



Rashida Begum winnows Aus paddy at Barakula village in Narail after farmers threshed the harvested crop yesterday. Aus is often used to produce various forms of rice and rice-based meals, and locals say this year's yield has been fairly good, selling for Tk 1,000 to 1,100 per maund.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

## Couple among 4 killed as bus hits easy bike

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Pubna

Four people, including a couple, were killed and two others injured after a bus hit a battery-run easy bike on the Bonpara-Kushtia highway in Baraigram upazila of Natore on Monday.

The deceased were identified as Anwar Ali, 60, and his wife Rashida Begum, 54, of Kalikapur in Baraigram; Nayon Islam, 28; and the easy bike driver, Munser Pramanik, 65, of Dhola village in Lalpur upazila of Natore.

Md Monjur Morshed, sub-inspector of Bonpara Highway Police Station, said the accident occurred around 4:00pm when a Kushtia-bound bus of Kolpona Paribahan hit the easy bike carrying five passengers.

Anwar, Nayon, and Munser died on Monday, while Rashida succumbed to her injuries at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.

The injured -- Rana and Russel, sons of the deceased couple -- are undergoing treatment at the RMCH. Police seized the bus, but its driver and helper managed to flee the scene. A case has been filed with the Bonpara Highway Police Station in this connection.

## Shop owner found dead near police station

OUR CORRESPONDENT,  
Netrakona

A man was found dead in his grocery shop, just 150 yards away from Mohanganj Police Station in Netrakona, on Monday night.

Police recovered the body of Narayan Pal, 40, and sent it to Netrakona Modern Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Law enforcers have collected CCTV footage from nearby areas, said Aminul Islam, officer-in-charge of Mohanganj Police Station.

OC Aminul said that a customer entered Narayan's shop, located at Thana Mor in Uttar Daulatpur, around 11:15pm and found his body on the ground. Narayan's throat was slit.

Shyamal Molla, general secretary of Mohanganj Grocery Traders' Association, said, "We demand a fair and speedy trial of those responsible for the murder."

# Illegal sand lifting worsens Meghna erosion

12 families displaced; locals demand admin intervention

JAHIDUL ISLAM, Narsingdi

Rubel Mia, 28, of Shantipur village under Mirzarchar union in Narsingdi's Raipura upazila, became homeless overnight after the Meghna swallowed his home.

With his eight-member family, Rubel took shelter in a neighbour's house after losing everything to the river. His home, once filled with life and laughter, now exists only in his memories.

"Meghna devoured our only home in early 2025. My neighbour Mainuddin gave us shelter out of kindness. Unchecked sand extraction by influential people has worsened the river's erosion," Rubel said.

Bilal Hossain, 40, a battery-run rickshaw puller from nearby Namarbari village, shared a similar ordeal. He now lives in a government shelter project, struggling to survive.

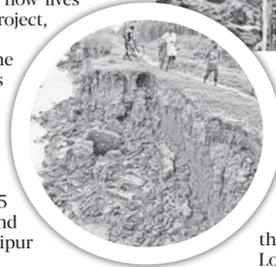
At least 12 families in the union became homeless this year due to severe erosion caused by rampant sand extraction from the Meghna.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw 10-15 suction dredgers lifting sand from the river in the Shantipur area.

Locals alleged that a Brahmanbaria-based company, Messrs Saimul Traders, which took lease of a sand quarry for Tk 8.93 crore in Nasirabad, has been illegally extracting sand from the Narsingdi side of the river.

They said the river's course has changed due to the sand lifting, even though there is no legal sand quarry in the entire Narsingdi district.

When villagers formed a human chain on



July 5 in protest, armed men attacked them.

Earlier on January 16 and May 19, the sand traders also opened fire on mobile court teams, forcing officials to retreat.

No case has been filed over the incidents.

Locals alleged that an organised armed gang now controls the river, patrolling it with speedboats and operating under the protection of influential political figures.

"Earlier Awami League men were involved; now some BNP men are in control of the sand looting," said a local resident, requesting anonymity.

Several leaders of local Jubo Dal, Jubo League, and Sramik League units are allegedly

involved in the illegal sand trade. They are also accused in multiple cases, including murder, robbery, and attacks on police.

Ashraf Uddin Bakul, BNP's assistant secretary for science and technology and an aspiring candidate from Raipura, said, "The allegations exist, but no concrete proof has been presented. Those involved do not represent BNP's ideals. We will take action at the right time."

