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Flood situation shows signs of improvement

Water starts receding in some parts in north

STAR REPORT

The overall flood situation in some parts of the north showed signs of improvement yesterday as floodwater started receding.

Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre of Bangladesh Water Development Board (WDB) said Brahmaputra, Dharla, Ghaghot, Jamuna and its connecting rivers were mostly flowing above the danger level yesterday but had a decreasing trend in some areas as of 3:00pm.

The situation is expected to be even better by today, WDB said.

In Kurigram, water receded 1.24 foot at Dharla Bridge Point in Sadar upazila, 12cm at Chilmari Ghat point within 24 hours.

Many dwellers in the district started returning home after water went down from different the areas.

In Rangpur, water receded 17cm at Noonkhawa Point in Sadar upazila, 13cm at Kaunia Ghat Point of Kaunia upazila.

In Manikganj, water of the Jamuna was 23cm below the danger mark at Aricha point, decreasing by 5cm in 24 hours. As a result, water in its connecting rivers also started to decrease.

Many people in the district, however, remained stranded in temporary shelters and dikes as most of the areas were still flooded.

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Flood victims have taken shelter on the rail tracks in Gaibandha's Badiakhali Station area as their villages on both sides of the tracks have gone under water. Officials said at least 15 people in the district have died in flood so far. Inset, some flood-hit families are living in a coach of Padmarag Express which remains stuck in the area for about 10 days due to damaged tracks. The photos were taken yesterday.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUI

BADDA MOB BEATING Key accused arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police arrested a woman suspected of branding Taslima Begum Renu as a child kidnapper, which led to her death in a mob beating in the capital's Badda on July 20.

Riya Begum Moina, 27, mother of a student of Badda Uttar-Purba Primary School, was arrested around 10:00pm on Thursday at Satarkul, said Inspector Abdur Razzak of Badda Police Station.

The officer said Riya was among the few parents who first talked to Renu on the school premises and branded her as a child kidnapper.

She is the 14th suspect arrested in connection with the single mother's killing on the school premises.

The 40-year-old victim went to the school in the hope of getting her daughter admitted there.

Renu entered the school premises and asked Riya, who was there to pick up her 1st grader son, about the admission procedure.

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Sinha 'seeks asylum' in Canada

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha has sought asylum in Canada, claiming that he was threatened for refusing to support political interference in the judiciary, according to a news report.



In an interview with Canadian online news portal The Star last week, Sinha said he had received threats for his stance against political interference that would have given parliament greater power to act dissenting judges.

On October 13, 2017, Sinha left Bangladesh for Australia on "sick leave" and resigned from the post of chief justice around a month later.

In its report published Thursday, The Star mentioned that Sinha recently stayed in the US. He crossed into Canada through Fort Erie on July 4 and filed a refugee claim.

"I was being targeted because I was an activist judge. I delivered judgments that provoked bureaucrats, the establishment, politicians and even terrorists," Sinha told The Star.

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We'll scrap all deals with Israel

Says President Abbas, slams demolition of Palestinian homes as 'ethnic cleansing'

AFP, Ramallah

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said Thursday he has decided to stop implementing all agreements with Israel amid worsening relations between the two sides.

"We announce the leadership's decision to stop implementing the agreements signed with the Israeli side," he said in a speech in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

He slammed the recent Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes as "ethnic cleansing".

Abbas had previously not spoken so clearly and definitively of a break in cooperation, although Palestinian officials have in the past made threats to stop implementing all accords with Israel.

He said the Palestinians would immediately form a committee to study how to carry out the decision.

The two governments work together on matters ranging from water to security, and withdrawing from agreements could impact security in the occupied West Bank.

Abbas, 84, has made similar threats before and not implemented them. But relations between Abbas's government, based in the West Bank, and its Israeli counterpart have worsened in recent months.

In February, the Jewish state decided to deduct around \$10 million a month from tax revenues it collects on behalf of the Palestinians, corresponding to the amount it said the Palestinian Authority pays to families of prisoners or directly to inmates in Israeli jails.

