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Flood ravages croplands, houses

73,400 houses, 36,000 hectares of crops damaged

STAR REPORT
Around 73,400 houses and 36,000 hectares of crops have been damaged by recent floods in 21 districts, causing thousands of people to suffer.

Of the houses, around 4,000 have been completely damaged, while the other houses were partially damaged. Of the croplands, over 500 hectares are completely damaged and around 34,500 hectares only partially.

The damage was calculated based on the statistics released by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, reports our correspondents in different districts.

The districts affected by the flood are Chattogram, Bandarban, Khagrachari, Rangamati, Cox's Bazar, Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Sunamganj, Netrokona, Sylhet, Bogura, Gaibandha, Kurigram, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Feni, Brahmanbaria, Sherpur, Tangail, Jamalpur and Sirajganj.

In terms of household damages, Gaibandha is the worst affected. In the district, 25,930 houses were partially damaged, according to the ministry's report.

On the other hand, maximum areas of cropland -- around 10,000 hectares -- were damaged in Rangamati.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) forecasted that the flood situation in Kurigram, Jamalpur, Gaibandha, Bogra, Sirajganj, Tangail, Manikganj and Faridpur may deteriorate today.

However, the situation may improve in Netrokona, Sunamganj, Sylhet, Habiganj and Moulvibazar.

The water levels of the Brahmaputra-Jamuna and Ganges-Padma rivers may continue to rise in the next 48 hours, while the Padma river at Bhagyakul point may cross its danger level today, according to the FFWC bulletin.

The FFWC monitored river conditions at 93 river

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Students of Dhaka University block the Shahbagh Intersection yesterday demanding cancellation of seven colleges' affiliation with the university. The road block had cascading effect on city traffic creating jams even at Farmgate, inset.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

DU students block road at Shahbagh

Demand cancellation of 7 colleges' DU affiliation

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University students yesterday blocked the Shahbagh intersection for two hours, demanding the university cancel affiliation of the capital's seven colleges with it.

Some 500 students gathered at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture around 11:00am. They brought out a procession around 12:00 noon and staged demonstrations at the Shahbagh intersection until 2:00pm to press home their four-point demand.

Vehicular movement on the adjacent streets remained halted during the time, causing sufferings to the commuters.

People heading for Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University and BIRDEM were seen stuck in long tailbacks. Many were seen walking to their destinations.

Roman, a Jatrabari resident who came to DMCH with his mother, said despite his mother's illness, she was compelled

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Two killed in Old Dhaka



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Firefighters have located the bodies of two men in the rubble of a partially collapsed two-storey building in the capital's Patuatuli area last night.

Officials and locals said they think the victims are roadside fruit vendor Jayed Ali Bepari, 60, and his son Babla Bepari, 16, who lived in the century-old building.

They added that it was unlikely that anyone else was trapped in the building.

Jayed's brother-in-law Liton Bepari told The Daily Star that family members had not been able to reach Jayed or Babla over the phone since yesterday morning.

Around 12:30pm, Liton went to Jayed's rented home and found out that the part of the building where they lived had collapsed.

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Regulate use of antibiotics

Health minister asks DCs about agro, poultry, cattle farms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister Zahid Malik yesterday directed all deputy commissioners to control use of antibiotics in agro, poultry and cattle farms.

He also asked them to take steps so that pharmacies cannot sell antibiotics without prescriptions from registered doctors.

The minister pointed out the sharp rise in cancer and heart diseases in the country in recent years and said food adulteration and environment pollution were partly to blame for this. He asked the DCs to address both the issues.

His directives, given on the fourth day of the DC conference at the secretariat, comes in the wake of a series of lab tests that detected antibiotics, lead, cadmium and pesticides in food items, including packaged and nonpackaged milk.

The use of antibiotics both for humans and animals is often indiscriminate in Bangladesh. In many cases, antibiotics are used without prescriptions.

Zahid Malik said antibiotics are being used in poultry, fish and dairy farms that ultimately enter into human bodies through fish and meat.

This in turn leads to antimicrobial resistance, meaning certain antibiotics simply stop working, he said.

