

TEESTA WATER SHARING Dhaka, Delhi should look for 'creative solution'

Int'l affairs expert Sreeradha tells Star

PORIMOL PALMA

Bangladesh and India should find a "creative solution" to the Teesta water sharing issue as Dhaka has long been demanding its share of water from the transboundary river, said Prof Sreeradha Datta of OP Jindal Global University.

Given the strong bilateral relationship between the two countries, the border killings are "shameful", she said.

"India has not effectively responded to Bangladesh's long-standing demand for Teesta water. I think the leaders of the two countries will find out a creative solution to this problem," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

Her comments came a day before the bilateral meeting between Prime



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Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at hotel Taj Palace in New Delhi yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

2 killed, 5 injured in Sherpur boat capsizes

UNB, Sherpur

Two young men, including a medical student, were killed while five others were injured when a boat capsized in a beel (lake-like wetland) in Sherpur yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Mosharraf Hossain Milton 22, a second-year student at Rangpur Medical College, and Md Amanullah 19.

The incident took place in the Dhali beel around 2:30pm in the Kanduli area under Jhenaigati upazila, confirmed Md Shafiqul, chairman of Dhanshail union.

According to police, hospital, and local sources, Milton, from South Kanduli village, along with some friends, rented two boats, one of which capsized in the middle of the beel. The passengers drowned because they couldn't swim.

The boatmen and passengers from the other boat rescued them and took them to Jhenaigati Upazila Health Complex.

As their condition worsened, they were moved to Sherpur District Hospital, where the on-duty doctor declared Milton and Amanullah dead, said Dr Khairul Kabir Sumon, residential medical officer (RMO) at Sherpur District Hospital.

Jhenaigati Police Station Inspector (Investigation) Iskandar Habib, said that a duty officer was sent to the scene immediately after learning about the boat capsizing. "Legal actions are being taken regarding the incident."

Messi's bright start

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takes place in Florida where Messi is ending his career with Major League Soccer club Inter Miami.

Thursday night's victory over Canada on a below-par temporary grass pitch in Atlanta was not a vintage performance: the Argentine captain and talisman missed a couple of clear chances though he also had a hand in both goals.

"The important thing is that we started with a win," said Messi, whose team had started the last World Cup with a defeat by Saudi Arabia that was one of the all-time shocks.

"We struggled a bit in the first half and the pitch didn't help either," he added after his record 35th Copa America finals appearance. "We'll always give our best, sometimes playing better, sometimes worse, but always fighting our hardest."

It was Messi's perfectly weighted pass to Alexis Mac Allister that made Julian Alvarez's opener followed by another controlled through ball to assist Lautaro Martinez's second.

"When Lionel Messi gets going, everything looks easy," football writer Diego Provenzano wrote in Argentine daily Clarin.

Messi could yet make the 2026 World Cup, depending on how his body holds up, but coach Lionel Scaloni has urged fans to stop speculating about that and just enjoy the moment.

"It doesn't make much sense to be thinking about when they are not here," he said of Messi and veteran striker Angel Di Maria. "Let's enjoy them now. Then we'll see what happens."

Argentina next face Chile and Peru in Group A of the U.S.-hosted tournament between 16 teams in the Americas.

With some, including French striker Kylian Mbappe, suggesting the Copa is inferior to the also ongoing European Championship, Messi noted that his tournament included teams with 10 World Cups between them: Brazil (5), Argentina (3), and Uruguay (2).

"There are a lot of world champions left out to say that it (the Euros) is the most difficult tournament," he said.

Road crashes

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Station, said, "After the incident, police arrested Sukumar Das, driver of Purbasha Paribahan. Police also seized the bus and the easy bike."

In Rangpur's Pirganj upazila, three people were killed and 12 others injured in two road crashes on Thursday night and yesterday, said police.

The deceased are Mintu Mia, 25, of Hajratpur village of Mithapukur upazila, and Ashrafur Islam, 30, of Narayanpur village of Pargachha upazila. The identity of another victim could not be known immediately.

Solaiman Sheikh, OC of Borodargah Highway Police Station in Pirganj, said a bus rear-ended another bus of Hanif Paribahan at Madarhat on Dinajpur-Panchagarh highway around 10:20pm, killing a person and injuring 12 others of both vehicles.

On information, firefighters went to the spot and sent the injured to Rangpur Medical College Hospital. One of the injured, Mintu, died there.

Police seized the vehicles, said OC Solaiman, adding that the deceased were Hanif Paribahan passengers.

In another incident, a Pargachha-bound pickup was hit by a bus in Madarhat village early yesterday, injuring Ashrafur, a pickup passenger.

