

AL destroyed country's politics Says Fakhru

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the current Awami League government has destroyed the country's political structure by revoking the caretaker government system.

"Awami League has destroyed the political structure that we established in 1991 after overcoming many setbacks and struggles," he said at an event organised by Ziaur Rahman Foundation at Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh.

He said the BNP government in 1996 introduced the caretaker government system, and four credible and acceptable elections were held under it. "But when they [AL] understood that people would not vote for them for their misdeeds from 2009-2011, they

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Crossing the road from Mohammadpur to Rayerbazar graveyard, one would come across rows of auto-rickshaws and trucks, casually parked on the side of the road. Due to this illegal parking, gridlocks take over the road, causing commuters to suffer on a regular basis. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

'The one who helped establish democracy' Speakers tell meeting commemorating Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Hasan Foez Siddique yesterday said prominent jurist Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq played an outstanding role to establish democracy in the country despite not being directly involved with politics.

"Barrister Rafique-Ul Huq was a brilliant, prudent and experienced scholar, and honest lawyer. For him, the law was not a means of earning money only. He was also involved in philanthropic activities and established many hospitals and charitable organisations to serve the people," he said.

The chief justice was speaking as chief guest at a memorial meeting for former attorney general Rafique-Ul Huq on his second death anniversary, organised by Ad-Deen Foundation at Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) auditorium.

Former chief justice Syed Mahmud Hossain told the function that Barrister Rafique had established himself as an institution through his outstanding and extraordinary works and activities in his life.

"He [Rafique] played an effective role to make the judiciary independent," he added.

Justice Md Nuruzzaman, a senior judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, said a great and legendary thinker, Rafique had worked for the welfare and health services of the people.

Justice Obaidul Hassan, a judge of the Appellate Division, said if a book is published on the legal opinions placed by Rafique before the courts, lawyers can learn many things.

Justice Borhanuddin, another judge of the Appellate

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PRAYER
TIMING
OCT 25



	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
Azan	4-50	12-45	4-00	5-32	7-15
Jamaat	5-25	1-15	4-15	5-35	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Sitrang brings rain, rain brings sufferings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Many areas of the capital have been inundated due to continuous rain since the early hours of yesterday. The rainfall, influenced by cyclone Sitrang, brought immense suffering to the city dwellers throughout the day.

The rain was pouring continuously as of filing this report at 8:13pm. Low-lying areas went underwater, and this made everyone dread their scheduled commute.

According to Bangladesh Meteorological Department, 120 mm of rain was recorded in 12 hours till 6:00pm yesterday.

In the morning, office and school goes had to struggle to reach their destinations amid the rain. Lack of public transport, and auto-rickshaw drivers and rickshaw-pullers charging extra fares made the situation worse. The heavy wind did not make the situation any better.

Most of them said they had to wait for at least half an hour, if not more to board a public bus.

However, the situation started deteriorating in the evening as most of the commuters got marooned on their way back home.

Md Shah Nawaz Khan Chandan, a teacher at Jagannath University, said he started from Sadarghat at 2:00pm and

reached Farmgate at 6:30pm, after four hours of a harrowing experience.

He said it almost took two hours for his private car to hustle through the waterlogged narrow streets of Old Dhaka and reach Gulistan area.

"My driver had to repair the car as water entered its engine. However, I had to continue as I had an important meeting. There was no public transport, and all the rickshaws and CNG-run three wheelers

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, 120 mm of rain was recorded in 12 hours till 6:00pm yesterday. The Met Office has hoisted danger signal 7 in the coastal districts, which may go up to signal 10.

were occupied, while vehicles of the ride-sharing apps were unavailable," he said.

Other commuters shared similar stories when approached by The Daily Star.

Cyclone Sitrang is set to hit Bangladesh between 6:00am and 7:00am today, according to the government and BMD sources.

The Met office has hoisted danger signal 7 in the coastal districts, which may go up to signal 10.

Lives on the line

Speakers tell roundtable on climate change



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Khulna has been identified as one of the most vulnerable cities in the world due to climate change. As climate-induced displacements in adjacent areas skyrocket, the city is and will further struggle with the growing population, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

They made the remarks at a roundtable, titled "Financing Loss & Damage and Displacement: A Global Call for Climate Justice", organised jointly by The Daily Star and AOSED (An Organisation for Socio-Economic Development) at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Prof Mustafa Saroar, head of urban and regional planning at Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (Kuet), presented the keynote of the discussion.

Khulna City Corporation Mayor Talukdar Abdul Kheleque said the Khulna region has been bearing the brunt of climate change, as more and more coastal people from the south-western upazilas are taking shelter in the city.

