

UN allocates \$2.4m to fight floods
UNB, Dhaka

In order to support Bangladesh's swift response and to assist those who have been affected by the flooding, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has allocated US\$ 2.4 million to support the humanitarian response.

To date, more than 720,000 houses have been affected or destroyed, and 172 died in the flood-affected areas are sheltering more than 46,000 people.

Agricultural land and vital infrastructure such as schools, health facilities, roads and bridges have been damaged.

Following heavy monsoon rains, one-third of Bangladesh has been affected by the worst flooding in four decades, impacting eight million people across 32 of the country's 64 districts.

Those who have lost their homes, livelihoods and means of making a living are in need of immediate life-saving assistance. The UN agencies and NGOs are assisting the government and the needs of flood-affected people in the northern and central parts of the country.

The CERF fund will allow agencies to scale up their responses and reach 100,000 people who have been acutely affected by the flooding in the two most severely affected districts - Dinajpur and Rangpur. The fund will be used to provide water and sanitation facilities, food assistance, health support for pregnant women and newborn babies, and emergency shelter kits.

The UN Resident Coordinator for Bangladesh, Robert Watkins, said, "Bangladesh has been hit by flooding at this time of the year ... but the volume of water that has fallen this year has been exceptionally heavy. There is a limit to people's resilience, and that has already been severely tested."

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Clockwise from left, A woman gets on a boat with the help of another after finishing her grocery shopping. While a man heads out for work on a boat from his house. People wade through a submerged road. Thousands of residents of Shanpar at Shiddhirganj in Narayanganj under the DND area have been experiencing waterlogging for the last two months. Due to a poor drainage system and clogged up canals, the DND (Dhaka-Narayanganj-Demra) area is chronically plagued by waterlogging. The photos were taken late last month.

PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN

Marooned by waterlogging

HELEMUL ALAM

Shahana Begum, a pregnant woman who was in her advanced stage, was wading through knee-deep water to go to a healthcare centre.

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"It is nine months and I am now in an advanced stage; my doctor has advised me to go to the clinic regularly. But it has become really tough for me because of waterlogging," Shahana said recently as she was going to the clinic along with her younger sister Tania.

Sadiya Majumder and Sumaiya,

two ninth grade students of Shamsul Haque Khan School, also have to wade through knee-deep water almost every day due to the waterlogging.

"Our mid-term examinations are going on and every day we have to attend the exam wading through dirty water. The situation turns worse when it rains," said Sadiya.

Not only these three, thousands of residents of Shanpar at Shiddhirganj in Narayanganj have been experiencing this level of waterlogging for the last two months.

Though several lakhs of people in DND area face waterlogging every year, residents of Shanpar, which is also under DND area, are facing this problem after 13 years.

"We last experienced waterlogging in 2004. After 13 years this it has become almost permanent," said Ziaur Rahman, a resident of

Shanpar.

He said Paglar Khal, a canal that used to carry rainwater to Shimrial pumping station, has lost its capacity because of encroachment and dumping of waste.

He added although the authorities concerned clean the canal, they only work on its surface.

Like Shanpar, five to eight lakh people of DND area including Dogair, Rahim Market, Adampur, Pagla and Faizulah have been facing waterlogging for more than two months.

Many residents of the area are suffering from skin diseases because of the dirty water said Nurunnabi, another resident of the area.

"My house is under thigh-deep water. We have purchased one truck of sand and put sandbags in our rooms to walk," said Sharupha, who lives in Shanpar and is also suffer-

ing from skin infection.

Meanwhile there have been new earning opportunities as many people have started ferries on boats.

"I have bought a boat three days ago at Tk 3,300. Now I earn Tk 600 to Tk 700 every day," said Monir, a boatman.

Around 30 boats are plying the waterlogged roads instead of motorised and non-motorised vehicles, said Shafiqul, another part-time boatman.

Project Director of Development of Drainage System of DND Abdul Awual has recently said they have taken a four-year-long project involving Tk 558.2 crore to solve the problem of the area.

Army might undertake the project and an agreement might be signed in this

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Rohingya refugees burden for country

Says Quader; visits ailing Kader Siddique along with Nasim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid a mass exodus of Rohingya into Bangladesh, Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said the government was treating the refugees on humanitarian grounds.

Terminating the refugees a burden for the country, he said the government was undertaking diplomatic efforts to stop the Rohingya influx into Bangladesh.

Kader Siddique was admitted to the hospital on September 3 due to dengue fever, diabetes and other complications.

Quader said a terrible situation was created in the bordering area over the Rohingya issue, and it was not possible for the government to cope up with the influx.

He said the government was consulting international organisations including UN Human Rights Council to end the crisis.

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Newly appointed Indonesian Ambassador to Bangladesh Rina Prithyamarsi Soemarno pays a courtesy call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the capital on Tuesday.

