



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is welcomed by a woman during a relief distribution programme at Gobindaganj upazila parishad yesterday morning. She later visited Bogra to distribute relief among the flood victims there. The government has undertaken a Tk 117 crore project for the rehabilitation of the flood-affected people in the northern districts.

PHOTO: PID

## Tk 117cr project taken up for flood victims

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Tk 117 crore project for the rehabilitation of flood victims in the northern districts.

Under the programme, farmers would get various benefits till the next Boro crops are harvested. Six lakh farmers of six northern districts would get five kg Boro seeds, 20 kg DAP fertiliser, five kg MOP fertiliser and Tk 1,000 each, she added.

The government has also initiated a Tk 58.77 crore incentive programme to provide support to farmers. Under the programme, each farmer would get 10-20 kg DAP fertiliser and 5-15 kg MOP fertiliser so that he doesn't face any hurdle in buying seed and fertilisers, said the PM.

Hasina said the government had been aware that there would be a flashflood this year. "So, we took steps to ensure food for all and avoid any possible food scarcity...we've already

started importing food grains."

The government would distribute Tk 58,77,19,315 among the flood victims alongside offering agricultural loans so that they can cultivate their next crops, she said. "We're beside you, and will remain so. We'll do whatever is needed to change your fate."

The premier said distribution of rice seedlings began on August 24 and it would continue in the flood-hit northern districts to help farmers start cultivation.

Seedlings were being produced in different state-owned agricultural research and development centres. About 1,000 floating seedbeds were being prepared to produce paddy saplings, the PM told the programme.

Terming flood a blessing for the country from some perspectives, she said the level of underground water, which is falling day by day, rises with rainwater and flood water. Flood water

also leaves silt on cultivable land to make it more fertile.

Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Disaster Management and Relief Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Food Minister Qamrul Islam, among others, spoke on the occasion.

'STAY ALERT ABOUT DISEASES'

Speaking at a meeting with senior government officials of Gaibandha at the conference hall of Gobindaganj Upazila Parishad, the PM directed the officials to remain alert about the possible outbreak of different diseases after the recession of floodwater.

She also asked them to take necessary steps for clearing stagnant floodwater and reconstruct damaged bridges and culverts in the flood-hit areas.

She told the Water Development Board to dredge the rivers to restore

their channels. She asked the officials not to allow lifting of sand from the same place every year.

PM VISITS BOGRA

Addressing a programme in Bogra's Sariakandi upazila yesterday, Hasina said necessary measures were taken to make sure that not a single person was deprived of food.

She distributed relief materials among the flood victims and paddy seedlings among the affected farmers at Sariakandi Degree College.

The PM said apart from allocating 1,100 tonnes of rice and Tk 25 lakh for the Bogra flood victims, the government allocated adequate funds to rebuild damaged houses, educational institutions, roads and bridges.

The government already started sending medical teams with adequate medicines to the flood-hit areas to prevent the outbreak of various waterborne diseases, she added.

## Diamond rain in Uranus!

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the diamonds had formed. When I saw the results of this latest experiment, it was one of the best moments of my scientific career," lead author Dominik Kraus from the Helmholtz Zentrum Dresden-Rossendorf expressed.

Several experiments have already been done to confirm the theory; however, previous observations failed to achieve success because researchers could not observe the results in real-time, which is a necessary part of the monitoring process.

DIAMOND SHOWERS

In order to test the theory, the team used polystyrene and the high-powered optical lasers in the SLAC Laboratory.

The polystyrene was chosen as an integral part of the experiment since its hydrogen and carbon compound mix is similar to the planet's own chemical composition.

Then the team needed a machine that could simulate the intense temperature and pressure in Uranus, so they turned their attention to the most powerful X-ray laser in the world: the Linac Coherent Light Source (LCLS).

The LCLS provided the two intense shock waves needed to allow the polystyrene to change its structure.

"You need these intense, fast pulses of X-rays to unambiguously see the

structure of these diamonds, because they are only formed in the laboratory for such a very short time," co-author Siegfried Glenzer explained. Glenzer is also a professor of photon science at SLAC.

According to the scientists, the peak intensity of the pressure happens when the two shock waves overlap, and this is also the fastest and necessary part of the process that the team needed to observe.

This is because, when the pressure peaks, it alters the structure of the polystyrene to form nanometer-sized diamonds in a matter of femtoseconds, which is actually one quadrillionth of a second.

The researchers say that, considering its size, the diamond rains in Uranus are probably giants reaching up to a few million carats in size. However, there are also two things to consider with ice giant diamonds: the first is that it probably has impurities, and the second is that they're not cut and polished.

They also predict that the diamonds could either sink in the planet's layers to melt at the core, forming underground melted diamond seas, or remain solid but form a layer around the core. Most models suggest the latter but not even scientists can say for sure what happens based solely on simulations.

## Crisis deepens

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BGB members have cordoned them off and are keeping close watch so that they cannot proceed further into the country. Locals extended a helping hand to the refugees with food, water and other life-saving materials, he said.

Meanwhile, one of the three Rohingyas, who suffered bullet injuries while fleeing alleged police action in their village in Rakhine State, died at Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday. The two other Rohingyas were undergoing treatment at the CMCH.

Rakhine State has become a crucible of religious hatred focused on the stateless Rohingya Muslim minority, who are reviled and perceived as illegal immigrants in Buddhist-majority Myanmar.

Residents of outlying villages fled to the main town of Maungdaw yesterday, only to be greeted with more

NO ROHINGYA TO BE ALLOWED

Md Ali Hossain, deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar, yesterday said the local administration has been directed to try its best to restrict the entry of fresh Rohingyas as not a single person will be allowed further in the name of "humanity", reports UNB.

He, however, said the government is keeping humanitarian aspect of the situation in mind with due sincerity. "That doesn't mean we'll have to bear the burden for year after year by allowing the entry of people from another country."

The comments were made at an emergency meeting held at the Circuit House on Friday night attended by government officials, representatives of law enforcement agencies, politicians and others.

The meeting has decided to take stern action against those who will help Rohingyas enter Bangladesh.

## Uncertainty over hajj of 3,300 ends

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He also added that over 3,300 pilgrims will be able to go to Saudi Arabia through the eight additional hajj flights. The Biman boss also confirmed that the Saudi authorities also extended the deadline for sending hajj passengers to August 28 from August 26.

Earlier on August 22, The Daily Star, quoting the religious affairs secretary Abdul Jalil, published that Biman got permission from the Saudi authorities to operate 12 additional hajj flights. Jalil also informed The Daily Star about extending Biman's deadline for sending pilgrims to Saudi Arabia by two days.

Saiful Islam, director, Hajj Camp office yesterday told The Daily Star that not a single pilgrim will be left out from being sent to Saudi Arabia within the extended deadline.

Shakil Meraj, general manager, public relation, Biman said, as of 8:00am yesterday, Biman and Saudi Airlines have ferried 1, 15, 730 pilgrims to Saudi Arabia.

In the next 24 hours starting from

8:00am yesterday, Biman will operate eight hajj flights which are likely to carry over 3,300 pilgrims.

Biman officials said the national flag carrier and Saudi Airlines will have to carry around 8,500 pilgrims to Saudi Arabia within the next two days.

Earlier in the day, around a hundred pilgrims staged a protest to demonstrate their anger at the Hajj Camp office over the uncertainty of their hajj trip this year as their hajj agencies are yet to ensure air tickets for them.

"We have been staying at the Hajj Camp for four days. But our hajj agency didn't ensure air tickets for us. The hajj agency has returned our passports and requested us to manage tickets on our own," Aminul Islam, a pilgrim, told The Daily Star at the Hajj Camp premises.

Aminul said like him some 80 pilgrims from Bogra gave money to Madina Air International Aviation for performing hajj this year.