"The displaced and impoverished people end up in slums, making it difficult for the city authority to ensure pure water, sanitation and other civic amenities for them. The city will soon lose its liveability if

Our right to life is being jeopardised by climate change. Education is at stake as school hours get hampered due to floods, and salinity is taking a huge toll on women's health. The "loss and damage" issue must be taken seriously.

FARAH KABIR

Country director of ActionAid Bangladesh

the influx continues," he said.

Lawmaker of Satkhira-2 Mir Mushtaque Ahmed Robi criticised the United Nations for "not being able to make any tangible progress in fighting climate change".

Farah Kabir, country director of

ActionAid Bangladesh, said efforts to arrange for "loss and damage" has been ongoing for 30 years. Yet, the developed countries did not agree to the arrangement.

"Our right to life is being jeopardised by climate change. Education is at stake, as school hours get hampered due to floods, and salinity is taking a huge toll on women's health. The 'loss and damage' issue must be taken seriously," she added.

Hasin Jahan, country director of WaterAid Bangladesh, pointed out the loopholes in the record-keeping process of climate-induced damage suffered by the country.

"All we do is count how many tube wells and homesteads are destroyed in natural calamities. We don't know whether the government has any aggregated data," she said.

She also suggested the government take help from academics and development organisations to create an evidence-based database to make the "loss

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Predicting landslides through rainfall

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lal Tha Zual, a young volunteer from Bandarban's Faruk Para village, alerted the people of his village of a potential landslide on September 2, after predicting it by applying a technique that she learnt last year.

She asked her neighbours not to go to certain areas in the following two or three days where they used to go regularly for hill farming.

The secret to this accurate prediction was measuring the amount of rainfall in her region using a rain gauge for seven straight days. Zual learned this technique under an initiative to disseminate this knowledge.

She shared the story at a workshop on landslide early-warning systems held at the multipurpose hall of Department of Disaster Management yesterday.

Around 65 such altruists were trained by local organisations Tahzindong and Bolipara Nari Kalyan Somity (BNKS) under the "Sokkhomokta" project in six areas of Bandarban and Lama upazilas.

Funded by USAID, Caritas Bangladesh, in collaboration with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), is conducting the project, which started in 2020.

This is reportedly the first community-based early warning system in the country, where volunteers go door-to-door to alert people and evacuate them from landslide-prone areas when they sense the possibility of its occurrence. If it rains more than 100 millimetres a day, more than 250 millimetres in three days, or more than 350 millimetres in seven days, there is a risk of landslides.

Caritas Bangladesh's Head of Disaster Management Alexander Tripura and Department of Disaster Management's Director General Atiqul Haque spoke at the event among others. The event was presided over by Netai Chandra Dey, director (MIM) of Department of Disaster Management.

DHAKA-SYLHET HIGHWAY Two joint ventures selected for expansion project

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Roads and Highways Department (RHD) yesterday appointed two China-Bangladesh joint ventures, comprising three firms, for the Dhaka Sylhet highway expansion project, as physical work is expected to start in December.

The two ventures have been selected for one of the six packages under the Tk 16,918.59 crore project for turning the 210 km highway into a four-lane one, with service lanes on both sides, say officials.

RHD signed separate contracts with the joint ventures at a city hotel yesterday.

A joint venture of Longjian Road and Bridge Company Ltd of China and Max Infrastructure Ltd of Bangladesh will work on an 18-km part of the highway, which stretches from Kanchpur intersection to Chanpara Bus Stand.

It will get Tk 925.36 crore to complete physical work within four years, according to the contract.

Another joint venture of China's Zhengzhou City Highway Engineering Corporation Ltd and Max Infrastructure Ltd will carry out work on a 17-km, from Chanpara to Narsingdi BSCIC area, at a cost of Tk 1,394.66 crore. This will be funded by Asian Development Bank (ADB). It will have to finish physical work in four years.

In February last year, the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnc) approved the project, setting December 2026 as the deadline.

The authorities decided to implement the project under six packages and hire 13 contractors for quick implementation.

The Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase on September 14 approved proposals for appointing two contractors for the first package.

Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary ABM Amin Ullah Nuri; Edimon Ginting, ADB country director; Project Director AK Mohammad Fazlul Karim, among others, spoke at the programme, while RHD Chief Engineer AKM Manir Hossain Pathan as in the chair.



Just after a few hours of rainfall, many areas of the capital were inundated yesterday. The city's dysfunctional drainage system could not handle the downpour, brought upon by cyclone Sitrang. And so, people had to endure the murky waters. This photo was taken in Adabor area around noon.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON