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ASSAD 'EXPOSED'

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Rivers show signs of major flood

Water levels continue to rise amid heavy rain; 14 northern, northeastern dists already hit; 12 drown in floodwaters

STAR REPORT

Heavy rains and fresh onrush of water from upstream have raised the water levels of most of the rivers in the Meghna, Brahmaputra and Ganges basins, submerging most of the northern and northeastern parts of the country.

Over the next few days, the water levels will keep rising as India's northeastern states will see "heavy to very heavy" rains, according to Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) of Bangladesh and Indian Met office.

Already, flash floods claimed lives of 12 people, including six children, in different districts yesterday.

Of the victims, seven including four children drowned in floodwater in Dinajpur, four including two children in Lalmonirhat and another in Joypurhat. Three of the kids in Dinajpur are from one family.

Most of them were moving to safe places by improvised rafts.

The water levels are on the rise in almost all the major rivers, and in the northern areas, some rivers have swelled to record levels. With tens of thousands marooned in at least 14 districts, many moved to safer places as their homes were inundated.

Experts warn that flooding might break previous records if rainfall continues in the upstream.

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A swelling Teesta river at the barrage point in Dalia of Nilphamari yesterday. Incessant rain and onrush of water from upstream in India turned the otherwise "dry river" into an all-consuming one. Parts of the Lalmonirhat-Burimari rail line, inset, were damaged by floodwater at Medical Mor yesterday, suspending rail communications on the route.



PHOTO: EAM ASADUZZAMAN / DILIP ROY

FULL JUDGMENT ON 16TH AMENDMENT

TOP QUOTE

"... The chair of the chief justice is an institution and this institution is not person-centric. We the people should be careful about this institution. I think emotion is running high, it will settle down soon."

LAW MINISTER
ANISUL HUQ
DURING A 'MEET THE PRESS' PROGRAMME AT DHAKA REPORTERS' UNITY.

Govt to seek review

Says law minister, claims history has been distorted in the observations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will file a review petition with the Supreme Court, seeking expunction of some of the remarks by the chief justice in the 16th amendment case verdict, Law Minister Anisul Huq said yesterday.

"You can assume that if review petition is the means of expunging [certain words] under the Supreme Court rules, then a review petition will be filed seeking expunction," he told a Meet the Press at Dhaka Reporters Unity in the capital.

Already, the "objectionable and irrational" words in the judgment have been identified for the purpose, he added.

However, he did not specify the date for filing the petition, but said, "We need to thoroughly scrutinise the full text of the verdict before lodging the petition."

The law minister was critical of one particular observation in the verdict that "No nation, no country is made of or by one person".

Anisul said this was irrelevant in the the case at hand and also contrary to the history. "There is no doubt that history has been distorted here."

He said neither the country's independence nor its declaration happened overnight. Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman announced it after earning the people's mandate through a political movement.

"It will be a crime if I distort it," he said.

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AL, allies to 'face it legally, politically'

Quader to meet CJ again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance yesterday termed the Supreme Court verdict on the 16th amendment "irrelevant", "unacceptable" and "ill-motivated" and said they would face it legally and politically.

The ruling alliance also demanded reconsideration of the verdict as well as cancellation of its observations regarding parliament, the Liberation War and Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Awami League leader Mohammed Nasim, MP,

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Lawyers' groups hold counter-demos

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-Awami League lawyers yesterday staged demonstrations at different bar associations across the country, demanding expunction of "unexpected, irrelevant and unconstitutional observations" in the verdict on the 16th amendment case.

They held rallies and formed human chains under the banner of Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi Parishad as part of their three-day protest programme.

Addressing a rally at the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in the afternoon, Parishad's Member-Secretary Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh alleged that the editor of an English daily prepared the draft of the CJ's observations in the judgment.

"... We know who are involved in the conspiracy. We will unmask them one by one before the nation. We know from where this draft [of the observations] came. The editor of an English national daily prepared the draft. We condemn this."

"The other six judges didn't agree with such irrelevant, unconstitutional and undemocratic comments. We thank them. We also demand expunction of the irrelevant comments," he said.

The Parishad demanded that the SC expunge the observations through a suo moto move.

Meanwhile, Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum (JAF), a platform of pro-BNP lawyers, held rallies at the SCBA and other bars in the country, demanding

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PM requests Canada to deport Noor

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the Canadian government to extradite Noor Chowdhury, one of the self-proclaimed killers of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

"One of the convicted killers of Bangabandhu is now residing in your country, extradite him," she told outgoing Canadian High Commissioner Benoit Pierre Laramée at her office.

The PM's press secretary Ihsanul Karim briefed reporters after the meeting.

He said the Canadian high commissioner said he would convey this to his

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This lorry hit a pothole and fell on a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, inset, killing three people in the three-wheeler at Nimtola of Chittagong yesterday. Following the recent rain and waterlogging, many streets in the port city have developed potholes posing risks of such accidents. Story on Page 3.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Biman goes for drastic measures

Cancels routes, trips to ensure hajj flights

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman yesterday took a number of emergency measures including suspending operations on Dhaka-Doha and Dhaka-Kuwait City routes until August 26 to ferry the hajj pilgrims who could not fly due to flight cancellations.

Meantime, despite repeated show-cause notices and warnings, at least 16 hajj agencies have yet to complete visa process of around 15,000 pilgrims, creating uncertainty about their performing hajj, sources at the Ashkona Hajj Camp office said.

The camp's Director Saiful Islam yesterday warned the agencies of taking punitive actions including cancelling their licences and confiscating bank deposit if they failed to complete the necessary processes, including ensuring flight booking by today.

The agencies have been asked to appear before the director by 10:00am today and show evidence of ticket booking.

A top official of Biman yesterday said after an emergency meeting at its Balaka Bhaban, they had taken a decision to cut short weekly flight frequency on a number of destinations, including London, to engage more wide-bodied aircraft for hajj operations.

Speaking anonymously, the Biman official added the national flag carrier also cancelled two Bangkok-bound flights scheduled for August 17 and August 24.

"We are also planning to cancel flights on some other routes where comparatively fewer passengers travel," the official said.

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