"We came at the hajj camp on August 23 as our hajj agency said our

flight was on the following day. The hajj agency later promised two dates for our flights—August 25 and today [yesterday]. The agency today sent back our passports saying they couldn't manage the tickets," Nehal Hossain, another intended haji, said.

"Without finding any alternative, we were forced to bring out the procession at the Hajj Camp office to express our concern," Abdul Hakim, a retired primary school teacher, added.

During the 15 minutes' brief procession, aspirant hajis demanded punishment of respective hajj agencies responsible for their sufferings. They chanted slogans against a number of hajj agencies, including Madina Air International, Al Balak, Sanjid and Eco Travel.

Highlighting their sufferings, Hakim said he, along with his wife, has been staying on the ground floor of the Hajj Camp office for the last four days.

"It would be very painful for us if we finally fail to perform hajj this year," said Hakim's wife, her voice choked with emotion.

While visiting the Hajj Camp offices yesterday, several hundred aspiring pilgrims were seen staying there, the uncertainty evident on their faces.

Amid the pilgrims' allegations against a section of hajj agencies, Bazlul Haque Harun, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on religious affairs yesterday said they have filed a general diary with the Airport Police Station against seven hajj agencies for not sending pilgrims to Saudi Arabia.

"We have given two days time to those agencies to send pilgrims to Saudi Arabia. Otherwise the diary will turn into a case and legal action will be taken against them," Harun also said.

Asked, Ijaz Shafi, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Biman Bandar Police Station, acknowledged the filing of the GD.

The Saudi government set a quota of 1, 27,198 pilgrims from Bangladesh this year. The number of total pilgrims from Bangladesh finally stood at 1, 26,247 as the passports of 951 intending hajis were not submitted, sources at the Hajj Camp office said.

## Not serious but threat is there

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hostages, including 17 foreigners, dead.

Tamim came to Bangladesh on October 5, 2013. It took him around a year to plan the café attack and execute it, officials said.

Following the attack, law enforcers were desperately trying to trace the masterminds and other "Neo JMB" militants. They discovered a militant den in the city's Kallyanpur on July 26 last year where nine militants were killed and one was arrested during a raid.

Just a month later, counterterrorism officials spotted Tamim in a Narayanganj militant den where he along with two of his associates was killed on August 27.

The Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) was tasked with the investigation into the Narayanganj raid. It is yet to submit the probe report.

Ahsan Habib Palash, special superintendent (Specialised Investigation and Operation Division) of PBI, said it would take more time to submit the probe report as investigators were yet to find any clue in the case.

the death of Tamim hit the "Neo JMB" leadership hard as it not only stopped the recruitment of youths from well off families into the militant group, but also scaled down the supply of fund.

Although some militant leaders tried to reorganise the group, they failed to do so due to continuous anti-militancy drives.

According to law enforcers, Tamim had instructed Major (ret'd) Jahidul Islam to look after the group's organisational activities with the help of Aslam Hossain Rashed alias Rash. During that period, Sarwar played a key role in looking after the financial transactions and recruitment of the "Neo JMB".

But Jahidul was killed on September 2 last year in the capital's Rupnagar while Rash went into hiding after law enforcers raided two Gazipur militant hideouts on October 8. Nine suspected militants were killed there during the raid.

Sarwar died on the same day after he jumped from a five-storey building in Savar during a raid by the Rab. Rash, a close aide of Tamim, was arrested in Naogaon on July 28.

enforcers traced a militant hideout in the capital's Ashkona. Two suspected militants were killed there, but one Maynul Islam Musa managed to flee.

After that operation, counterterrorism officials came to know that Musa had taken over as the "Neo JMB" chief.

Under Musa's leadership, the militant group was desperately trying to revive it. He set up militant dens at different parts of the country, keeping its members there in small groups. He also stockpiled powerful explosives in the dens, virtually turning those into "bomb factories".

Young "Neo JMB" leader Ahmed Azwad Intiaz Talukder alias Omi and another militant Mahmud Hasan were arrested in Comilla on March 7 this year when they were carrying bombs to Dhaka to launch an attack.

