

## 1 dead, three go missing as trawler capsizes in Bay 19 others rescued

UNB, Cox's Bazar

A fishermen died and three remained missing, while 19 others were rescued after a fishing trawler, “FB Rashida” carrying 23 fishermen, capsized during a storm in the Bay of Bengal yesterday afternoon.

The incident occurred near Laboni Point in Cox's Bazar.

The deceased is Jamal, a resident of Chattogram's Lohagara.

According to Osman Gani, senior in-charge of Sea Safe Lifeguard, the trawler capsized due to a storm. One of the rescued, Jamal, was critically injured and declared dead after being taken to the hospital. The others are receiving treatment.

“We have spoken to the injured fishermen, who mentioned there were 23 fishermen onboard,” he said.

Tanvir Hossain, magistrate of the Tourist Cell of Cox's Bazar District Administration, said, “The trawler is now ashore, and there are a few fishermen still missing.”

“Once the injured are stable, we will be able to gather more details,” he added.

## Dengue

FROM PAGE 1

In the lean season, meaning November to February, fewer people are infected by the virus. If the authorities identify the homes of those patients and thoroughly rid those of mosquitos and the breeding spots, then there will be fewer dengue cases throughout the rest of the year.

“The authorities ignore this suggestion every year,” he said.

The current outbreak can be tackled only through identifying the hotspots and taking measures, he added.

Pointing out the limitations of the database on dengue, Monzur said the DGHS data is sourced only from 81 district and division-level hospitals.

But dengue patients are treated at over 16,000 public and private hospitals, clinics, and other facilities, said the former president of Zoological Society of Bangladesh.

Without proper data, the preventive steps will always remain ineffective.

Prof Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist at Jahangirnagar University, said, “Leadership is important in anti-mosquito campaigns. But there is no mayor. Since dengue has now spread to union parishad areas, local government bodies will have to be prepared to curb the Aedes population. Equipment, logistics, and necessary training will be required.”

The local government bodies must be equipped to act and the government should provide the funds.

Raising awareness, organising anti-mosquito campaigns, and implementing compulsory measures such as dengue testing, and ensuring hospitalisation of individuals experiencing a second infection are crucial, he added.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman said the absence of surveillance in district towns was a major failure on the part of the authorities.

“The government must have effective surveillance to identify dengue hotspots. This will enable the local government departments, community organisations, and educational institutions to conduct targeted interventions,” he said.

After the fall of the Awami League government in early August, 12 city corporation mayors, 330 municipality mayors and administrators, almost all the zilla and upazila parishad chairmen were removed.

The interim government then appointed administrators to carry out the responsibilities of the mayors.



PHOTO: ANIK SHARIAR

The roads and homes of Bhupatipur village under Chhoyani union in Noakhali's Begumgunj upazila were still submerged on September 11, a month after devastation by flash floods. Around 70 percent of eight upazilas in the district have been affected by prolonged flooding.

## Half of Noakhali still reeling from flood

FROM PAGE 1

Apart from Hatia, the remaining eight upazilas of Noakhali were hit by floods. Around 60 percent of these upazilas are still under water. The most affected upazilas are Begumganj, Senbagh, Chatkhil, Sonaimuri, and Sadar.

Md Salim of Baro Sardar Para of Senbagh upazila said the roads and homes of the village are still under water with all the canals in the area blocked, filled up with garbage or encroached on.

“We are requesting the government to investigate the matter and clear the canals. We do not seek any other assistance,” he said.

Munshi Amir Faisal, executive engineer of the Water Development Board in Noakhali, said only 2 cm of floodwater receded in the district from 6:00am to 6:00pm last Wednesday.

The water from Chatkhil, Sonaimuri, Begumganj, and Sadar upazilas falls into the Meghna river through the Rahmatkhali canal of Lakshmipur district through the Rahmatkhali regulator, according to him.

“However, the Lakshmipur part of the Rahmatkhali canal has not been excavated for a long time. Due to this, floodwater is not receding quickly. Moreover, there is a pile of

garbage in every canal.”

A cross dam was constructed in an area of 16 km up from Mannan Nagar to Atakpalia of sadar upazila in 1964 to save 71,000 hectares of land in Subarnachar upazila from river erosion.

But due to the construction of the dam, Subarnachar has become a higher ground than sadar upazila, obstructing the natural drainage system, Faisal said.

Abdul Awal, executive director of Noakhali Rural Development Society who is vocal about the environmental degradation, said hundreds of big ponds

dug in Noakhali earlier for holding rainwater have been filled up for construction.

Noakhali and Lakshmipur had numerous small and big canals, including Noakhali, Begumganj's Wabda, and Bhulua, which were interconnected, according to him.

“Now the canals have been encroached on for fish farming. So, the path for floodwater to the sea is now blocked,” Awal said.

“Today's Majidde town itself was once a big canal named Chhagalmara. Noakhali was next to Chhagalmara. Water used to go to Lakshmipur

through these canals. Noakhali had a natural drainage system in the past. Now all canals are blocked by illegal structures, plastic garbage, or other objects,” he said.

He suggested using satellite imagery to find out the path of the natural flow of water.

“It is very important to identify the obstacles and then remove them on a priority basis. The sea levels continue to rise. In that case, the saline water of the sea can enter the land and stay for a long time. To end this crisis, the government needs to have a mega plan,” Awal said.

## How Hasina's flight was kept off radar

FROM PAGE 1

In Ghaziabad, 30km from the Indian capital, according to a screen grab of the radar screen at the Dhaka airport.

Aviation experts said that it was likely that the plane made the detour, by going towards Kolkata first instead of flying straight to Delhi, because it wanted to spend as little time as possible in Bangladesh airspace.

The Dhaka to Delhi route flies over Rajshahi and requires several minutes more in Bangladesh airspace than the Dhaka to Kolkata route.

Indian Foreign Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told

operating in its airspace.

Before taking off, the crew manually enters this code into the aircraft's transponder.

When a flight plan is approved, the code is sent to the destination air traffic controller, in this case it was Kolkata.

Civil aviation sources said there is a direct hotline between Dhaka and Kolkata's air traffic control to notify each other about approaching planes.

Even though the plane was invisible to secondary radar, used by ATCs, the cockpit crew maintained continuous communication with different air traffic controllers, including

The ground controller warns the plane that two Antonov An-32s were there and to taxi with caution.

The plane was later cleared for an initial altitude of 20,000 feet by the ATC.

“AJX 1431 [...] cleared for take-off, after take-off, left-turn 238 [heading], continue climb [to] flight level 200 [20,000 feet], we are rolling,” said the pilot as he repeated the controller's instructions as required and notified the ATC that the plane was taking off.

The tower responded, “Roger” and Sheikh Hasina's flight was in the air.

After AJAX1431 crossed 4,000 feet, the pilot contacted the Dhaka area

Dhaka ATC.

The ATC then also alerted the cockpit crew about traffic, an Airbus A320 heading for Dhaka. It said the Airbus was above them and was descending to 26,000 feet.

Soon afterwards, Dhaka ATC said, “AJX 1431 change to Kolkata control”, which means it asked the crew to get in touch with the Kolkata area controller and announce its arrival. This is usually done when the flight is close to the border, sources said.

Air Commodore AFM Atiquzzaman, member (operations & planning) at the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh was at the

India Today, after Hasina's plane crossed the border, it was escorted by two Dassault Rafale fighter jets of the 101 squadron at Hashimara airbase in West Bengal.

The fighters were waiting for the C-130.

India Today on August 6 said the Indian authorities started monitoring the flight around 10km from the Indian border with Bangladesh.

Sources claimed that neither Hasina, nor her sister Sheikh Rehana, or the flight crew and Security Services Force (SSF) members went through immigrations before departing Dhaka.

Hasina was carrying a diplomatic passport,



The flight path of AJAX1431 charted by flight radar24.com on August 5.

the Rajya Sabha on August 6 that Hasina had sought approval to come to India on a “short notice”.

According to the flight progress strip, Indian authorities were notified of the plane entering its airspace.

Hasina's flight was given squawk code 4131, a unique four-digit code assigned by the ATC to each aircraft

the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport's traffic controller, and most likely the Kolkata area air traffic controller.

The recording of the radio communications between the C-130 and the ground controller at Dhaka reveals that flight AJAX1431 chose taxiway South Alpha to get on runway 32 from Bangabandhu Airbase.

the hill was loosened by heavy rain.

Shamsud Dauza Nayan, additional commissioner of Cox's Bazar Relief and Repatriation Commission office, said three houses were destroyed in a landslide at the Rohingya camp in Ukhiya's Hakimpura.

He said the three siblings died on the spot.

Cox's Bazar experienced moderate to heavy rain since Wednesday, leading to waterlogging in many areas of

the district.

Abdul Hannan, assistant meteorologist at Cox's Bazar Met office, said they recorded 501 mm rain in the district in 24 hours preceding 3:00pm yesterday, the highest rainfall recorded in the district in a single day this monsoon.

Most of the roads, including Kolatali Road, Sugandha Road and Seagull Road, in the district town have gone under water and thousands of people living in low-laying areas have been

marooned.

Rainwater has entered more than 500 hotels, guesthouses, cottages, resorts and the shops at Zhinuk Market in the town.

The record rainfall has left thousands of tourists confined to their hotel rooms.

Shamim Ahmed, a tourist from Dhaka's Tejoaon area, said he came to Cox's Bazar with his family to visit different areas of the town, Teknaf and Ramu. But the plan has been ruined due to

the incessant rain.

Abul Kashem Sikdar, president of Cox's Bazar Hotel Motel, Guest House and Cottage Owners Association, said that he did not see such massive flooding in the town in the last 50 years.

He blamed unplanned road development, poor maintenance of drains and hill cutting for such massive waterlogging.

The assistant meteorologist said heavy rain may continue in the district today.



A screen grab of the radar monitor at Dhaka ATC shows flight AJAX1431 after it switched on its transponders moments before it entered Indian airspace.

## MEETING WITH BSF BGB strongly protests border killings

BSS, Thakurgaon

The Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) has strongly protested and condemned border killings, highlighting the incident where a 15-year-old Bangladeshi youth, Jayanta Kumar Singh, was shot dead by BSF at Baladangi point in Thakurgaon on September 9.

BGB (Rangpur Region) raised the issue when Indian Border Security Force (BSF) North Bengal Frontier held a courtesy meeting with BGB at the Banglabandha-Phulbari Integrated Check Post ICP on the Bangladesh-India border on Thursday, according to a BGB press release issued yesterday.

In response, Inspector General (IG) of BSF North Bengal Frontier Shri Surya Kumar Sharma expressed regret for the unexpected incident involving the BSF.

He also assured the BGB delegation that the BSF would not open fire on any Bangladeshi citizens along the border areas in the future.

The meeting was also attended, among others, by Rangpur Region Commander of the BGB Brigadier General Khandaker Shafiquzzaman, Deputy Inspector Generals (DIGs) of the Siliguri and Kishanganj Sectors and other BGB and BSF officials.

Both the paramilitary forces also agreed to work jointly on curbing cross-border crimes, preventing illegal border crossing, and raising awareness among the citizens of both countries residing in the border areas.

## BARAPUKURIA POWER PLANT Partial operation resumes after 3-day shutdown

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Following a three-day complete shutdown, the 525MW Barapukuria Coal-Based Thermal Power Plant in Dinajpur has resumed operation partially.

Following necessary repairs, the plant's Unit 1 began generating electricity at half capacity around 8:30pm Thursday.

Although this unit, one of three, is capable of generating 125MW of electricity, it's currently supplying 60.65 MW to the national grid, according to Chief Engineer Md Abu Bakar Siddique.

Unit 1 has been offline since September 6 while Unit 3, which has been offline since late July, briefly operated from September 6 to September 9 before a technical glitch shut it down again.

An official from the plant's electrical department said although the plant has three units, power is usually generated by Unit 1 and Unit 3, while Unit 2 remains inactive for various reasons.

Since November 2020, the 125 MW Unit 2 – which previously contributed 65.70MW – has been inactive.

In late July this year, the 275 MW Unit 3, which usually produces 190-250 MW, also ceased operations.

The remaining Unit 1 was operational till September 5 and was generating 60.65MW before being taken offline for necessary repairs, said the chief engineer.

On September 6, Unit 3 was brought back online but was shut down again on September 9 due to a failure of the oil pump.

This led to a complete halt in power production, which caused severe load shedding in eight northern districts.

The power plant, which depends on coal supplied by the nearby Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited (BCMCL), requires about 5,500 tonnes of coal daily to operate all three units at full capacity.

Currently, BCMCL has a stockpile of 2,30,000 tonnes, and the mine supplies around 3,000-3,500 tonnes daily.

However, all three units are never operated simultaneously. Harbin International and CMC XMC, both Chinese companies, are on contracts to handle the plant's maintenance and operations.

Their five-year contract is set to expire next year.

The contractors have requested 15 days to resolve the issue, and once the necessary machinery arrives from China, Unit 3 is expected to be back online, added the chief engineer.

## Economy, trade

FROM PAGE 1

USAID and the Office of the US Trade Representative will also be in the delegation.

They will tomorrow call on Chief Adviser Prof Yunus, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain, and Finance Adviser Saleh Uddin Ahmed, Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin told reporters at his ministry on Thursday.

He added that the delegation will also hold an official meeting with him over lunch that day.

Officials from the ministries of foreign affairs, finance, commerce, labour, and Bangladesh Bank are also scheduled to be present.

“US and Bangladeshi officials will discuss how the United States can support Bangladesh's economic growth, financial stability and development needs,” said the US State Department in a statement ahead of the visit.

“The United States is optimistic that, by implementing needed reforms, Bangladesh can address its economic vulnerabilities and build a foundation for continued growth and increased prosperity,” Brent Neiman told The Financial Times on Tuesday.

The delegation is expected to discuss Bangladesh's fiscal and monetary policy, and the health of its financial system, he said.

Bangladesh's relations with the US were strained during the AL government. In December 2021, Washington imposed sanctions on the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) over allegations of extrajudicial killings.

In 2023, the US announced a visa policy for Bangladeshis ahead of the general elections. Following

the January 2024 elections, the US declared that the elections were neither free nor participatory.

“The US delegation's visit after the formation of the interim government only demonstrates how the US gives importance to our relationship,” Foreign Secretary Jashim said on Thursday.

“The discussion will be multidimensional. We are also preparing accordingly. In general, I would say, the government wants a mutual beneficial relationship,” he said without detailing the meeting agenda.

A diplomatic source said withdrawing sanctions on Rab will require time. Meanwhile, Washington can work in supporting reforms in law enforcement, including on accountability, prosecution, and training.

According to foreign ministry officials, Dhaka is expecting Washington to provide funds under the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) that provides equity finance. The US has been working on smart grid systems in Bangladesh. This can be an area of financing.

Earlier, Washington said finance under DFC requires improvement of labour condition – something that the current government is working on.

Another official said the US wants an improved investment climate and reforms in the financial management sector, especially in preventing financial fraud. With all these reforms now underway, hopefully, the US will come ahead with more investment, the official said.