



85mm rain drowns Dhaka

Experts question preparedness of city corporations after yesterday's rainfall

HELEMLUL ALAM

With the two city corporations taking charge of canals and drainage system from Wasa around five months back, Dhaka dwellers had high hopes that there will be significant improvement in the waterlogging situation.

However, that expectation is yet to reach an expected level, which became quite evident yesterday, as just three hours of rainfall -- from 6am to 9am -- was enough to drown most parts of the city with several areas facing severe waterlogging problems.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, Dhaka faced 85mm of rainfall in three hours.

During yesterday's rainfall, once again, many parts of the capital including Dhanmondi 27, Green Road, Nakhla, parts of Rajarbagh, behind Bangabhaban, Gandaria DIT plot, Gabtola mosque in Jhigata, Kazipara and Khilkhet went under ankle-to-thigh-deep water.

Besides, people, mainly office-goers, faced difficulty during their commute due to the rain that led to waterlogging on many streets, lanes and by-lanes in Banani, Green Road, Dhanmondi, Satmasjid Road, Mirpur Road, Tejturibazar, Mohakhali and Malibagh areas.

Vehicles were seen stalled on the road due to the waterlogging, which led to traffic congestion on Mirpur and Green roads.

People were traveling on rickshaw-vans, getting no other way to reach office. Many

had to pay extra to reach their destinations due to lack of public transport amid rain.

Many shops and houses in low-lying areas were submerged.

Due to gusty winds, several outbound flights at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport were delayed by 45 minutes to one hour, said sources at HISA.

"The road at Dhanmondi 27 crossing went under thigh-deep water by 10am and it took an hour for the water to recede. It used to take three to four hours before," said a traffic police in the area.

"We had more expectations after the city corporations took charge of the drainage but they have failed to fulfil it so far," he said.

Kazipara resident Habibur Rahman, who works at a leasing company in Uttara, said he had an important meeting at 10am but could not reach office on time as the alley was inundated with water.

"I had to wade through knee-deep water to go to the main road and change several transports to reach office," said Habib (31).

The two city corporations on December 31 formally took over management and maintenance responsibilities of 26 canals, 10 kilometres of box culverts and 385km of storm water drainage from Dhaka Wasa.

Earlier, DNCC and DSCC used to manage pipe and surface drains.

Iqbal Habib, joint secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, said water connectivity is crucial to solve the

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INUNDATED TOO EASILY

In only three hours, yesterday's downpour devoured the capital's roads, forcing commuters in many areas to wade knee-deep water by any means necessary. Half-submerged cars were seen struggling through the waves, ultimately splashing others in the way, while some climbed on rickshaw-vans to avoid the muddy water. Those who had no access to vehicles, just lifted their clothes, hoped for the best and walked to their destination, while city corporation workers were seen trying to clear up the clog. The photos were taken from Dhanmondi, Green Road, and Tejgaon areas.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON, ANISUR RAHMAN, PALASH KHAN AND PRABIR DAS

MITU MURDER

Wife of accused seeks security after testifying against ex-SP Babul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Wife of Kamrul Islam Musa, an accused in Mahmuda Khanam Mitu murder case, has filed a general diary (GD), seeking security after giving testimony against former superintendent of police Babul Akter before a court yesterday.

Confirming the development, Panna Akhter told The Daily Star, "I have filed the GD with Rangunia Police Station today (Tuesday), seeking security considering my current situation."

"I have testified against former SP Babul Akter where I told the magistrate that Musa was working as an informant for Babul. Apart from that, I told the court that Musa was picked up by plainclothes men after the murder (of Mitu)," she added.

She, however, said she has not received any threat so far. Although police said Musa is on the run, his wife claimed that plainclothes police detained him and his brother Saku in Bandar area on June 22, 2016, but later only Saku was shown arrested in the case.

Police brushed aside the allegation. On June 5, 2016, Mitu was stabbed and shot dead by a group of criminals led by Musa while she was taking her son

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RMCH running out of beds, ICU

Hospital director urges regional lockdown

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, RAJSHAHI

Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, that provides treatment to Covid-19 patients of Rajshahi district and beyond, has been running out of beds and high-flow oxygen facilities, hospital officials say.

The 1,200-bed hospital that has a central oxygen supply in all its 42 wards, dedicated 250 beds of six wards where high-flow oxygen can be ensured, they said.

But all the six coronavirus wards became full with Covid-19 positive and suspected patients in the last seven days till yesterday, as 30 new patients -- 18 of them from Chapainawabganj, 10 from Rajshahi and two from Natore districts -- were admitted.

Hospital director Brig Gen Shamim Yazdani said they were insisting district administrations in Rajshahi region to impose a lockdown in order to prevent spread of the infection.

"(Covid-19) cases have been increasing every day; the situation may turn worse and become unmanageable in coming days," he told The Daily Star.

He said they can prepare more wards of the hospital for treating Covid-19 patients, but it may not be possible to ensure high-flow oxygen to all wards.