Gleaning information from them, counterterrorism officials busted militant dens and "bomb factories" in Chittagong, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Jhenidah, Chapainawabganj and Rajshahi.

Musa was killed during a raid on a Moulvibazar militant hideout on April 1.

Later, Basharuzzaman Chocolate took over the "Neo JMB" leadership, but he was also killed in an anti-militancy drive in Shibganj of Chapainawabganj on April 26.

Around 69 militants have been killed in 23 anti-militancy drives across the country since the Gulshan café attack.

Counterterrorism officials claimed some third tier "Neo JMB" leaders, including Ayub Bachchu, Shakil and Archar, were trying to capture the top position of the group. Besides, a rift developed in the group as one Hadisur Rahman Sagor demanded the top position.

Monirul Islam, chief of the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said they successfully destroyed the group's organisational capacity.

"No country in the world can rule out the possibility of a militant attack. If any dedicated 'Neo JMB' member wants to carry out an attack, he might go for it individually. But the group can't launch any major attack now as its organisational strength has been reduced and the supply network has been hit," he told The Daily Star.



Mukter Miah, a Rohingya from Myanmar, gets treated in Chittagong Medical College Hospital yesterday. He is accompanied by his relative who came to Bangladesh 15-20 years ago.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

violence there. Three village officials were killed overnight near Maungdaw, according to the office of State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi.

Meanwhile, the United States urged Myanmar authorities to avoid a response that would inflame the tensions.

State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in Washington that as security forces act to prevent further violence and bring the perpetrators to justice, they should respect the rule of law and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

She said the attacks underscored the importance of the government implementing recommendations of a commission chaired by former UN chief Kofi Annan, which published its final report on Thursday recommending that the government act quickly to improve economic development and social justice in Rakhine state to resolve violence between Buddhists and the Rohingyas.

At least 89 people were killed as militants besieged border posts in Rakhine on Friday. The office of de-facto leader Aung San Suu Kyi said 12 security officials had been killed alongside 77 militants -- the highest declared single-day toll since fighting broke out last year.

More than a thousand Rohingyas, including women and children, reportedly crossed the Naf River on Friday morning and got into Bangladesh through several points along the Teknaf and Ukha borders. BGB said it sent back 146 Rohingyas hours after they entered the country.

Attacks on police posts last October sparked a wave of deadly "clearance operations" by Myanmar's army and forced some 87,000 Rohingyas to flee to Bangladesh. Rights groups fear a similar crackdown may take place following Friday's attacks.

Bangladesh shares with Myanmar a 272km border that falls in Bandarban and Cox's Bazar. Of this, a 52km stretch is in the Naf River.

The country has been hosting up to 5,00,000 Rohingyas for three decades. More than 32,000 of them are registered and live in two camps in Cox's Bazar. Others live in different areas of Cox's Bazar and Chittagong.

Cox's Bazar armed forces launched a counterinsurgency operation following attacks on security personnel in Rakhine State in October last year, more than 75,000 Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh.

THE DEATH AT CMCH

The Rohingya who died was identified as Mohammad Musa, 23, son of Mohammad Ismail, from Mehendi village under Jeddina Police Station of Maungdaw, said police.

Of the injured, Mohammad Mukter Miah, 27, hailing from the same village, was undergoing treatment at the surgery ward of the CMCH, said Jahirul Islam, in-charge of CMCH Police Camp.

Another injured, 10-year-old Md Idris, was admitted to Neurosurgery ward.

Police said Musa and Mukter were injured in police firing as they went to "attack police camps" in Myanmar, but the injured claimed that they were "innocent" and that sustained bullet injuries while trying to flee police attack in their village.

"Some people brought Musa and Mukter to the CMCH around 3:00am [yesterday]," said Jahirul, adding that Musa suffered bullet injuries in the abdomen, Mukter in left shoulder and Idris in the head.

Idris was brought by a woman around 5:00am, he said. Mahadi Hasan Manju, a medical officer of surgery ward, said Musa died around 9:45am.