



## Extreme weather events threatening food security

PINAKI ROY and PORIMOL PALMA

Since May last year, Bangladesh faced more than a dozen extreme weather events – four cyclones, nine incidents of floods, and multiple spells of heavy rains, heatwaves, and cold waves – and they now threaten food security.

These events not only harmed farmers and food security, but also



➤ Bangladesh suffered extreme weather events in 15 out of the last 17 months

➤ DAE says crop damage due to floods, cyclones this year worth Tk 6,969cr

affected the economy, agriculturists and economists said.

Food security is expected to remain fragile, given the persisting economic constraints, high inflation and likely weather extremes, such as cyclones, during the monsoon season, read the latest report of Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Luckily, the country did not have to import cereal last fiscal year, but the FAO report says it could be among the countries that would import cereals in 2024-25.

Humayun Kabir, a farmer of Kamalganj in Moulvibazar, has been hit by floods four times this year. The Aman crop he planted has been destroyed. Now he does not have any seedlings, and the window for planting the crop is closing.

"...Most of my fields are now abandoned, with sand and silt accumulated on them," Humayun told The Daily Star.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension, the extreme weather events damaged four to 15 percent crops in seven to 50 districts since May last year.

The two recent floods in Chattogram, Sylhet, and Mymensingh divisions damaged an estimated yield of about 10 lakh tonnes of Aman just before the plants were to flower, according to the DAE.

The flooding in the eastern region in August-September was unprecedented.

Mujibul Haque, a farmer of Sreechandapur village under Fulgazi

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



The students of Vigarunnisa Noon School and College flash the V-sign for the cameras as they celebrate their GPA-5 in this year's HSC exams, the results of which were published yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## HSC pass rate drops, number of GPA-5 rises

### Exams faced many roadblocks

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Though students did not have to sit for nearly half of the exams, the pass rate for this year's Higher Secondary Certificate still saw a slight drop.

As many of the tests were not held following the demands of a section of examinees, the results of those were

PASS RATE	GPA-5
75.56	1,31,376
GIRLS: 78.27	72,788
BOYS: 72.55	58,588

based on the students' SSC performances. According to the results published by the boards yesterday, the pass rate of the candidates under nine general education boards has dropped from last year's 75.90 to 75.56 this year.

Due to unforeseen circumstances this year, students of eight boards sat for only seven exams out of 13, while those in Sylhet were able to sit for only three, said Prof Tapan Kumar Sarkar, chairman of the Inter-Education Board Coordination Committee.

The exams began on June 30 and were supposed to continue till August 21. In Sylhet, they began on July 9 as the region was reeling from floods.

After seven tests were taken elsewhere and three were taken in Sylhet, the countrywide anti-discrimination student protests had escalated, prompting the then government to postpone the remaining tests indefinitely on July 16.

After the ousting of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5, the interim government, formed on August

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

## 8 die of dengue in a day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least eight dengue patients died, while 1,108 patients were hospitalised in the 24 hours till yesterday morning.

Of the deaths, one each was recorded in Barishal, Chattogram, and Dhaka divisions and the rest in Dhaka city.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), with the new deaths and cases, the death toll rose to 223 while the total number of cases rose to 44,764, of which 25,597 are from outside Dhaka.

## Weak policing, polls uncertainty pose high risk to economy

Says WB in its latest report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank (WB) identified law and order, uncertainty surrounding the next general election and weak financial sector as the three major downside risks to Bangladesh's economy and development.

Subsequently, the Washington-based multilateral lender recommended five reform priorities to offset the risks in its 'Bangladesh Development Update, Creating Jobs

for a Better Future', which was released yesterday.

The WB said the downside risks have increased and significant uncertainties remain.

Although the interim government has prioritised law and order, restoring the police's full strength may take time due to the widespread destruction of police infrastructure.

"First, safety and security concerns persist and are likely to remain until the

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

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