"So we asked them [DCs] to be cautious about it and visit different farms so that it [use of antibiotics] can be controlled," he told reporters after the meeting.

Global as well as the country's drug policies allow sale of antibiotics only when prescribed by registered doctors. But many pharmacies do not follow this rule.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

ROHINGYA ABUSES US sanctions on Myanmar army chief, 3 top officers

REUTERS, Washington

The United States yesterday announced sanctions against the Myanmar military's Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing and other leaders it said were responsible for extrajudicial killings of Rohingya Muslims, barring them from entry to the United States.

The steps, which also covered Min Aung Hlaing's deputy, Soe Win, and two other senior commanders and their families, are the strongest the United States has taken in response to massacres of minority Rohingyas in Myanmar, also known as Burma.

It identified the two others as Than Oo and Aung Aung, both brigadier generals.

"We remain concerned that the Burmese

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

1.3m people sign up to see aliens



AFP, Washington

For more than a century, scientists have scoured the known universe for signs of extra-terrestrial life, an endeavour that has thus far proved fruitless -- unless you believe the US government is hiding aliens at a remote base in Nevada.

The number of people persuaded of this theory could be growing.

As of Tuesday, more than 1.3 million people had signed up for a Facebook event called "Storm Area 51, They Can't Stop All Of Us" scheduled for the early hours of September 20, and a million more had marked themselves as "interested."

Area 51 is a highly classified US Air Force base in the Nevada desert, the very existence of which was not publicly acknowledged by the CIA until 2013, when the agency declassified documents relating to the U-2 spy plane.

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Minni placed on 5-day remand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A Barguna court yesterday granted police five days to question Aysha Siddiq Minni in remand over the murder of her husband Rifat Sharif.

The first-year student of Barguna Government Degree College was produced before the court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Sirajul Islam Gazi around 3:00pm, said Md Humayun Kabir, the investigation officer (IO) of the case.

"We sought a seven-

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 18

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-15 12-45 5-00 6-54 8-15
JAMAAT 4-50 1-15 5-15 6-58 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Dawn editor wins CPJ press freedom award

DAWN ONLINE

Editor of Pakistan's leading daily Dawn Zaffar Abbas has been awarded the 2019 Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) for "extraordinary and sustained achievement in the cause of press freedom", the body announced on Tuesday.

CPJ's Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award, previously known as the Burton Benjami Memorial Award, was renamed in 2017 to honour a veteran journalist

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

Amid attacks, Pak media dwindle

AGENCIES

The ruling party of Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has launched another blistering attack on the press, linking critical coverage to potential "treason" in the latest broadside against the beleaguered media.

Pakistan routinely ranks among the world's most dangerous countries for media workers, and reporters have frequently been detained, beaten and even killed for being critical of the government or powerful military, reports AFP.

In recent years the space for dissent has shrunk further, with the government announcing a crackdown on social networks and traditional media houses decrying pressure from authorities that they say has resulted in widespread self-censorship.

The official account of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party fired off over two dozen tweets in English and Urdu late Tuesday, lambasting the press for coverage criticising the government and Khan which it deemed "Anti-State".

"Freedom of Expression is beauty of Democracy. Expressing Enemy's Stance is Not Freedom of speech but treason against its people," read one tweet.

"Media houses & journalists must take care that in their quest for criticism on State, they intentionally or unintentionally do not end up propagating enemy's stance," read another, with the hashtag: #JournalismNotAgenda.

Media watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF) recently warned of "disturbing dictatorial tendencies" after three Pakistani TV stations were briefly taken off air in

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2

Two killed in 'shootout' in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Two suspected drug peddlers were killed in an alleged gunfight with Border Guard Bangladesh officials in Cox's Bazar's Teknaf upazila early yesterday.

The dead were identified as Asmaul Saudagar, 35, from Chandpur, and Zabeed Mia, 34, from Jashore.

Lt Col Mohammad Foyzal Khan, commanding officer of BGB-2 Battalion, said one of their teams conducted a drive in Jajimura Shikolpara area around 12:30am on information of drugs being smuggled through the Naf river.

The criminals opened fire just as the border guards reached the spot. The BGB men retaliated for self-defence, leaving two

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