

Rain paralyses life in capital, causes fatalities

September 22, 2023

Online Desk: A mere 122 mm of rainfall brought life in the capital to a standstill last night and led to casualties, while other parts of the country also grappled with waterlogging as rain swept across several districts, starting at 6 pm. Four people, including three from the same family, lost their lives due to electrocution in Dhaka's Mirpur. The incident occurred on the opposite side of Jhilpar Slum, adjacent to Commerce College in Mirpur.

The incessant downpour led to severe waterlogging in various areas of Dhaka city, leaving commuters stranded and facing significant difficulties. Streets were inundated, and major roads experienced traffic congestion. Numerous areas in the capital, including Mirpur 10, Mirpur 11, Shyamoli, Mohammadpur, Dhanmondi, Purana Paltan, Gulistan, Old Dhaka, Bangshal Road, Bijoy Sarani, Eskaton, Farmgate, and Tejgaon, were submerged in floodwaters.

Meteorological officials attributed the persistent rainfall and thunderstorms in Dhaka city to a low-pressure area over the Northwest Bay and adjoining regions, now situated over Jharkhand, India. Hafizur Rahman, a meteorologist from the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), reported that 122 mm of rainfall was recorded in the capital, with rain continuing until around 12 am. At the time of filing this report, several parts of the capital, including Bongshal, Siddik Bazar, Dhaka University area, and some areas of Khilgaon, Rampura, and Old Dhaka, remain underwater.

A heart-wrenching video circulated on social media platforms yesterday night, showing a seven-year-old child being rescued from the floodwaters in the Mirpur area. Tragically, the child's parents and sister lost their lives due to electrocution in the water, while the child was found unconscious. In the video, one local resident is seen pulling the child out of the stagnant water, while others attempt to rescue additional victims using bamboo pipes.

Office-goers, particularly those employed in the private sector, endured tremendous hardships while returning home amidst the heavy rainfall and ensuing traffic gridlock, given that their work hours extend into the night. Shams Rahman, a journalist at New Age, shared his experience, saying, "I arrived home at 2:37 am, four hours after I boarded the bus." He expressed frustration at the city's inadequate public infrastructure, and said "This cursed city, with no development done for the public, took four lives today (at least). Among them was a baby. A baby."

Tanjila Tasnim, a student at Dhaka University and a resident of Bangladesh Kuwait Maitree Hall, reported that the hall's premises remained submerged in water. "We are unable to move from one building to another. We have been grappling with water logging issues for an extended period now," she lamented. Country's maximum rainfall for the last 24 hours till 6am today was recorded by 157 millimeters (mm) at Netrokona.

The Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD) has issued forecasts of further rainfall across the country in the next 24 hours. According to the Met office, "Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty winds are likely to occur in most places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Mymensingh, and Sylhet divisions, as well as other areas within Dhaka, Khulna, Barishal, and Chattogram divisions, with moderately heavy to very heavy rainfall expected in some places within Rangpur, Rajshahi, and Mymensingh divisions."