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STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The Rajshahi City Corporation has recovered on Monday night recovered a rock python from the bungalow of a Rajshahi district judge in the city's Sreerampur area.

The snake went missing from the Rajshahi Central Zoo around one and a half years ago, said RCC Mayor Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul, present during the effort.

A guard at the judge's bungalow noticed the snake at a crop field few days back. On Monday around 8:30pm, it was seen in front of the bungalow entrance. The guard then informed the city corporation officials. They later caught the snake around 9:30pm.

Dr Farhad Uddin, in-charge of the zoo, said the snake was caught in a trap set up by the corporation officials. The guard was charged with assisting Oishee to remove the bodies of the couple.

Advocate Syed Nazmul Huda, one of the counsels of Sumi, told The Daily Star yesterday that the trial could not be completed due to failure of the prosecution.

The prosecution was reluctant to produce the prosecution witness before the court even though 52 consecutive dates had been passed. Moreover, same witnesses who had earlier given their statements before another court which disposed of the other part against Oishee and two others in 2015" the lawyer added.

The lawyer also said Sumi appeared before the court on every date from Ramzanati.

Rejecting the defence plea, additional public prosecutor Abdus Sattar Dulal said he had tried his best to produce the witnesses but they did not pay heed to the court's order.

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Incorporate climate issue in health policies

Suggests WHO health expert Dr Thamarangsi; stresses political commitment to cope up with its adverse effects

THIHN SHIBRA ADHIKARY, from Maldives

With Bangladesh being one of the most vulnerable countries to the adverse impacts of climate change, good preparedness and management can minimise its effects on public health, said WHO health expert.

"That's like military preparation, even if you don't have a war-like situation. But you have to be prepared for it," said Dr Thakhsaporn Thamarangsi, director of Non-communicable Diseases and Environment Health of WHO South-East Asia Regional Office.

Stressing political leadership and effective leadership to cope up with the adverse effects of climate change on public health, she said climate change risk issues should be incorporated into the country's health policies and programmes.

He advocated climate resilient health system and more investment in the sector.

Thakhsaporn was speaking at a media orientation programme at a hotel in Male

yesterday, a day before the health ministers of 11 member countries of WHO Southeast Asia Region going to meet for a one-day meeting in the capital city of the Maldives to highlight health priorities and discuss the health agenda.

Bangladesh ranked sixth among the world's top 10 countries most affected by extreme weather events in the last 20 years, according to the Global Climate Risk Index by think-tank Germanwatch published early this year.

On average, 67,005 people died in 185 climatic events in Bangladesh within the period of 1996 to 2015, the report said. As a result, the country lost 0.7324 percent of its GDP.

According to a 2015 UN report, unless considerable protective measures are taken, an average of 7.7 million people are projected to be affected by flooding due to sea level rise between 2070 and 2100.

It also anticipated that 20.3 million

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Bangladeshis rush to India thru Benapole
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Around 6,000 Bangladeshis are entering India every day through Benapole international check post following the Eid-ul-Azha holiday.

Immigration and customs officials of both countries are struggling to deal with the rush. As a result, long queues sometimes go as far as 2km, were they are travelling to meet relatives, see doctors, or tour.

Bangladeshis officials said 4,503 passengers crossed into India on September 2, while 6,162 the next day, 7,281 on September 4, and 3,000 till yesterday noon. They are travelling to meet relatives, see doctors, or tour.

Usually 1,800-2,500 people cross Benapole into India daily.

MURDER OF COP, WIFE IN 2013 Trial of child domestic help dragging on

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A juvenile court in Dhaka is yet to complete the trial against Khadija Akhter Sumi, a domestic help of Oishee Rahaman, an accused in the case filed for the murders of a police inspector and his wife in August 2013.

But the trial against Oishee, also accused for killing her parents, was completed both in the trial and in the High Court earlier.

Special Branch (SB) Inspector Md Fazlur Rahman, who died in his office in Rajbari on April 16, 2013, was stabbed to death at their rented flat in Chameleibagh in the capital. Police recovered their bodies on August 16, 2013.

Sumi was charged with assisting Oishee to remove the bodies of the couple.

Advocate Syed Nazmul Huda, one of the counsels of Sumi, told The Daily Star yesterday that the trial could not be completed due to failure of the prosecution.

The prosecution was reluctant to produce the prosecution witness before the court even though 52 consecutive dates had been passed.



A man fishes in the Buriganga in Borsila of Keraniganj yesterday. Though the residents of the area are blessed with this river, for a long time they could not enjoy fishing because the water was too polluted to sustain aquatic life. The locals said the river water got clear due to monsoon rain and relocation of tanneries from nearby Hazaribagh.

PHOTO: RASHED SHAMIM