Locals took him to the local upazila health complex, where he died in the morning, said OC Solaiman.

[Our Faridpur and Dinajpur correspondents contributed to this report.]

Thousands in dire need of relief

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The couple has now taken shelter at their neighbour's home, which was flooded as well but not as badly as other houses.

They also said they lost all their rice stored at the house when it got flooded.

Sufi Alam Sohel, chairman of the Islampur union in Chhatak upazila, said the flash floods severely damaged at least 800 houses while thousands of families lost their stored paddy as they live at the foothills of India's Meghalaya state.

"As an emergency response, I was allotted only 10 maunds of rice and three sacks of dry food, which was barely enough to feed the people at the shelters, let alone all the affected people in the union," he told this newspaper.

Another 17 tonnes of rice have been allotted for the union, but that has yet to arrive. "But that too will be inadequate," he added.

Kanon Alam, an advocate of the Supreme Court, said he was at his home in Azampur village of Sunamganj's Dowerabazar upazila when the flash floods first hit.

"In the last couple of days, I have closely observed the struggle of the affected people. The government allotment is so small that many people would have been starved if the solvent locals did not lend their support," he said.

Faruque Mahmud Chowdhury, president of the Sylhet divisional unit of Sushashon Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), said that on the one hand,

the amount of relief provided is insufficient, and the distribution is also questionable.

"The process of distributing relief provides an opportunity for local representatives to commit irregularities," he said, calling for adequate supply and transparency in distribution.

Abdul Karim Kim, coordinator of Songkhubdho Nagorik Andolon Sylhet, said the Sylhet region gets affected by floods every year, yet the government fails to allot adequate relief.

"The government ought to provide relief assistance to the people in proportion to their needs."

Speaking on the matter, Debojit Singha, additional divisional commissioner (general) of Sylhet, said, "As general relief, we have received enough cash, rice, baby food, and animal feed. Additionally, 26,000 relief packs with 14 essential items have been provided by the Prime Minister's special relief fund."

"Reaching those residing in shelter centers was our top priority because they are the most severely affected and they have received relief multiple times. We are aiming to extend relief efforts to the people left in the villages and remote areas now that we have received a new allocation."

According to the Water Development Board (WDB), as of 9:00am yesterday, the water level of the Surma River was flowing 16cm above the danger mark at Sylhet point and 65cm above the danger

mark at Kanaighat point.

On the other hand, the Kushiara River was flowing 61cm above the danger mark at Amalsid point, 13cm above the danger mark at Sheola point, 1.2cm above the danger mark at Fenchuganj point, and 24cm above the danger mark at Sherpur point.

Shah Mohammad Sajib Hossain, Assistant Meteorologist at Sylhet Weather Office, told UNB that there was no rainfall from Thursday noon till Friday morning.

Meanwhile, the local meteorological department has predicted moderate to heavy rains in some parts of Sylhet for the next few days due to active monsoon conditions.

In the past three weeks, Sylhet city has been inundated five times due to heavy rains, affecting hundreds of areas and causing untold suffering to the dwellers.

Earlier, on May 29, heavy rains and hill torrents from upstream caused flooding in Sylhet. The flood situation began to normalise on June 8.

However, continuous rains starting in the early hours of June 17 led to another flood in the district.

Prior to this, in May, floods were caused by hill torrents and rains from upstream in India.

CORRECTION
The Sylhet floods story in Friday's newspaper mentioned that 103,776 people were at shelters when, in reality, over 51,000 people moved to shelters. We apologise for the inadvertent mistake.

Hasina-Modi talks in Delhi today

FROM PAGE 1

evening, Hasina called upon India businesspeople to invest in Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh government gives priority to the neighbouring countries for trade, business and investment, PM's Private Industry and Investment Affairs Adviser Salman quoted Hasina as saying while briefing reporters after the meeting.

Hasina said Bangladesh is setting up 100 special economic zones and the Indian entrepreneurs can invest there.

The CII team told Hasina that they in collaboration with Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) want to work in Bangladesh's different sectors, including agriculture, IT and logistics.

He said Bangladeshi businesspeople raised the issue of non-tariff barriers and urged the CII delegation to prevail upon the Indian government to address the issue.

FBCCI President Mahbul Alam, Nitol Niloy Group Chairman Abdul Matlub Ahmad, Pran RFL Group Chairman Ahsan Khan Chowdhury and some other leading Bangladeshi businesspeople were also present.

Today morning, red carpet will be rolled out for Hasina at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, where she will receive formally by Modi. She will also inspect the guard of honour there.

