately.

Mahtab blamed a state minister and a lawmaker from Rajshahi for backing the owners of the unauthorised vehicles.

He also demanded that the authorities concerned take immediate steps to stop illegal toll collection and alleged harassments by police on highways and withdraw enhanced rates of tax, token and fitness certificate.

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গণস্বনানী

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, মন্ত্রিপরিষদ বিভাগের নির্দেশনার আলোকে পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তরের মহাপরিচালক প্রতী মাসের দ্বিতীয় বৃহস্পতিবার গণস্বনানীতে অংশ গ্রহণ করবেন। চলাতি মাসে নিম্নোক্ত সূচি অনুযায়ী গণস্বনানীতে অনুষ্ঠিত হবেঃ

তারিখ/দিন	সময়	স্থান
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যেকোনো ব্যক্তি বা উদ্যোক্তা পরিবেশ/পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর সংশ্লিষ্ট যেকোনো সমস্যা/অভিযোগ/পরামর্শ (ছাড়পত্র/পরিবেশ দুর্ঘণ) ইত্যাদি বিষয়ে আলোচনার জন্য উল্লিখিত গণস্বনানীতে অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারেন।
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(ফরিদ আহমেদ)
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