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FLOOD DAMAGE IN 28 DISTRICTS

Crops on 5.32 lakh hectares destroyed

STAR REPORT

Around 6.77 lakh hectares of croplands have been damaged by the recent flood that affected about 61 lakh people in 28 districts, says the government statistics.

Crops on 5.32 lakh hectares were destroyed and the rest damaged.

Besides, 5.66 lakh houses were affected -- 33,635 destroyed and 5,32,643 damaged.

Talking about road communications, Shah Kamal, senior secretary of the disaster management and relief ministry, at a press briefing at the ministry yesterday said over 7,000kms of roads were affected. Of them, 292km were destroyed and 6,735km damaged.

The flood also razed 42 educational institutions and damaged 4,857 others. But the secretary did not give any details about what kind of educational institutions those were.

The financial loss caused by the flood was yet to be estimated. It will be assessed after water recedes from all the affected areas. It may take 15 days more, said Kamal.

Aimed at protecting the people from flood, the government is planning to build embankments on both sides of all major rivers across the country.

The embankments will be constructed with the financial assistance of the Japan government. Discussion is going on in this regard, said the secretary.

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Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiquur Rahim was once again the hero of the innings when he scored a 110-ball 98. However, his strong performance could not lift the Tigers above a sub-par 238 for eight in the second ODI against Sri Lanka yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Injured teen dies on ferry as it waits 3 hrs for official

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

An injured sixth grader died in an ambulance on a ferry after the vessel waited three hours at the Kathalbari Ferry Terminal Thursday night for a government high official.

Thirteen-year-old Titash Ghosh, a student of Kalia Pilot Secondary School in Narail, was critically injured in a motorbike accident in Narail on Wednesday evening, family members said. He was rushed to a hospital in Khulna and kept on life support.

A day later, the doctors referred him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for an emergency operation.

The family with the child in an ambulance was coming to Dhaka and arrived at the Kathalbari Ferry Terminal in Munshiganj around 8:00pm on Thursday.

A ferry called “Ferry Cumilla” was already at the pontoon but it had its gate closed and was not loading vehicles.

Titash’s uncle Bijoy Ghosh said they learnt that the ferry would be late as it was waiting for an additional secretary.

The ambulance had committed to the pontoon and could not reverse or go to another pontoon because of queues of vehicles around it.

The family members pleaded to the authorities concerned there to resume

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PRAYER TIMING JULY 29

	Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4:20	12:45	5:00	6:59	8:15
JAMAAT	4:55	1:15	5:15	6:55	8:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Give them citizenship or a state

Says Mahathir on Rohingyas

THE STAR ONLINE, Kuala Lumpur

The Rohingyas should be treated as Myanmar nationals or be given a chance to form their own state, said Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

He said even though Malaysia generally does not wish to interfere with the internal affairs of other countries, it does so in this case due to the massacre or genocide that is happening in Myanmar.

“Myanmar, of course, at one time was made up of many different states. But the British decided to rule Myanmar as one state -- and because of that, many of the tribes (were) included in the state of

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Myanmar to consider Rohingyas as foreigners

Myanmar foreign affairs permanent secretary tells reporters in Cox's Bazar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

The Myanmar government will consider Rohingyas as foreign nationals, said Myanmar Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary Myint Thu to reporters after a meeting with hindu Rohingyas at the Kutupalong D-4 camp in Cox's Bazar's Ukhia yesterday.

Detailing his government's position on the issue of Rohingya repatriation from Bangladesh, Myint Thu said there were three types of citizenships in the Myanmar Citizenship Act 1982.

According to it, whoever has been living in Myanmar for three generations would be entitled to get “naturalised citizenship”.

Even if the Rohingyas are not direct Myanmar

citizens, they will be allowed to live legally in Myanmar as foreign citizens according to clause three of the citizenship act, Myint Thu said, adding that in this process they will get a national ID card.

The foreign secretary, who is leading a 10-member team to Bangladesh, also had a meeting with Muslim Rohingyas at Camp-4 in the morning.

But his meetings over the last two days with Rohingya leaders failed to make any headway on the issue of repatriation.

Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights Chairman Mohibullah, who led a 30-member team in the meeting, said after Saturday's unsuccessful meeting with the Myanmar

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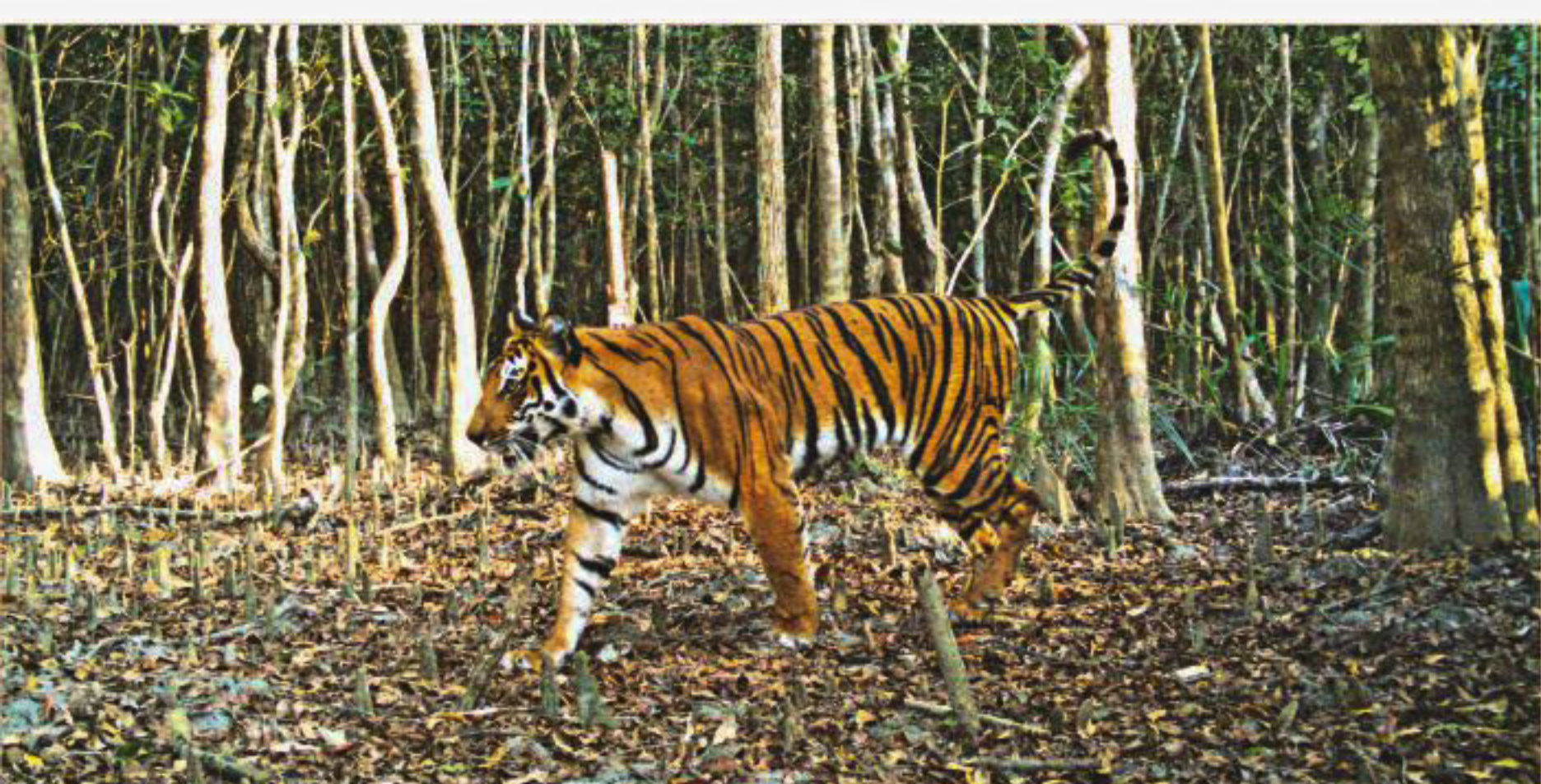
Largest piano strikes chord in Latvia

AFP, Ventspils

Soaring to new musical heights, a German-born innovator has crafted what is believed to be the world's largest grand piano.

It is without question one of a kind: attached high on the wall of a concert hall in Latvia, the steel-framed vertical grand piano hangs as if in mid-air some three storeys above the audience.

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BIG CATS IN SUNDARBANS

Male tigers at greater risk

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

With the intervention of humans, be it poaching or destruction of habitat, Bengal Tigers are now facing a new threat in the form of a dwindling male population.

The number of male tigers has come down alarmingly; so much so that the male-female ratio now stands at 1:10.

According to experts, the ideal male-female ratio is 1:3, but it so happens that the threats of extinction has affected male tigers more than the females.

The government is in the process of relocating tigers to up their population, particularly of male tigers.

“The number of male tigers is declining,

which is very alarming. We have observed one male tiger against 10 females, but the ideal ratio is one against three. If in any case a male tiger dies or becomes a victim of poaching, female tigers in that area will face severe problems,” Md Jahidul Kabir, conservator of forests of the forest department, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said the government is planning translocation of tigers to maintain the male-female ratio at 1:6.

The findings came up in a tiger census, which also showed that the number of Bengal tigers in the Bangladesh part of the Sundarbans has slightly increased.

The number rose to 114 in 2018, up

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RIFAT MURDER

Were police sleeping?

HC says

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday observed that Barguna's Rifat Sharif would not have been murdered had the police been alert.

Were the police sleeping during the incident? asked the HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader.

The bench asked the question during the hearing of a writ petition seeking its directive on the government to transfer the Rifat murder case to the Criminal Investigation Department or the Police Bureau of Investigation for proper probe.

The HC also asked Deputy Attorney General Abdullah-Al Mahmud Bashar to communicate with the local administration so that they take proper steps against the real culprits and do not become more enthusiastic about Rifat's wife Aysha Siddika Minni.

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‘Criminal’ killed in ‘gunfight’ in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A man was killed in a “gunfight” with Rab in Chattogram's Banshkhali upazila around 5:00pm yesterday.

The dead -- Jaker, 40, resident of Banshkhali -- was accused in at least 28 cases filed over murder, robbery and other criminal offences, claimed Rab.

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