



WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

STAR
WEEKEND

VENUS INTO FINAL

She ends Konta's fairytale run to reach her first Wimbledon final since 2009

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GOODBYE, XIAOBO

The Nobel laureate dies of cancer after 8 years in Chinese prison

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9 rivers cross danger line

No possibility of major flooding now, but heavy rains in India next month may abruptly change Met forecast

Pranab ROY

At least nine rivers, including the Jamuna, Teesta, Dhara, Surma and the Kushiya, are flowing above the danger level, but experts say that will neither worsen nor prolong the current flooding.

However, there is a possibility of a fresh flood if it rains heavily in the northeastern states of neighbouring India, they add.

The water level of the Jamuna (the Brahmaputra in India) began to rise on June 30 and the swelling river caused

flows in the northern region. But the water will flow down to the central part of the country in a day or two.

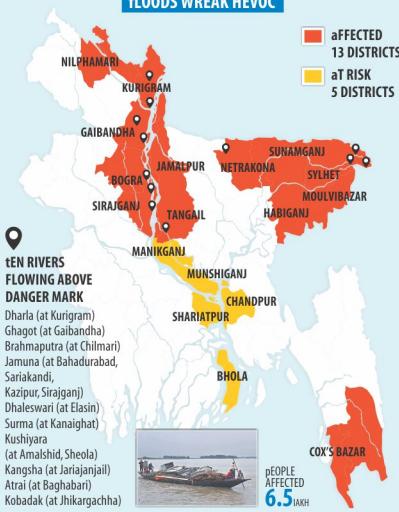
"The situation is likely to improve," said Sazzad Hossain, executive engineer of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre.

"There is a forecast of heavy rains in India but the flood situation in the northern region of Bangladesh may not get worse as there was no heavy downpour in Assam in the last two days."

Ruling out a prolonged or heavy flooding in a week or two, he said the

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FLOODS WREAK HEVOC



Worried parents with their children at the Bangladesh Institute of Tropical and Infectious Disease (BITID) in Fouzdarhat area of Sitakunda in Chittagong yesterday. Nine children of the area have died recently showing similar symptoms and the doctors are yet to identify the disease.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI Das

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'Disease new' problem old

More children fall sick; people's poor living conditions come to fore

Alim Billash DY, back from Sitakunda

Seven more children became sick yesterday in Sitakunda's Tripura Para where nine others died this week showing similar symptoms.

Fourty four other children from the remote hilly area in Chittagong were hospitalised on Wednesday. They are believed to have been suffering from the same disease, which has not been identified yet.

Meanwhile, a team from the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research in Dhaka visited the victims and collected their saliva, urine and blood samples for tests.

Shipping deal with Colombo in focus

SL President Sirisena arrives in Dhaka to sign nearly a dozen treaties

Staff Correspondent

Dhaka and Colombo are expected to strike nearly a dozen deals, including one for facilitating the plying of feeder vessels between the two South Asian nations, officials said yesterday.

The deals are to be signed today after the official talks between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena, who would be leading their delegations this morning.

President Sirisena arrived yesterday on a three-day state visit.

Presently, 90 percent of Bangladeshi's shipping, both exports and imports, is routed through Singapore Port and Kelang Port in Malaysia.

Colombo wants Dhaka to route some of Bangladesh's external shipping through its port, as the island nation's port remains underutilised.

Experts here in Bangladesh gave mixed reaction to the possible shipping deal.

One group said if Bangladesh used Colombo instead of Singapore or Kelang, its lead time and cost for export and import would reduce by 20 to 30 percent. They said Singapore and Kelang had become congested and it took a lot of time to exchange cargo between mother and feeder vessels.

Another group said the deal would not have much benefit for Bangladesh as the routes depended on the shipping lines.

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Qamrul finds food stock sufficient

Bins media reports but won't share information on current rice reserve

Staff Correspondent

Food Minister Qamrul Islam yesterday trashed some recent media reports on low food stock in public granaries, claiming that the government had sufficient stock.

He, however, refused to share specific information about the current food reserve.

Speaking at a press conference, his ministry said the country would have at least 1.2 lakh tonnes of food in stock by September.

Pressed several times on the current food reserve, Qamrul said, "I don't want to speak further."

Interestingly, the official website of his ministry shows that the government silos have a stock of only 3.37 lakh tonnes now.

The minister blamed the recent price hike of rice on unscrupulous traders and rice millers who took advantage of flash flood in Haor areas.

He hoped the prices would come down soon with the first consignment (20,000 tonnes) of rice, imported by the government, reaching Chittagong Port yesterday.

He said the government struck a deal with

Vietnam to import 2.5 lakh tonnes of rice. Of the amount, 1.1 lakh tonnes would reach the country by July 24 and the rest by next month.

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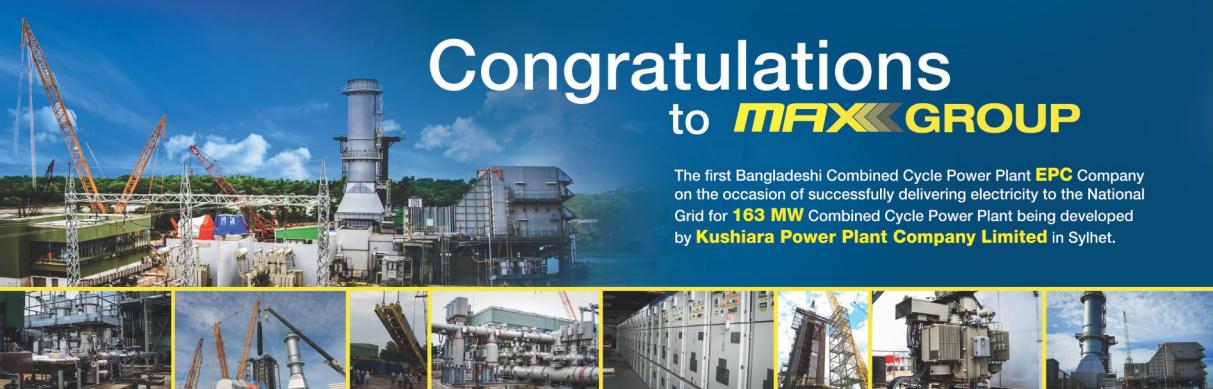


"I am telling you we have sufficient stock. We have sufficient stock. I don't want to speak further."

FOOD MINISTER QAMRUL ISLAM TO JOURNALISTS QUERIES ABOUT FOOD RESERVE VOLUME

Congratulations to MAX GROUP

The first Bangladeshi Combined Cycle Power Plant EPC Company on the occasion of successfully delivering electricity to the National Grid for 163 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant being developed by Kushiara Power Plant Company Limited in Sylhet.



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