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## Haor project put on ice

Tk 704cr 'priority project' taken up to protect haor people from flashfloods; implementation sees little progress

- 4-year project overruns by 2 years
- Less than a fifth implemented in 6 years
- Project gets 11 directors so far
- Fresh extension sought till 2019



REAZ AHMAD and REJAUL KARIM BYRON

In the country's northeastern haor region, people continue to live at nature's mercy. Every year, pre-monsoon floods submerge vast swathes of their land, destroying the only crop they can grow -- Boro rice.

And after years of the flashfloods, triggered by rain and onrush of water from the hills, the government finally took up a project in 2011 to save 29 upazilas of Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Kishoreganj and Netrakona from the havoc.

The main objectives of the Tk 704 crore priority project were to build and repair flood protection embankments and improve drainage system in the haor area that experiences 12,000 millimetres of yearly rainfall on average. That project has now overrun by two years, achieving almost nothing.

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**AUSSIERS IN TOWN:** Members of the Australian cricket team, including captain Steven Smith (L) and vice-captain David Warner (2nd from R) wait in the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport lounge for their bus to the hotel after their arrival in Dhaka around 10:50pm yesterday. Left, security was tight for Australia's ride to the team hotel, with the road from the airport being cleared of all other traffic. Australia are in Bangladesh for a Test tour after a gap of 11 years. The two Tests will take place from August 27 in Mirpur and from September 4 in Chittagong.

PHOTO: STAR

## Govt now preparing to seek SC review

Law minister on 16th amendment judgment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said the government was preparing for seeking review of the Supreme Court judgment that upheld the High Court verdict scrapping the 16th amendment to the constitution.

Passed in 2014, the 16th amendment had restored parliament's power to remove SC judges for misconduct or incapacity. Last year, the HC declared the amendment illegal.

The amendment brought to the constitution in 2014 abolished the chief justice-led Supreme Judicial Council system which was introduced in 1978.

"The government has applied to the Supreme Court for the certified copy of its judgment on the 16th amendment. The apex court judgment is being examined

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## Floods affect 16m people in South Asia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 16 million people in Bangladesh, Nepal and India are affected by the monsoon floods ravaging parts of South Asia and unfolding a humanitarian crisis, according to International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Floods have already reached record levels in Bangladesh with major rivers like the Jamuna surpassing levels set in 1988—the deadliest flood the country has ever faced, IFRC said in a press statement, quoting authorities.

Many areas in Nepal remain cut off after the destructive floods and landslides on August 11 and 12, while over 11 million people in four Indian states across the country's north are affected by recent floods, said the statement issued yesterday.

"This is fast becoming one of the most serious humanitarian crises this region has seen in many years, and urgent action is

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## Queues for relief getting longer

In Dinajpur, each flood-affected family received 4kgs of rice, Tk 14 from govt

STAR REPORT

Mostafizur Rahman, administrator of Razarpur union parishad in Dinajpur, seemed unhappy with the size of allocation of relief materials for the flood-hit people in his union.

He got only two tonnes of rice and Tk 8,000 till Wednesday for 5,000 affected families in the union.

"What do I do with this? It's nothing against the huge demand," he said, adding that each family would get just 400 grams of rice and Tk 1.60.

In Dinajpur, 485 tonnes of rice and Tk 16 lakh have been distributed among 114,491 flood-hit families in nine upazilas, according to an estimate by the district administration. This means each family got only 4.23 kgs of rice and Tk 13.97.

Mokhlesur Rahman, relief and rehabilitation officer in the district, said his office distributed 447 tonnes of rice in four days till August 17.

However, visiting different affected villages in Biral and Kaharol upazilas, our correspondent found that most of the flood-hit people didn't get government relief till Thursday.

"We need relief immediately to feed our children", said Motaleb, a flood victim in Chokchokha village.

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Flood-affected people wait for government relief at Raghupur High School of Biral upazila in Dinajpur around noon yesterday. Left, a flooded village of Mahimaganj upazila of Gaibandha after a dyke breaks on the river Bangalee. The onrush of water inundated at least four unions in the district.

PHOTO: STAR

## Trump's chief strategist Steve Bannon fired

CNN ONLINE

President Donald Trump's chief strategist Steve Bannon has been fired, two White House officials told CNN yesterday.

A source told CNN that Bannon was given the option to resign but was forced out. White House press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders confirmed Bannon's departure but did not say whether he was fired or resigned.

"White House Chief of Staff John Kelly and Steve Bannon have mutually agreed today would be Steve's last day. We are grateful for his service and wish him the best," Sanders said in a statement.

The President has privately stewed over Bannon in recent days, including on Thursday night from his golf course in New Jersey. He was furious with his chief strategist after he was quoted in an interview with the American Prospect contradicting him on North Korea and asserting that he was able to make personnel changes at the State Department.

Bannon's exit comes just seven months after Trump took office and three weeks after retired Gen. John Kelly took over as chief of

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

### Saying 'No' is a right too

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The issue of having the option of "No" vote in the election has come up again for discussion in the ongoing electoral talks being organised by the Election Commission.

The fundamental question is why a voter's choice should be confined only to candidates nominated by political parties. It is quite possible, the argument goes, that a voter may not like any candidates on the ballot, and that he should have the option of expression his rejection of all the candidates by casting a "No" vote.

Political analysts say, "No" vote provision puts pressure on political parties to some extent to field clean candidates to contest the parliamentary election.

Two main reasons drive the political parties to be suspicious of the "No" vote provision. One, they consider it a

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## TOP QUOTE

"Was attacked again before PG hospital while returning from Shahbagh. They won't stop until gagging our voice. The message is clear: You can't speak up if you want to live in this country."

**IMRAN H SARKER**  
SPOKESPERSON OF GONOJAGORON MANCHA, ON HIS FACEBOOK PAGE ABOUT THE FRESH ATTACK YESTERDAY  
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## Teacher 'gang-raped' at Barguna school

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A primary schoolteacher has allegedly been gang-raped in Barguna's Betagi upazila.

On Thursday night, the assistant teacher filed a case with Betagi Police Station against six people of the upazila's Kadomtala village. She was sent to Barguna General Hospital for medical tests yesterday.

The six are Sumon Biswas, 35, Mohammad Rasel, 24, Sumon Kazi, 30,

Mohammad Robiul, 18, Mohammad Hasan, 25, and Jewel, 30.

Locals said the teacher was chatting with her husband in a classroom after the end of school hours Thursday afternoon. All of a sudden, some people attempted to enter the school.

Frightened, the couple locked the collapsible gate of the building. After breaking the lock, the gang stormed the building and beat them up. They then confined the

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26th - 27th August '17, 11am to 5pm @ Radisson Hotel - Lalkhan Bazaar, Chittagong | 29th - 30 August '17 @ MUAC Office, CDA Ave, Dampara, Chittagong

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