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Rain brings pain for port city dwellers

Most of its low-lying areas go under knee-to-waist deep water

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Most low-lying areas in Chattogram city went under knee-to-waist-deep water yesterday due to incessant rain since Sunday night, causing immense sufferings to city dwellers.

Abdur Rashid, a 65-year-old caretaker of a residential building on DC Road, died when he attempted to recover a submerged water pump in the morning and was electrocuted, said Sub-Inspector Ariful Islam of Chawkbazar Police Station.

Chattogram Met Office recorded 187.2mm of rain in 24 hours until 3:00pm yesterday, said Mahmudul Alam, forecasting officer of Chattogram Met Office.

Since yesterday morning, The Daily Star correspondents found the ground floors of homes and businesses inundated in Chawkbazar, KB Aman Ali Road, DC Road, Muradpur, Bahaddarhat, Badurtola, Kapasgola, Sholashahar Gate-2, Probortak Intersection, Agrabad, Halishahar, Shulak Bahar, Bibirhat, Chandgaon, Dewan Bazar, Chaktai, Khatunganj, Oxygen, Katalganj, and Panchlaish Residential Area of the city.

Many streets in these areas were under knee-to-waist-deep water. People were seen wading the filthy water to go to work. Some were seen busy attempting to protect their homes and shops from the water while others were trying

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Rickshaws and a car negotiate a submerged street in Chattogram city's Probartak area following torrential rain yesterday. Locals blame poor drainage for the waterlogging.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Bangladeshi shot dead by BSF

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Indian border guards shot dead a Bangladeshi national near Kironganj border of Chapainawabganj early yesterday.

According to locals, the deceased is 18-year-old Dulal Uddin of Kironganj village under Shibganj upazila.

Indian Border Security Force (BSF), who had the body in their possession until filing of this report, are yet to confirm his identity.

BSF members of Sukhdebpur camp in Malda, West Bengal, opened fire on a group of smugglers as they intruded into the Indian territory around 2:40am, said Lt Col Mahmudul Hasan, commanding officer of BGB battalion-59 in Chapainawabganj.

Dulal died on the spot while others managed to flee, he said adding that BSF personnel had carried the body to their camp.

"A flag meeting was held on the Kironganj frontier where BGB handed over Dulal's NID card and photo to BSF. BSF will confirm the identity tomorrow [today]," the officer told this paper.

MYANMAR'S RAKHINE STATE

Dozens of boat people found stranded

AFP, Yangon

More than 60 people were found stranded near a boat in Myanmar's Rakhine state, an official said yesterday, as a trafficking route for persecuted Rohingya Muslims appears open for business despite a crackdown.

Each year thousands of Rohingya and stateless Bangladeshis try to reach Malaysia or Indonesia by sea.

But boatloads commonly wash up on the shores of Myanmar or Thailand, especially in the treacherous conditions brought by the monsoon season.

Sixty-three "Muslims" were found early Sunday and taken to a nearby police outpost, district administrator Soe Aung told AFP from northern Rakhine's Maungdaw township.

"We found four men on the boat and the rest nearby. In total there were 63 people," he said by phone, adding it was not yet clear if they were Bangladeshi or Rohingya.

Myanmar officials do not recognise the Rohingya as an ethnic group and refer to them as Bengalis or Muslims from Rakhine state.

Authorities tried to close down the

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RESCHEDULING DEFAULTED LOANS

It will benefit the influential borrowers

Apex court slams BB for its circular, says it will create discriminations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday expressed dissatisfaction at Bangladesh Bank for issuing a circular that allows defaulters to reschedule their defaulted loans for a period of 10 years upon a down payment of just two percent of the total loan amount, and to get further loans.

If the circular remains in effect, loan defaulters will get a chance to borrow more from different banks and this will benefit the influential people, the court said.

The SC came up with the observation while hearing a petition filed by the finance ministry seeking a stay on a High Court order that issued a status quo on the circular issued by the BB on May 16.

The apex court observed that actions, including filing of cases, were taken against common people like farmers and other villagers when they failed to pay back small amounts of loans. However, the big loan defaulters did not face appropriate action, it said.

So the provision of the BB circular may create

discriminations and it needs to be examined, the SC said.

At one stage of the hearing, the top court asked whether there was any guarantee that some other banks like BASIC Bank or Farmers Bank would not collapse due to the provision.