The hospital authorities have stored around 450 oxygen cylinders for dealing with an emergency and are preparing to add another ward of 29 beds for coronavirus treatment.

The ICU of the hospital that has 15 beds. It also requires more beds and ventilators, as officials say at least 30 patients are kept in waiting for getting an ICU bed.

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Budget session of JS begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The budget session of the eleventh parliament begins this afternoon amid the ongoing second wave of Covid-19.

Scheduled to begin at 5pm, this will be also the thirteenth session of this parliament.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal is scheduled to place the budget for 2021-22 fiscal on the following day.

The last budget session of the current parliament was prorogued after only nine working days due to the pandemic, which was the shortest budget session in the recent history of Jatiya Sangsad.

The daily order of business of this year's budget session will be carried out with minimum lawmakers in the House, in an attempt to maintain social distancing and avoid the risk of Covid-19 infection while duration of the session will be brief.

"Maintaining all health guidelines, the budget session will continue for around two weeks," Zafar Ahmed Khan, senior secretary of the parliament secretariat, told The Daily Star recently.

"Due to the ongoing second wave of Covid-19, the budget session will be as short as possible to avoid the risk of infection. No other business except for budgetary and other important activities will be done during the upcoming session," he added.

Usually, the session continues for 30 to 35 working days having discussion on the general budget for 55 to 60 hours. Only MPs, staff members and officials of the parliament

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MONEY LAUNDERING

SC scraps HC bail order for Rashedul Haque Chishty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday scrapped a High Court verdict that granted bail to Rashedul Haque Chishty, son of former chairman of Farmers Bank audit committee Mahbubul Haque Chisty, in a money laundering case involving Tk 159 crore.

The apex court also directed the trial court concerned to finish the case's trial proceedings expeditiously.

A full bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain came up with the order after hearing two petitions filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission and Rashedul.

The ACC filed the leave to appeal petition challenging an HC verdict that granted bail to Rashedul.

The Appellate Division yesterday also rejected a bail petition of Rashedul.

Lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan argued for ACC while Additional Attorney General Sk Md Morshed represented the state and lawyer AF Hasan Arif appeared for Rashedul during the virtual hearing.

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MC COLLEGE GANG RAPE

HC may decide on suo-moto rule today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court is likely to deliver its verdict today on a suo-moto (voluntary) rule over the sensational incident of gang rape on the Murari Chand College campus in Sylhet on September 25 last year.

The HC bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Kamrul Hossain Mollah is set to deliver the verdict, court sources said.

The bench has concluded hearing on the rule on March 11 this year and kept the issue on CAV (Curia Advisari Vult, a Latin term that suggests reserving of judgement until a later time).

Following two separate reports published on The Daily Star on September 27 last year under the headlines "Rape in MC College: 6 accused BCL men moved with impunity" and "Unpublished crimes led to horror like this", the HC bench on September 29 issued the suo-moto rule.

In the rule, the court asked the authorities concerned to show causes why they should not be directed to take appropriate legal steps against the principal and hostel superintendent of the MC College for their negligence and failure to

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TWO CORRUPTION CASES

Awal, wife seek HC order to release bank accounts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pirojpur's former Awami League lawmaker AKMA Awal and his wife Laila Parvin have sought High Court directives to scrap a lower court order that asked Anti-Corruption Commission to freeze their bank accounts and seize documents of properties in two corruption cases.

Awal and his wife yesterday filed two separate petitions with the HC through their lawyer Sheikh Awasfur Rahman seeking cancellation of the lower court order.

In the petitions, they also requested the HC to order the ACC to release their bank accounts and property related documents, ACC's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan, who received the petition copies, told The Daily Star.

He said the HC may hold hearing on the petitions today. On May 25, the HC bench of Justice M Enayetur Rahim and Justice Sardar Md Rashed Jahangir upheld the lower court order that asked ACC to freeze the bank accounts and seize property documents.

The bench rejected two appeals filed by Awal and Laila, challenging the Dhaka court orders, on the ground that they were late in filing those.

The HC bench, however, asked them to move petitions in proper way -- under Section 561(A) of Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1898.

Judge KM Emrul Kayesh of the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka on January 17 ordered ACC to freeze 18 bank accounts and seize documents of 40 scheduled immovable properties of the two in the cases.

On September 29 last year, ACC filed the cases with its Integrated District Office-1 of Dhaka. Awal was sued for amassing Tk 33 crore illegally while Laila for acquiring Tk 10.98 crore illegally.

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This "two-storied" house stands on poles and a platform made out of bamboo, and its walls and roof are made of corrugated tin sheets that appear to be rusty and repurposed. A blatant violation of any housing safety guideline, this fragile, risky structure stands not on the outskirts of the capital but in the rather central Moghbazar area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Trees near Dhaka Medical College Hospital have recently bore bright green Java apples, popularly known in the country as jamrul. The fruits, which look like miniature upside-down pears and come in different colours, including red and white, are one of the many offerings of summer.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Vacancy

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Ref: 30.34.0000.061.28.001.21/24 Date: 01-06-2021

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