Raipura UNO Masud Rana said police were instructed to file a case over the attack on the mobile court, but no case was recorded. "The administration is aware of the issue and will take action soon," he said.

Nazmul Hasan, deputy commissioner (revenue) of Narsingdi, said there is currently no legal sand quarry in the district. "Drives are ongoing, and we will take further action if new complaints arise," he said.



A truck plies along the pothole-riddled Shipyard Road in Khulna, which stretches from the Rupsha Traffic Intersection to Khan Jahan Ali Bridge. Once a busy commercial route, the road has now become a source of immense suffering for commuters, especially during the monsoon, as rainwater often leaves it waterlogged. The photo was taken yesterday.

MOHSIN MILON, Benapole

Vegetable growers in Jashore have been severely affected by persistent monsoon rains that damaged their fields and seedbeds. Despite replanting several times, farmers are struggling to save their crops due to continuous rainfall.

The repeated losses and delayed planting have already pushed back the harvesting of winter vegetables, raising fears of a shortage in the market.

Along the Chougacha Road in Abdulpur village, hundreds of seedbeds were seen covered with polythene sheets. Farmers there prepare cabbage and cauliflower seedlings from mid-June and sell them to growers across the region once they mature.

Currently, cauliflower seedlings sell for Tk 800-1,500 per thousand and cabbage for Tk 500-1,100, depending on quality. While prices are good, rainfall since July has caused major setbacks to cultivation, said farmers.

Nazrul Islam, a local grower, said, "Last

month I bought cabbage, eggplant, and cauliflower seedlings, but those were damaged in heavy rains. Now I've come again to buy seedlings for replanting. The production cost has doubled."

Another farmer, Alim Hossain, said his seedbeds were submerged seven to eight times in a month. "Those who bought seedlings from us also suffered huge losses. It rained continuously even in the past few days," he said.



Ahsan Rahman, another grower, said, "The rains have completely disrupted winter vegetable cultivation. By this time, we should be planting seedlings, but instead we're sowing seeds again. So, vegetables will reach markets later than usual."

Mosharrar Hossain, DAE deputy director in Jashore, said, "Traders from greater Jashore and other regions buy seedlings worth over Tk 25 crore. Although continuous rainfall caused losses, we are providing fertilisers and seeds to help farmers recover."

## Türkiye backs Bangladesh's democratic transition

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Türkiye yesterday reaffirmed its strong commitment to supporting Bangladesh's democratic transition and institution-building efforts as the country moves toward elections early next year.

The pledge came during the 4th political consultation between the two countries at the state guest house Padma, according to a joint statement. Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam and Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister A Berris Ekinci led their respective delegations.

Ekinci also paid a courtesy call on Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at the state guest house Jamuna yesterday. At the meeting, she conveyed the greetings and best wishes of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his invitation to Prof Yunus to visit Türkiye at a mutually convenient time.

In response, Prof Yunus said he would be delighted to visit Türkiye in the near future.

Ekinci also called on Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain, where the adviser underscored the need to boost bilateral trade and increase it to \$3 billion in the near future.

The two countries also reaffirmed their steadfast solidarity with the Palestinian people in their legitimate pursuit of inalienable rights and self-determination. They also stressed the urgent need for increased aid, justice and accountability for atrocities against the Rohingyas and their voluntary repatriation to Myanmar.

TEESTA RIVER

## Water recedes, but suffering far from over

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

The water level in the Teesta has fallen below the danger mark, easing flood conditions in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Rangpur, and Nilphamari.

Floodwaters have started receding in many areas, allowing people who had taken shelter on dams, roads, and flood centres to return home.



Around 9:00am yesterday, the water level at the Teesta Barrage point in Nilphamari's Dalia was recorded at 51.70 metres -- 45 centimetres below the danger mark. Kurigram WDB Executive Engineer Rakibul Hasan said, "We are keeping watch and will drop sand-filled geo-bags immediately if erosion starts."

Although water levels are falling, the sufferings of flood-hit families are far from over. In many low-lying areas, stagnant water still forces locals to live in makeshift huts covered with polythene sheets atop embankments.

Aklima Bewa, 65, from Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, said, "During floods we suffer, and when the water goes down, we suffer again. Now erosion will begin, and the river will take our land and home."

Lalmonirhat DC HM Raqib Hayder said, "Relief assistance has been distributed... If any houses are damaged, the affected families will be rehabilitated with government support."

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN