

3 of a family 'drown' in Ctg canal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three members of a family, including two children, went missing while crossing a canal in Fatikchhari upazila of Chittagong yesterday afternoon. They are Jahangir Alam, 50, of Shetkua village and his daughter Fatema Jinnat, 7, and son Shamsul Alam, 5. Quoting family members, Mohammad Anwar, a member of Paindhong union parishad, said Jahangir, a sawmill worker, along with his two children went to catch fish in Durong canal around 1:00pm and the three might have drowned while going across the canal.

A search operation was going on. But there was no trace of any of the three till filing this report around 8:30pm.

Flood

FROM PAGE 1 and villages and send the information to us," Rafiqul Islam, an official at the control room of the disaster management and relief, told The Daily Star yesterday.

According to the FFWC, water levels in all major rivers, except for the Brahmaputra and the Meghna, are rising.

Such rise was recorded at 42 monitoring stations yesterday, while water was flowing above the danger level at 15 points of the Brahmaputra, Teesta, Jamuna, Ghagot, Padma, Kangsa, Dhaleshwari, Shitalakkhya and Surma rivers, submerging nearby villages.

Some other districts, including Rajbari, Faridpur, Gopalganj, Manikganj and some places in the Sylhet region, will be freshly affected because the water level of the Ganges will rise in the next two days.

In the affected areas, many flood victims have taken shelter on the flood protection embankments or some other places with no food or drinking water.

In Lalmonirhat alone, at least 40 villages went under water, affecting more than 80,000 people, our district correspondent reports.

At Dangra under Rajarhat upazila of Kurigram, around two km of the flood protection embankment by the Teesta has been washed away by the flood.

A flood shelter called Thutapaipkar, a market named Tayab Kha Bazar and two schools -- Daldalia Govt Primary School and Kalirhat Govt Primary School -- are under threats from river erosion in the district.

Besides, about 250 *chars* have been inundated due to rising water of the Brahmaputra, our Kurigram correspondent said.

In Jamalpur, some 9,787 hectares of cropland went under water affecting Aus, Aman, transplant Aman, sugarcane and vegetables fields, our district correspondent reports, citing officials of the agricultural extension department.

Around 300 families remained marooned in Islampur, the worst hit upazila of the district.



A slow-moving overloaded rickshaw van right next to a bus at speed on Dhaka-Chittagong highway near Shanir Akhra yesterday. Non-motorised vehicles using the highway cause fender-benders and sometimes serious accidents almost every day.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Living in danger of landslide

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the aforementioned areas.

The committee also listed around 2,500 people for rehabilitation but many more have been left out as an estimated 10,000 people are currently living in such areas.

Some 100 families were evicted from the disaster prone areas in Tankir Pahar and Lalkhan Bazar during a drive by Chittagong district administration on June 25. But The Daily Star on August 17 observed some newly-built makeshift structures and construction activities on the sites.

Kulsum Akther, a sexagenarian

claiming to have been residing in the area for 20 years, said they had no other place to go and so they had come back.

Jasmine, a resident of Yasin Colony in Akber Shah, says she lived there because the rent was cheap. She pays Tk 1,000 a month for a room.

Locals allege most of those who claim ownership of hills have no valid documents of possession. Yet they can rent out such vulnerable makeshift structures because of their political clout or ties with government officials.

During the June 25 drive, the district administration demolished 40 shacks

owned and managed by Zafar, a former Wasa official, at Tankir Pahar.

No further drives, however, were conducted on "humanitarian grounds" as Ramadan approached, Divisional Commissioner Mohammad Abdullah, who heads the Divisional Hill Management Committee, told The Daily Star recently.

Long-term planning is required for eviction drives so that the victims can be rehabilitated properly, he added.

Instead of carrying out any more eviction drive this year, the committee now plans to use loudspeakers to ask the remaining dwellers to leave the

risky areas.

It is the responsibility of the hills' owners -- individuals, Chittagong City Corporation (CCC), Chittagong Wasa, Bangladesh Railway and Public Works Department -- to ensure that such risky abodes do not exist, said Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) SM Abdul Kader of Chittagong.

On the rehabilitation of the displaced, Abdul Kader, who had led the June 25 drive, said the CCC is constructing a building in Batali Hill area for 150 families.

What is in store for the rest remains to be seen.

