



**Sea of relief supplies fills DU campus**

P3



**Regain the land and regain its soul too**

P8



**High-carb foods that are actually healthy**

P10



**'Hamza will be a great addition'**

P11

# Millions cut off without food, power

Situation dire in Feni, Noakhali, Cumilla; many flood shelters overcrowded

MD ABBAS and ANWARUL HAIDER

Millions of people were still left without electricity and any means of communication, and relief materials had not reached many remote areas where families were stranded in flooded villages for days.

Even the shelters opened by the government in the affected districts have become overcrowded yesterday, locals said.

The situation was particularly dire in Feni, Noakhali and Cumilla where relief materials had not reached many remote areas.

Five upazilas of Feni still remained inaccessible by road yesterday even as the waters were receding.

Family members could not reach each other over the phone as almost every cell phone tower in the district was offline.

**"We only had time to go to the roof of a neighbour's house. The water gushed in very fast. The walls of the corrugated iron sheet of our hut fell apart within a short time. Soon, the water was as high as the tin roof of our house."**

Aleya Begum of Chhagalnaiya, Feni.

Locals said there were severe crises of drinking water and food in many areas of the district.

"Our house was submerged. We only had time to go to the roof of a neighbour's house. The water gushed in very fast. The walls of the corrugated iron sheet of our hut fell apart within a short time. Soon, the water was as high as the tin roof of our house," said 45-year-old Aleya Begum, a resident of Khopal area of Chhagalnaiya upazila.

She, her 70-year-old mother-in-law Saleha Begum, and six others of the area had spent three days on the roof of their neighbour's one-storey building.

Saleha said, "I have never fought such a battle with water. I thought I was dying. We cannot contact anyone. My husband and sons had not returned home. We survived only on some dry food and little drinking water."

Officials said three people drowned in the flood-affected districts yesterday, taking the toll from the floods to 18.

According to a statement from the chief adviser's office, almost 9.8 lakh people were marooned in 11 districts. They were in desperate need of drinking water, oral saline, and food.

About 50.94 lakh people in 77 upazilas of 12 districts have been affected by the floods so far.

Over 3 lakh people took shelter at the 3,513 shelters opened by the government.

As the downpour stopped, the situation improved in Cumilla, Noakhali, Brahmanbaria, Laxmipur, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Khagrachhari, Rangamati, Chattogram, and Cox's Bazar, said the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre.

However, more areas were flooded in Senbagh upazila

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Riding a rickshaw van, a family negotiates a flooded road near Feni Girls' Cadet College on their way to a shelter in Feni town yesterday. In the distance, other flood victims are also seen moving to safety. Top right, an army boat carries people to a shelter. Bottom right, a section of the Dhaka-Chattogram highway submerged in floodwaters in Feni's Lalpol area.

PHOTO: NAHID MAZHAR, NAIMUR RAHMAN

## Flood causes 50km jam on Dhaka-Ctg highway

People stranded for days now worry about robberies too

FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN

The economic lifeline of the country, the Dhaka-Chattogram highway, remains flooded in Feni.

Police and highway officials have reported that the flooding of around five to six kilometres of the highway in Feni's Lalpol area caused a nearly 50km tailback.

Passengers and cargo vehicles have been stranded for days. Those rushing to Feni and Chattogram's Mirsarai to help the flood affected people with relief materials are also facing difficulties.

Many drivers told this correspondent that they have been stuck in Feni for the last three days.

Khairul Islam, Superintendent of Highway Police Cumilla Region, told The Daily Star over phone, "Due to floodwater on the highway, vehicles have remained stranded for the last three days. The

SEE PAGE 6 COL 5

### Star INTERVIEW

## Reshuffle of officials for ensuring reforms

Law Adviser Asif Nazrul tells Star, says efforts on for withdrawing false cases

GOLAM MORTOZA

The interim government aims to reform the administration in order to make it people-oriented, inclusive, transparent, and accountable, says Law Adviser Asif Nazrul.

"Reforms involve more than just appointing qualified individuals. Competent people are being placed in positions to ensure that no one can obstruct the reform process. Reforms signify a shift towards a more people-oriented, inclusive, transparent, and accountable administration. We must make that happen," he said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star.

Before the reforms, the administration, the judiciary and the police must get rid of those who helped an autocratic government sustain for



over one and a half decades, he said, replying to a query on the massive reshuffle in different tiers of the administration and other bodies.

"Is it possible to bring reforms keeping in place the people committing extrajudicial killings? Is it possible to reform the police administration with Harun [Harunor Rashid, former chief of DMP's DB] still in the force? These people should be replaced by honest and competent ones," Asif said.

After bringing in these people, he said, reforms will be done in the institutions, laws and policies. Efforts were already made to withdraw false cases filed over the killings during the uprising in July and early August. "Now we will try to change the policy and laws

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

## Immediately unveil roadmap for elections

Fakhrul asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday urged the interim government to place immediately a roadmap to the next general election.

He also called for an urgent dialogue on the national polls between the new government headed by Professor Muhammad Yunus and the political parties.

Fakhrul made the call at a discussion organised by the Bhasani Anusari Parishad at the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka to mark the ninth death anniversary of former prime minister Kazi Zafar Ahmed.

"We have a lot of expectations from the interim government. We think they will hold the elections within a reasonable time," he said, voicing the party's confidence in the Yunus-led government. "But [election] must be done within a specific, limited and reasonable time."

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



## Hasina, 7 journos sued for murder

BJC concerned over arrest of newspersons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A murder case has been filed against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 192 others, including seven journalists, over the death of a student during protests in Dhaka's Jatrabari on July 19.

The journalists are Mozammel Haque Babu, managing director and editor-in-chief of Ekattor TV; Syed Ishtiaque Reza, former chief news editor (CNE) of Ekattor TV; Ahmed Jobaer, a director of Somoy TV; Munni Saha, former CNE of ATN News; Farzana Rupa, former principal correspondent of Ekattor TV; Shakil Ahmed, former head of news at Ekattor TV; and Nayeemul Islam Khan, Hasina's press secretary.

Among them, couple Shakil and Farzana are on remand for four days

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Vehicles are caught in a long tailback on and under the Babubazar Bridge in Old Dhaka's Nayabazar area, causing suffering to the road users. The photo was taken around 2:00pm yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## EAVESDROPPING TECH Release white paper on its use against dissent

Civil society members urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Civil society members yesterday called upon the government to publish a white paper on the recent use of software and technology to suppress dissent and civil rights in the country.

They made the call at a dialogue organised by Civil Reform Group Bangladesh 2.0 at the capital's BASIS auditorium.

Speakers at the event highlighted that thousands of crores of taka was spent on purchasing advanced software and technology from Israel and some other countries over the past decade.

Citizens have the right to know about those technologies and their applications, they observed.

Although the authorities claimed to have bought those expensive technologies for national security, those have mainly been used for political purposes to stifle dissent, the speakers said.

The dialogue titled "Surveillance, the Right to Privacy,

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

