

CTG-RANGAMATI ROAD

Reopens partly after 8 days

Army put in tremendous efforts

HASSAN JAHID TUSHER, from Rangamati

Road communication between Rangamati and Chittagong was restored yesterday on a limited scale after the authorities had repaired and opened a severely damaged area of the highway at Sapchhari point, nine days into the devastating landslide in the district and elsewhere.

Only three wheelers and light vehicles would be able to use the road for the time being. Lt Col Md Masfiquil Alam, commander of 19 Engineers Construction Battalion, told The Daily Star at the disaster hit point where the road was washed away. He said it was opened for public at 12:51pm.

More than 100 points of the highway was damaged in the landslide that snapped the road link between Rangamati and other parts of the country. The road was opened through waterways and the government also made smooth transportation toll free to ease country transportation.

With restoration of limited road communication, goods would still be coming through the waterways, said an official.

Members of the Army Engineering Corps along with the Roads and Highways officials worked relentlessly to repair the road and clear the soil, mud and stones from its surface.

Secretary of Road Transport and Highways Division MAN Siddique, General Officer Commanding of 24 Infantry Division Maj Gen Iahangir Kabir Talukder, the chief engineer of Roads and Highways, Rangamati region commander and commander SWDO of Bangladesh Army were present when the road was opened some 13km away from the town.

Lt Col Masfiquil said heavy vehicular movement was not possible and it would need either a 150-metre-long Bailey bridge or an alternative road to that end.

Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Manzurul Mannan told The Daily Star the situation in the

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The Bangladesh Army and the Roads and Highways Department restore road communication between Rangamati and the rest of the country for light vehicles yesterday. A part of the Rangamati-Chittagong road was destroyed in recent landslides. The photo was taken at Sapchhari in Rangamati. PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Mosquito may be breeding in areas hard to reach

Stays DNCC mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) Mayor Anisul Haque yesterday said mosquitoes might be breeding in areas difficult to reach by his mayor.

The mayor apologised for failing to control the mosquito menace.

The city corporation is increasing its capacity every year to give city dwellers relief from the mosquito problem, Anisul claimed while addressing a press briefing on the 2017-18 proposed budget for the corporation.

In the proposed budget, the corporation allocated Tk 20 crore to fight mosquitoes.

Last year, the DNCC's proposed budget was Tk 23.25 crore for mosquito control but it failed to spend the allocation. It spent Tk 16.85 crore on pesticide, larvicide and fogging machines.

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26 ruling party men sued

FROM PAGE 1 Forum, yesterday filed the case with Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate Shahidullah Kaisar under the Speedy Trial Act.

Enamul is also a former general secretary of Chittagong District Bar Association.

The court has directed Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) to investigate the case. It also asked the PBI to submit a report by June 18, said the complainant's lawyer Abdus Sattar.

According to the case statement, the attack was carried out to "kill Fakhrul as part of a plot by government high-ups to annihilate the BNP".

On Sunday, Fakhrul's motorcycle was under attack in front of Ichhakhali Upazila Health Complex. He along with other BNP leaders was going to visit the landslide victims in Rangamati.

In the attack, seven BNP leaders, including Fakhrul, were injured and five vehicles were vandalised. From Facebook video footage and images published in different online and newspapers, the accused were identified, it mentioned.

The case statement said Sarwar hit Fakhrul with an iron rod to 'kill' him and Najim Uddin Badsha attacked Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury and beat him with a stick.

Mahbubur Rahman Shamim, BNP's Chittagong divisional organising secretary, said they lodged the case with the court as they did not feel secured to go to Rangunia for filing the case with local police station.

Contacted, BCL leader Tayab, an accused, said he was in the city on Sunday. "I did not go to Rangunia that day... then how did I attack the BNP leaders?" he said, claiming that the case against him was false.

His father is alive but in the case, it has been mentioned that his father is dead. So it is clear that BNP leaders filed the case, hearing some names from people. They did not know whom they made accused, Tayab added.

Imtiaz Md Ahsanul Kader Bhuiyan, officer-in-charge of Rangunia Police Station, said he heard about filing of the case. "We will take action as per the court directive."

Contacted, Shamsul Alam

Talukder, general secretary of Rangunia upazila unit AL, said nobody of their organisation was responsible for the attack.

"Why will we attack them? What is our interest?" he said, adding that, "They are spreading propaganda against us."

Meanwhile, terming the attack on Fakhrul's motorcycle "unexpected and regrettable", AL lawmaker Hasan Mahmud yesterday told parliament that the mystery behind the incident would be unravelled through an investigation.

After the probe, it would be known why and how the incident happened. The home minister already announced that they would take action in this regard, he said.

Hasan, a lawmaker from Rangunia and AL Publicity Secretary, made the comments, participating in the general discussion on the proposed budget for 2017-18 fiscal year.

After the attack, some BNP leaders blamed Hasan for the attack. He said Fakhrul was going to Rangamati via his constituency changing the scheduled route and he did not inform the police about it.

PM tells JS of 2041

FROM PAGE 1 sub-regional and international levels.

On the per capita income, she said the Kailashor Hi-tech Park in Gazipur was being constructed with the aim of creating employment for 1 million people and having an export earning of five billion dollars through the IT sector by 2041.

"We firmly believe the size of Bangladesh economy will be \$2.5 trillion and the per capita income would reach \$12,000."

Currently, the per capita income is \$1,602 and the size of the economy \$245 billion, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics data.

Referring to the projection of some global research organisations, the premier said Bangladesh would be the world's 20th largest economy by 2030 and 23rd by 2050 from 31st at present.

Responding to another query, she said the government was making efforts to create more career specialists in the country as their number is significantly low compared to that of patients.

"Every year, around two lakh people in the country are falling victim to cancer whereas there is only one physician against every ten lakh people," she added.

In a scripted answer, the PM also said

that considering the costly treatment of the disease, the government gave some charitable organisations the responsibility of providing cancer patients with necessary services at a low price.

In reply to another query, she said her government has conducted a study to explore the labour market in 50 countries, including Australia, Brazil and European countries, and to analyse the market trend in the Middle Eastern countries.

Based on the study report, steps would be taken to identify the prospective areas for manpower export, she said.

The government has already set up safe homes in Riyadh and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, and in Oman, South Korea and Jordan to ensure safety of female workers. Gradually, more such homes would be built in other countries, Hasina said.

Turning to road communications, she said 55-kilometres of the Dhaka-Khulna highway from Jatabari to Mawa and Pachchar to Bhanga would be the country's first expressway.

"Construction of the expressway, which would be connected to Padma bridge, would be completed by next year," she added.



Vehicles stuck in a 10km tailback on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in Munshiganj yesterday.

Saudi king upends royal

FROM PAGE 18 as it is locked in a battle for regional influence with arch rival Iran, bogged down in a controversial military intervention in neighbouring Yemen and at loggerheads with fellow US Gulf ally Qatar.

His youth is a novelty for a country that is used to ageing leaders -- Mohammed's father is 81.

His rapid ascent over the past two years has symbolised the hopes of the kingdom's young population, more than half of which is under 25.

Footage aired on Saudi television channels showed the bearded Mohammed bin Salman kissing the hand of his ousted cousin Mohammed bin Nayef and kneeling in front of the older prince, who patted his shoulder to congratulate him.

"I am going to rest now. May God help you," the former crown prince said, to which his replacement replied: "May God help you. I will never do without your advice."

The king called on governors and other princes to pledge allegiance to his new heir and ordered a ceremony after night prayers at a royal palace in Makkah. STOCKS RISE

The king accompanied his son's elevation with several measures to woo the many Saudis who are government employees, either civilian or military.

He ordered the reinstatement of all civil service benefits cut as part of an austerity package earlier this year. He also extended the end-of-Ramadan Eid Al-Fitr holidays until July 9 for all public sector employees.

Yemen, although analysts say that he has increasingly left day-to-day management of the campaign to his generals.

Sunni-dominated Saudi Arabia leads a coalition of nations which has fought alongside the Yemeni government against Shia rebels who control the capital Sanaa.