Israel sees such payments as encouraging attacks while Palestinians see them as support for families who have often lost their main breadwinner. The Palestinians have in response refused to take any of the roughly

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BNP demands Khaleda's proper treatment

UNB, Dhaka

Voicing deep concern over BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's illness, the party yesterday demanded that immediate steps be taken for her proper treatment either at home or abroad as per her desire.

"She has been suffering from ulcer in her tongue. She has lost weight by around four kg in the last one week. It's very alarming. She's now unable to eat anything," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir.

"We strongly demand that the government immediately free our leader and take steps for her better treatment. We also demand that she be provided proper treatment either at home or abroad as per her choice."

Fakhrul made the comments at a press conference at BNP chairperson's Gulshan office.

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'Graffiti village' eases loneliness



AFP, Ruan Chiao

Nestled in the mist-covered foothills of Taiwan's central mountain range, Ruan Chiao village is virtually devoid of young people, but artist Wu Tsun-hsien is coaxing the Instagram generation back by transforming local homes into a canvas of colour.

Dipping his brush into a tin of beige emulsion, he carefully applies new layers of paint to his latest production -- a vibrant rural scene depicting farmers in traditional weave hats tending to a flock of animals.

Behind him, an elderly villager with a walking stick shuffles his way down the main street, which is plastered with Wu's colourful paintings.

"This village is full of old people," the 55-year-old laments, explaining how the vast majority of youngsters -- including his own children -- have

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FINANCING RAKHINE REBELS Nine held in Myanmar

AFP, Yangon

Nine people subject to a police probe over fundraising for a rebel group fighting Myanmar's military in restive Rakhine state were remanded in custody yesterday, including several recently deported from Singapore.

Among the deportees is Aung Myat Kyaw, who is believed to be the brother of Brigadier General Tun Myat Naing, the chief of the Arakan Army (AA).

Myanmar's army has deployed thousands of

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 27

Fajr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-20 12-45 5-00 6-50 8-15
JAMAAT 4-55 1-15 5-15 6-55 8-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Missile launch a warning to South Korea

Says N Korea's Kim

AFP, Seoul

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has said two missiles fired under his supervision were newly designed tactical weapons that sent a "solemn warning" to the South over plans to hold military drills with the United States.

Thursday's missile tests were the first since Kim and US President Donald Trump agreed to resume nuclear talks during an impromptu meeting last month in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea.

That working-level dialogue has yet to begin and, even before Thursday's launches, Pyongyang had warned the talks could be derailed by Washington and Seoul's refusal to scrap joint military exercises scheduled for next month.

North Korean state media provided no technical specifications, but said yesterday the latest tests were of a "new-type"

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Underprivileged children study at Swapno Purn School in old launch terminal area of Patuakhali's Galachipa upazila. Seven local college students have been running the school since March 2017. It is now providing education to 85 students from ultra-poor families free of cost. The students also take part in cultural activities. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SOHRAB HOSSAIN

The school of dream

An initiative of some Patuakhali youths for unprivileged children

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, Patuakhali

Twelve-year-old Jannati's dream of going to school was far-fetched because she had to get up early every day and accompany her mother Sukhi Begum for work.

Members of the underprivileged Manta community, the two work as housemaids to make ends meet. Her father owns a small boat and earns a living by fishing.

Just recently, she heard about an initiative taken by a group of youths to educate the poor children. She decided to go check out the place and that is how she came to find out about Swapno Purn School (the school to fulfil dreams).

"I thought I would never go to school in my life. Just the prospect makes me so happy now," said Jannati, who lives in a shanty near Galachipa launch terminal area of Patuakhali.

"I attend classes every day with my friends, and it is a great opportunity for us. I am learning to read and write here."

The school was the brainchild of seven youths in the area, all of them undergraduate students at local colleges. They decided to educate the children of the ultra-poor and Manta families, who would otherwise never get a chance to study.

The Manta are a small community of nomadic people who move from one place to another and live on fishing.

Sakib Hasan, one of the founders of Barishal, said, "These children are deprived of their basic rights. Our decision to

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