Hasina is scheduled to visit Raj Ghat to pay tribute to the Father of the Indian Nation Mahatma Gandhi by placing a wreath at his Samadhi. She will sign the visitor's book there.

The premier will attend a luncheon hosted by Modi at the Hyderabad House.

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Docs, engineers

FROM PAGE 1

"But doctors, engineers and other cadre officials wait for years for a promotion. In most cases, they work under younger admin cadre colleagues. It is clear discrimination."

SM Golam Kibria, former president of BCS Information Association, said while some administration cadre officers of the 13th BCS have been appointed as secretaries – the top grade for a bureaucrat – officers of the same batch in education cadre have reached the 4th grade at best, and those in health reached the 3rd grade.

Prof Baizid Koorshid Riaz, additional director general of the Directorate General of Medical

Education, said, "A deputy secretary gets an interest-free car loan and Tk 50,000 per month to pay for a chauffeur and maintain the vehicle. A professor gets no such thing."

Serajul Islam Choudhury said medical graduates choosing other fields is alarming when the country is facing a dearth of doctors, especially in rural areas.

"It's a pity that they go to villages as public servants, but not as physicians."

Contacted, PSC Chairman Sohorab Hossain said he has nothing to comment on the issue.

The commission recommends candidates as per the rules, he said.

News reports on cops 'motivated, misleading'

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Asaduzzaman Khan on Thursday said the graft allegations against Asaduzzaman appeared to be based on speculation.

The same day, the BPSA, a platform of the police's BCS cadre officials, held a meeting at the police headquarters. Some participants of the meeting even demanded that legal action be taken against those involved in publishing such news.

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), said police's stance is akin to "shooting the messenger".

"By doing this, they are actually warning the people and the media that you don't comment on the graft allegations or publish reports in the media. They are actually threatening the media and the people," he told The Daily Star when asked for his reaction on the BPSA statement.

He said the BPSA, as a representative association of police, does not want publication of reports on irregularities and corruption by the force members.

BPSA STATEMENT
According to the statement, anti-liberation and anti-state elements, along with cyber terrorists hiding abroad, are using the social media to assassinate the characters of police officers through spreading misinformation. Inspired by them, several media outlets are running biased and negative reports against some former and current members of the police.

The statement, signed by BPSA President Monirul Islam, additional IGP, and General Secretary Golam Mostafa Russel, superintendent of Narayanganj police, said in most cases, the reports did not mention their sources of information. Such reports damage morale and tarnish image of the police members.

It went on to say that because of the police's successful role against the anti-liberation, communal, and anti-democracy forces' activities like torching properties and hurling petrol bombs, they are constantly criticising the police force.

It added that some media outlets are publishing negative reports against certain police officers out of personal vengeance and individual interests, which goes against the ethics of journalism.

The BPSA said the media has obligations to publish impartial news. "But for some mysterious reasons, a section of the media is cleverly trying to make the police force controversial, which is nothing but an attempt to stifle honest journalism. Such one-sided behaviour from the media is

tantamount to deceiving the general readers."

In the interest of public safety, the BPSA requested the media to refrain from publishing any misleading reports.

The association's statement also highlighted the role of police in uprooting terrorism and militancy and also during the Covid-19 pandemic.

IFTEKHARUZZAMAN'S REACTION

Iftekharuzzaman said the BPSA took a stance to save the police officials against whom graft allegations have been brought.

"Instead, they could have said that they were embarrassed by the reports on the allegations against their fellow members. As a police association, it should state that they are ready to cooperate with investigations.

"If they can do it, people's faith in them would be restored to some extent," Iftekharuzzaman said.

Ukrainian drones strike 4 Russian oil refineries

Radar stations, intel centres in Bryansk, occupied Crimea also hit

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukrainian long-range attack drones struck four Russian oil refineries as well as radar stations and other military targets in Russia in a major attack in the early hours of yesterday, Kyiv's military said.

Ukraine has dramatically stepped up its use of drones this year to attack Russian oil facilities, which it deems legitimate military targets that are fuelling Russian troops in their nearly 28-month-old invasion.

"Unmanned aerial vehicles attacked the Afipsky, Ilsky, Krasnodar, and Astrakhan oil refineries," the Ukrainian military said in a statement on the Telegram messaging app.

Russia's military said earlier that it had downed 70 drones over the Black Sea and Ukraine's occupied Crimean peninsula, 43 drones over Russia's Krasnodar region and one more over Russia's Volgograd region yesterday.

A Kyiv intelligence source told Reuters that the Afipsky, Ilsky and Krasnodar oil refineries produced fuel for Russia's Black Sea Fleet and that the drone operation targeting them had been conducted jointly with the SBU security service.