It has provided ground troops, enforced an air and sea blockade and conducted a bombing campaign that has drawn repeated criticism from human rights groups for the high number of civilian casualties. CALLING THE SHOTS

Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen in March 2015 signalled a more aggressive foreign policy, emphasised again this month when the kingdom and its allies imposed an embargo on neighbouring Qatar.

They accused Doha of supporting extremists, a charge it denies. The rift marked the region's worst diplomatic crisis in years and drew some concern in Washington but Riyadh has remained unapologetic.

The move reflects Mohammed's "calling the shots" in the kingdom, said Andreas Krieg of the Defence Studies Department at King's College London.

A visit to Saudi Arabia by US President Donald Trump in May, when he held talks with the then deputy crown prince, signalled that Mohammed "could be more confrontational", Krieg said.

His appointment as heir to the throne completes a gradual stripping of power from the ousted crown prince, Mohammed bin Nayef, 57, who has also been fired as deputy prime minister and interior minister.

An April government and security shakeup prepared the way for Mohammed bin Salman's rise, when a number of his allies were appointed to prominent positions and a brother was named ambassador to Washington. Salman had already set a precedent for removal of a crown prince when, in April 2015, he appointed Mohammed bin Nayef and fired Prince Mogen bin Abdul Aziz bin Saud, an appointee of the late King Abdullah.

Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef -- the ousted interior minister's nephew -- was named to replace him.

Holidaymakers hit highways

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Transport operators apprehend that things would turn unbearable for holidaymakers if authorities fail to control traffic flow at some key points of the highways when the pressure intensifies.

The number of people leaving Dhaka and its outskirts is likely to increase significantly when the garment factories close.

Adding to the concern, the Met office in Dhaka forecasts light to moderate rain and thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind from all most places over Rangpur, Mymensingh, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal divisions today.

An estimated 80 lakh holidaymakers would leave Dhaka for their home by three modes of transports -- bus, train and launch -- ahead of the holidays.

Road Transport and Highway Division, which surveyed 16,621km highway and road last year, found 79.6 per cent of national highways were in fair or good state while the rest were in poor, bad and very bad conditions.

had or very bad states and 46 per cent of the district roads in similar conditions.

Since the mad rush of homegoers was yet to begin yesterday most people could leave the city without much difficulty.

Selim, an official of a firm, who was on his way to Khulna, said his bus departed Sayedabad Bus Terminal on time. "I took two days' additional leave ahead of the holiday just to avoid being stuck on the road. I suffered a lot last year," he said.

Passengers heading to the southern districts in buses said they were in dread of the Paturia and Daulatdia ferry terminals.

Last year, we had a nightmare of a journey across the Padma. We were stuck for six hours. We don't know what will happen this year," said Abid, a student of a private university, who was going to Jessore.

Every year, holidaymakers suffer at the ferry terminals due to inadequate ferries and poor management of vehicles.

Mosharaf Hossain, manager of Hanif Paribahan at Gabtoli, said the Dhaka-Tangail highway which already had potholes, was made worse by the rains. Vehicles using the road are being delayed by two to three hours.

"When more buses hit the road in the next two days, people will suffer a lot, if the situation remains unchanged," he said.

An owner of a bus service, on condition of anonymity, said the five major highways had already been experiencing traffic congestions at places for the last few days.

"We are afraid this will take a turn for the worse in the coming days," he said.

Some homebound passengers started leaving the capital yesterday also by train also. On June 12, Bangladesh Railway sold around 22,000 tickets for yesterday for 31 trains that left Kamalapur Railway Station.

of homegoers. "We expect the rush of homegoers to start from tomorrow [today] afternoon," said Badiuzzaman Badal, senior vice chairman of Bangladesh Indian Waterways (passenger carriers) Association.

He however, added that a large number of garment workers would use the rivers to go home.

He said light rains would not create much of a trouble for launches.

Usually, 70-75 launches operate on 41 routes, mostly to the country's southern regions from Dhaka's Sadarghat. An additional 130 will take the fleet to carry 8-10 lakh people during the Eid vacation, according to transport operators.

The road transport and bridges ministry has already requested garment factory owners to close and open their factories on different dates to ease the pressure on road transport.

PHOTO: STAR