EU seeks new Gaza truce

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Council on a resolution after Jordan's draft text met with resistance, notably from the United States.

The so-called "elements" document lays out the parameters for a ceasefire deal that would address Israel's security concerns and meet Palestinian demands.

It asks UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to immediately come up with proposals to "implement the relevant provisions" in a move that could jump-start peace negotiations.

UN diplomats said they hoped the initiative would shore up the Egyptian-led peace track and lead to a lasting ceasefire that would avoid a relapse into war.

At least 2,091 Palestinians have been killed since July 8, of whom the United Nations has identified 70 percent as civilians, and 67 people have died on the Israeli side, all but three of them soldiers.

The European-drafted document calls for the return of the Palestinian Authority to Gaza, which has been under Hamas control for the past seven years.

It provides for the lifting of economic and humanitarian restrictions on the Gaza Strip to allow for a massive reconstruction effort, and for the re-opening of border crossings.

An international monitoring and verification mission would be established with a mandate to report on

ceasefire violations and check the flow of goods into Gaza -- a key point missing from the Jordanian draft resolution.

Ban has pledged international help to rebuild Gaza but warned that this would be "for the last time" after three wars in six years.

18 Israeli 'collaborators' executed In broad daylight outside Gaza's largest mosque, a day after Israel killed three of the movement's top militants, Hamas gunmen grabbed six men from among hundreds of worshippers spilling out onto the street, witnesses told AFP.

They were pushed to the ground. One of the masked men shouted: "This is the final moment of the Zionist enemy collaborators," then the gun-

men sprayed them with bullets.

Earlier, another witness saw 11 people shot dead in a square near the remains of Gaza police headquarters, bombed by Israeli warplanes. An 18th person was shot in front of bystanders in a separate incident nearby.

The Israeli military yesterday said it struck around 30 targets in Gaza since midnight as 45 rocket and mortar shells hit Israel during the same period. Another seven rockets were shot down, a spokeswoman said.

Two Palestinian men aged 22 and 24 were killed in a strike on Nusseirat refugee camp early yesterday, emergency services said.

Two more were killed in an air raid near neighbouring Deir al-Balah.

JU suspends 16 BCL activists



One of the injured Chhatra League activists of Jahangirnagar University's Maulana Bhasani Hall in his bed at Enam Medical College and Hospital, Savar, on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

FROM PAGE 16 During the suspension, the 16 students will not be allowed to stay at the dormitory or campus and participate in any academic activities, he added.

The suspended students, all residents of Maulana Bhasani Hall, are KM Nurunnabi of genetics engineering and biotechnology department, Anindo Baroi and Mainul Hossain of anthropology, AKM Khairuzzaman of history, Khandokar Naymul Islam, Tanvir Shajib, Adel Al Mamun and Rayhan Habibi of marketing, Kishore Das of physics, Saddam Hossain of botany, Santo Kumar Nath, Shihab Khandokar and Raj Prasad of environmental science, Md Nishat Rahman

and Shakiluzzaman of finance and banking and Istiak Ahmed Bijoy of chemistry department.

Nurunnabi is the organising secretary of JU Chhatra League while Anindo is the general secretary of the student body's Maulana Bhasani Hall unit.

At least 10 students were injured when a group of BCL men swooped on their rivals who were asleep at the dormitory around 4:00am on Wednesday.

Chhatra League men led by Anindo Baroi, loyal to JU BCL president, attacked hall unit president Shakil Ahmed and his supporters. Shakil is loyal to the general secretary of JU BCL. Shakil, Humayun Kabir and

Rokanuzzaman were stabbed several times by the attackers. Seven other BCL men were sent to Enam Medical College and Hospital in Savar after they were treated initially at the university medical centre, said BCL sources.

Raiding the dormitory on Thursday afternoon, police recovered huge locally made weapons, including iron rods and pipes.

Meanwhile, some ousted BCL men returned to the dormitory yesterday morning with the help of law enforcers and university authorities.

Rakibul Hasan, vice-president of JU BCL unit, filed a case with Ashulia Police Station yesterday, accusing 16 people of carrying out the attack.

Led by Imran, 34 Pak MPs resign

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Khan insists the May 2013 general election, which swept Sharif to power in a landslide, was rigged, though observers rated it free and credible.

PTI leaders Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Arif Alvi and Shireen Mazari submitted the resignations of all 34 MNAs to the NA speaker's office, including that of Chairman Imran Khan, Dawn reported.

The party had earlier decided to resign from all assemblies except the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, a province where it forms the government.

"We had already given our resignations to our chairman, and now we have also completed the formal procedure of submitting them to the National Assembly speaker," said PTI leader Murad Saeed shortly after the resignations had been submitted.

PTI is the third largest party in the Pakistan National Assembly.

Speaking to DawnNews, former Secretary Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) Kanwar Dilshad said that as per rules, the lawmakers' assembly membership ceases the moment they submit their resignations.

"Our future course of action is clear: we demand free and fair elections in Pakistan, an independent

election commission, accountability of those involved in electoral rigging, and the resignation of the prime minister," said Saeed.

The standoff has raised fears of possible military intervention -- the country has seen three coups since its creation in 1947 -- though analysts say the army is more likely to use the crisis to assert influence behind the scenes than stage an outright power grab.

Talks to resolve the impasse that began on Wednesday stalled almost immediately, with Khan sticking to his hardline stance that Sharif must go before he would negotiate.

But his party yesterday said dialogue was restarting through contact with the governor of Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province.

"We are resuming talks with the government," PTI vice-chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi told AFP.

Khan's and Qadri's protest movements are not formally allied and have different goals, beyond toppling the government. But their combined pressure -- and numbers -- have given extra heft to the rallies.

If one group were to reach a settlement with the government and withdraw, the other's position would be significantly weakened.

Umrah visas were also arrested from Hara and Batha areas.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Riyadh Shahidul Islam said they didn't have information of the arrest of any Bangladeshis in the raids.

"Majority of our people are currently working here legally. Very few may stay and work illegally," he told The Daily Star over the phone yesterday.

The Saudi police are carrying out

SONALI BANK

Questions of recruitment test 'leaked'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Questions of the preliminary tests held yesterday for Sonali Bank recruitment were allegedly leaked. The authorities concerned said they were looking into the allegation.

Several job-seekers, who took the recruitment test for the posts of senior officer, officer and officer (cash), claimed they had received the answers of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) on their mobile phones from people outside during the hour-long test.

Some claimed to have got the answers even before the tests began.

Emerging from an exam centre, a candidate told The Daily Star he had received the answers 20 minutes after the exam started.

"A person promised to get me a job in the bank in exchange for Tk 5 lakh. Today, he provided me the answers of the preliminary test and will confirm my position after the written and the viva voce," he said, wishing anonymity.

"He has also told me that I don't even need to qualify in the written test. He will take care of everything necessary," he added.

Upon asking, the person showed this reporter two SMSs received at

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3 Bangladeshis

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residing in India. They pleaded guilty to the offences.

Additional Sessions Judge Rajeev Bansal yesterday awarded the jail term to Rafiqul Islam, Mohammed Dalim and Mohammed Jafur who were natives of Bangladesh and are now residing in Delhi.

The court has imposed a fine of Rs 300 on each of them, noting that they belong to the "poorest of poor" families.

It, however, said since the convicted people are in custody for more than seven years, they be set at liberty if not needed to be detained in any other case.

Rafiqul, Dalim and Jafur said they wished to plead guilty to the offences after which the court convicted them for "assembling for the purpose of committing robbery and making the preparation to commit robbery".

They were also held guilty of possessing illegal arms and for staying in India without permission or any documents.

The three other accused claimed they were juveniles at the time of the offence in 2007 and on the report of medical board, they were declared minor and sent to juvenile justice board to face the proceedings.

According to police, on August 7, 2007, acting on a tip-off, they came to Green Avenue Road in South Delhi and detained six people along with firearms when they were planning to commit a robbery at the farmhouse.

On seeing the police, they tried to flee, but were overpowered and arrested.

Saudi police detain 400

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fines and deportation depending on each case.

The Riyadh police carried out the operations in cooperation with other security forces. According to police, the operation took place in Manfouha, Hai Al-Wazara (Hara) and Batha city centre in Riyadh.

During the raids, 45 vegetable vendors who overstayed their Hajj and

raids to strengthen security ahead of holy hajj, the envoy mentioned.

Earlier, the Saudi interior ministry had warned illegal expatriates in the Kingdom to legalise their status or leave the country by November last year to avert punishment.

A general amnesty was given for the illegal foreign workers to correct their status in May last year and later extended till November.