After holding hearing on the finance ministry's petition, the SC stayed for two months the HC's order of status quo with a condition that the banks can allow defaulters to reschedule loans on depositing two percent down payment, but cannot give them any fresh loan.

A four-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain also asked the HC bench led by Justice JBM Hassan to hear and dispose of the writ petition filed in this regard in the next two months.

Writ petitioner's lawyer Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star that the defaulters can be allowed to reschedule their defaulted loans, but they cannot get fresh loans from any bank following the SC order.

During the hearing, Attorney General Mahbubey

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Ancient Philistine town found in Israel



AFP, Jerusalem

Researchers in Israel said yesterday they have pinpointed the site of an ancient Philistine town mentioned in the biblical tale of David seeking refuge from the Israelite king Saul.

Ziklag was a town under the rule of a Philistine king in nearby Gath after the ancient "sea peoples" began arriving in the region in the 12th century BC, the researchers say.

A biblical tale says the town became the unlikely seat of David before his anointment as king in Hebron following Saul's death.

Ziklag's location has been the subject of scientific debate, with 12 possible locations named in southern Israel.

None of the sites, however, had the necessary evidence of consecutive Philistine and Israelite settlement to fit what is believed to be the historical narrative, the Israeli Antiquities

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TRUMP ADMIN 'INEPT' UK regrets leak of memos

REUTERS, London

Britain said yesterday it had contacted Washington to express regret for the leak of confidential memos in which its ambassador described US President Donald Trump's administration as "dysfunctional" and "inept".

The memos from Kim Darroch, ambassador to Washington, were divulged to a Sunday newspaper, annoying Trump and embarrassing London.

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 9

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:10	12:45	5:00	6:55	8:17
JAMAAT 4:45	1:15	5:15	7:00	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Landslide kills two in Rangamati

STAR REPORT

Two people, including a child, were killed and five others injured in a landslide triggered by heavy rainfall yesterday in KPM Kalabagan area of Rangamati's Kaptai upazila.

The incident occurred around 12:30pm.

The dead were identified as Tahmina Akhter, 25, and Shurjo Mallik, 5. Their bodies were recovered from the debris.

The injured are Sunil Das, 55, Babul Mallik, 35, Abdul Gafur, 55, Khadeja Begum, 45 and Ratna Mallik, 35.

Quoting locals, police said around an 80-foot hilltop collapsed on two houses during heavy rainfall. When the seven people were buried under the debris, other family members and locals started searching for them.

After around a 20-minute search, they found Tahmina dead on the spot and six others injured. They were rushed to a local hospital, police

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Police look for survivors at the site of a landslide in KPM Kolabagan area of Rangamati's Kaptai upazila yesterday. An 80-foot hilltop collapsed on two houses, killing two people, including a five-year old. Inset, Ratna Mallik, right, mother of deceased Shurjo Mallik, being consoled by her daughter.

PHOTO: ANVIL CHAKMA



RIGHTS VIOLATION IN KASHMIR

UN blasts India, Pak over inaction

Renews calls for international probe

AFP, Geneva

The UN rights office yesterday hammered India and Pakistan for failing to improve the situation in Kashmir, while renewing calls for an international probe into violations in the disputed Himalayan region.

Kashmir, ruled in part but claimed in full by both countries, has suffered decades of unrest with rebel groups fighting for independence from Indian rule or a merger of Kashmir with Pakistan, in bloodshed that has left tens of thousands dead, mostly civilians.

Last year, the Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights released its first-ever report on Kashmir, documenting wrongdoing by both sides and urging action to reduce long-standing tensions.

In a follow up report, the rights office said "neither India nor Pakistan have taken any concrete steps to address the numerous concerns raised." "In Indian-Administered Kashmir, accountability for violations committed by members of the Indian security forces remains virtually non-existent," the report said.

The groundbreaking 2018 findings were particularly hard on India, highlighting "chronic impunity" for misconduct by troops.

Pakistan welcomed the 2018 findings even though the UN said obtaining information about Pakistan-administered Kashmir was difficult given restrictions on freedom of expression and information.

"No steps have been taken to resolve the main issues, including a number of highly problematic legal restrictions," the rights office said yesterday.

It also noted that four major armed groups in Kashmir

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