

# Dyke collapse floods areas in Habiganj

Flash flood snaps road link in Brahmanbaria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Vast areas of several villages in Habiganj's Madhabpur upazila were inundated as water entered the areas through the collapsed embankment on the Sonai river due to flash flood triggered by heavy rain and tidal surges yesterday and on Saturday. Besides, many roads of the upazila headquarters went under knee-deep water, causing immense sufferings to the home-bound people ahead of the Eid.

The situation worsened after a portion of the embankment on the eastern side of the Sonai river collapsed on Saturday. General Secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, Habiganj chapter, Tofazzal Sohel said vast tracts of croplands and vegetable fields in more than 30 villages have been submerged and fish in a number of ponds washed away due to the flash flood.

Flash flood also caused waterlogging in different areas of Habiganj town and submerged many educational institutions, markets and residential areas, he said, adding that people of Habiganj town have long been suffering from waterlogging due to unplanned drainage system and illegal

grabbing of the Khowai river. Locals alleged that unplanned development work and siltation in the Khowai river have prolonged the water logging problem.

Habiganj Water Development Board (WDB) Executive Engineer Tawhidul Islam said many villages have been flooded due to collapse of a portion of the flood control embankment on the Sonai river in Madhabpur upazila.

Away in Brahmanbaria, the contractor of a construction firm has dismantled a bridge on an important road in Bijoynagar upazila that connects four unions and an upazila to reconstruct it allegedly without approval of the authorities concerned.

Although traffic movement was continuing through a diversion road underneath the bridge, sudden onrush of water from the hills in the Indian state of Tripura on Saturday inundated the diversion road, disrupting vehicular movement on Awlia Bazar-Singarbil-Akhaura regional road. The contractor concerned and Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) authorities admitted the fact, they are yet to take any steps in this regard.



Onrush of water from the hills in the Indian state of Tripura flooded a diversion road in Brahmanbaria's Bijoynagar upazila on Saturday, disrupting vehicular movement on different regional roads. Inset, premises of a school in Habiganj goes under water as flash flood inundated different areas of the district town. The photos were taken yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

# Woman killed by in-laws for dowry

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

A young woman was strangled allegedly by her husband and in-laws for dowry in College Para area of Kurigram municipality on Saturday night.

The deceased was Arifa Begum, 18, wife of Arif Mia, 22, of the area, and daughter of Kahinur Begum of Sarker Para in the municipality.

Quoting family members, Md Raju Mia, inspector (investigation) of Kurigram Police Station, said Arif, son of Ashraf Ali, and his family members often tortured Arifa mentally for dowry since their marriage two years ago.

Around 9:00pm on Saturday, Arif's family members strangled Arifa following an altercation over the issue.

Later, Arif, his mother Ahlima Begum and younger brother Ashiq Mia sent her to Kurigram General Hospital where doctors declared her dead.

The victim's mother filed a murder case, accusing Arif, his parents, younger brother and elder sister Asha Akhtar, said the inspector, adding that of them, Arif, his brother and mother were arrested.

They are raiding different areas to arrest the rest accused, said the police official.

# Tight security measures at Sholakia Eidgah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

The authorities have taken a four-tier security measure as tens of thousands of devotees from different parts of the district and outside are expected to gather at Sholakia Eidgah in Kishoreganj to attend the largest Eid congregation in the country.

On the Eid day on July 7 in 2016, an attack near the Eidgah left two on duty policemen, a woman and a suspected assailant dead.

CCIV and two open circuit cameras have been installed at 64 points in and outside the ground to monitor the area, said Kishoreganj Superintendent of Police (SP) Md Mashrur Rahman Khaled.

Around 1200 policemen, both in uniform and plainclothes, 100 personnel of Rapid Action Battalion and five platoons of Border Guard

Bangladesh members will be deployed around the Eidgah and its adjacent areas, said the SP.

Mobile teams, led by 15 magistrates, will also be on duty on the Eid day, he said, adding that units of Fire Service and Civil Defense, medical teams and ambulances will also be part of the precautionary measures.

On July 10 in 2016, police sued two suspected militants and some other unnamed people for the attack.

Mohammad Shamsuddin, the then officer-in-charge of Pakundia Police Station, filed the case with Kishoreganj Sadar Police Station under Anti-Terrorism Act 2009.

Police pressed a charge sheet against five operatives of outlawed Neo JMB (Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh) in connection with the attack on September 12 last year.

The charge-sheeted accused are Jahangir Alam alias Rajib Gandhi, 32, Mizanur Rahman alias Boro Mizan, 60, Abdus Sabur Khan alias Sohel Mahfuz, 33, Jahidul Haque Tanim 24, and Anwar Hossain, 45.

All five are now behind bars, said Toufiqul Islam, court inspector of Kishoreganj.

Islamic thinker Maulana Farid Uddin Masoud, also the imam of the largest Eid congregation, was the target of the attack for his anti-militancy speech and activities.

Expressing his satisfaction over security measures, Gourango Nath Bhowmik, husband of Sholakia attack victim Jharna Rani Bhoumik, said they want no further untoward incident.

He also demanded speedy trial of the accused.

# Lightning strikes kill 2 in 2 districts

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Two people were killed in separate incidents of lightning in Panchagarh and Kishoreganj yesterday and the day before, report our correspondents.

In Panchagarh, a farm labourer was killed and two of his fellow workers were injured when a thunderbolt struck them at Kajoldighi Fakirpara village in Panchagarh Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased, Ashrafal Islam, 35, son of Abul Hossain, was a resident of Goalpara village in the upazila.

Kamat Kajoldighi Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Mojahar Hossain said the incident occurred when a thunderbolt struck them while a group of labourers were cutting paddy around 8:00am, leaving three labourers, including Ashrafal, Arifuzzaman and Mobarak injured.

Villagers took the injured trio to Panchagarh Sadar Hospital, where the doctors declared Ashrafal dead.

Away in Kishoreganj, a youth died in lightning strike in Hossainpur upazila on Saturday.

The victim, Sujon Mia, 28, was son of Mohammad Shamsuddin of Pashchim Depeshwar area in Hossainpur municipality.

Sujon was hit by a streak of lightning when he went to the Brahmaputra river for fishing around 6:00am and died on the spot, Officer in Charge (investigation) of Hossainpur Police Station Mohammad Noor Islam said.

Being informed, they recovered the body and handed it over to the deceased's family members, he said.



Long tailbacks on parts of Tangail-Elenga-Jamulpur highway add to the sufferings of people, especially those heading for their village home for celebrating the Eid-ul-Fitr, amid slow pace of the road widening work, allegedly being done in an unplanned way. The photos were taken from Ghatail municipality area a few days ago. PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Child rescued within six hours of abduction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Within six hours of abduction, police rescued a ten-year-old boy early Saturday morning from an abandoned house in Ichhobpur area of Moulvibazar's Srimangal upazila and arrested three of his abductors.

Mahdi Omi, son of Abdul Hashim, was abducted around 9:30pm on Friday from Kulaura Police Station mosque area in Kulaura upazila.

The arrestees are Hridoy Ahmed, 27, from Joypasha area in Kulaura town; Kamrul Islam, 17, from Danapur village in Kulaura upazila; and Redwan Ahmed, 27, from Mollapur village in Bianibazar upazila of Sylhet.

Kulaura police in a press conference on Saturday afternoon said after the boy's mother informed them that after abducting her son, the criminals called over phone and demanded Tk 2 lakh ransom for his release, a team of police led by Moulvibazar Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Rashedul Islam first arrested microbus driver Hridoy.

Based on information gleaned from Hridoy, they then raided the house in Srimangal, where they found the boy and arrested the two accomplices of Hridoy.

ASP Rashedul said a fourth abductor named Khairul Islam managed to flee the scene during the raid.

The child was returned to his parents and a case was filed with Kulaura Police Station, accusing the four criminals, said Ferdous Hasan, officer-in-charge of the police station.

They were conducting raids to arrest Khairul, he also said.

# 7 money launderers arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) arrested seven alleged international money launderers with two lakh 53 thousand four hundred US dollars, 70 thousand roubles and five thousand 90 pounds from a Dhaka-bound bus in Amarkhali area under Benapole Port Police Station on Saturday.

BGB said this is the largest shipment of US dollars in Benapole.

The arrestees are Billal Hossain, 28, Abdus Salam, 30, Iqbal Sarder, 27, Mirajul Islam, 22, Jahangir Alam, 44, Hossain Chowkidar, 33, and Yusuf Melakar, 34.

They hail from different areas in Shariatpur, said Salim Reza, commanding officer of BGB 49 Battalion.

The arrestees were later handed over to the police station, said the BGB official, adding that a case was filed in this connection.

EXTENSION OF TANGAIL-ELENGA-JAMALPUR HIGHWAY

# Traveller sufferings likely during Eid holidays

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Holidaymakers travelling on Tangail-Elenga-Jamulpur highway during Eid holidays may expect delays and sufferings due to slow pace of the highway's extension work.

Ever since the work -- with a price tag of Tk 489.82 crore and a completion deadline of June 2020 -- was undertaken in January this year, long tailbacks, dust and mud have been common phenomena in Ghatail municipality and Madhupur area.

Thousands of vehicles of at least 20 different routes ply the 77.6 kilometre stretch of the highway every day and the number of vehicles multiply on it during the Eid holidays, said people in transport sector.

Saiful Islam, a driver of passenger bus service

Binimoy Poribahan, said the highway remains congested most of the time since the work started.

Shahiduzzaman Khan, mayor of Ghatail municipality, said the progress of the project is slow as its contractor did not engage sufficient number of workers for the project.

As a result, residents of the municipality have been suffering, while people going home for the Eid holidays are likely to suffer on the highway, he added.

Dust, mud and traffic congestion have turned the area hazardous for everyone, especially for the students, said Abdul Momen, a teacher at Ghatail Government Pilot High School.

Contacted, no one at the local office of the contractor firm agreed to comment over the allegation of engaging insufficient number of

workers for the project.

Mozammel Haque, the assistant engineer who was supervising the work on behalf of Roads and Highways Department (RHD) in Tangail, said they withheld the casting work on one side of the highway since last week to ease public sufferings.

On the other side of the road, they were taking immediate measures to complete a brick pavement for easier movement of traffic during the holidays, he also said.

Without admitting slow progress of the work, Amimul Ehsan, executive engineer of RHD in Tangail, said the congestion is mainly being created by electric poles that the Power Development Board is yet to relocate to the sides of the highway.



People crowd this makeshift market at Gangnipar in Mymensingh city to buy new clothes ahead of the Eid-ul-Fitr. Such roadside markets selling clothes for cheaper prices come as a relief for low-income people before festivals. PHOTO: MD AMINUL ISLAM