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The Daily Star

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After Ravana, BJP casts Deepika, who portrayed Sita in television serial Ramayana, as party candidate from Gujarat. **Page 5**

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Dinosaurs of tomorrow

Perhaps a day will come when typewriters will be extinct as computers slowly take over. **Page 3**

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To overcome the present crisis PM should involve all political parties — The Third View by Mahfuz Anam



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Garments sector may lose Tk 500 crore due to the recent devastating cyclone and tidal surge. **Page 8**

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NEWS BRIEFS

Sharif leaves Dhaka

Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif left Dhaka for home Monday morning after a day's visit to the cyclone-affected areas, reports BSS. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia saw the Pakistani leader off at Zia International Airport.

Hearing on Ershad's case adjourned

A single bench comprising Justice Anwarul Haque Chowdhury of the High Court Division adjourned Monday the hearing of the detention of former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad till May 28, reports BSS.

TK 91,38,257 to PM's Fund

Various organisations and individuals Monday donated a total of Tk 91,38,257 to Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the cyclone affected people. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia received the donation in cash and cheques at Sugandha Monday evening, reports UNB.

BNP nomination by May 10

Candidates seeking BNP nomination for the by-elections to 10 vacant seats of the Jatiya Sangsad have been requested to collect and submit nomination forms within May 10, a party press release said Monday, reports BSS.

France, UNDRO pledge mobilisation of world support : Gruel kitchens planned

1.5cr people in 74 UZs affected

Star Report

France has said it will propose a conference under the aegis of the United Nations to raise funds to help the cyclone victims while the United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation (UNDRO) has also pledged to mobilise world support in helping Bangladesh tide over the crisis.

The visiting French Minister for Humanitarian Action Bernard Kouchner and the visiting United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation (UNDRO) Coordinator Hamed Essafi made the commitments to the government.

Meanwhile, government is planning to open gruel kitchens in the cyclone affected areas to feed the hungry millions.

The survivors are facing acute shortages of food, drinking water, shelter and medicine.

The survivors in the offshore islands are living on scanty dry food such as chapatti, bread, beaten rice, and molasses.

It is impossible for them to cook as there is no firewood and they have no homes.

An official source indicated that the administration in co-operation with the armed forces is planning to open gruel kitchens in as many places as possible to supply cooked food to the survivors.

Last week's killer cyclone affected about one crore 50 lakh people in 74 upazilas of 13 coastal districts in the country.

According to official sources the death toll was about 125,720 and the loss of cattle-head about 110,000. Ten lakh dwelling houses and 5016 educational institutions were damaged.

The Government has sanctioned Taka 1,47,00,000 as GR cash and contingencies for the affected districts, a spokesman of the cell at the Old Sangsad Bhaban said.

Nine aircraft carrying different relief materials including tents, medicines, foods, blankets and clothes from the friendly countries have already reached Dhaka. These include

six from Saudi Arabia, two from Pakistan and one from UNICEF. Two Indian aircraft carrying water purifying tablets, bleaching powder, dry food and clothes are expected to reach Dhaka this morning, the spokesman said.

Nine thousand tons of rice and wheat were allotted as gratuitous relief for the severely affected areas of the districts of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Noakhali, Feni, Laxmipur, Bhola, Borguna, Patuakhali and Barisal.

The district authorities have been instructed to set up as many gruel kitchens as possible for feeding the distressed people specially in the most severely affected areas.

Reports received from the cyclone-hit areas said, the Hatiya island still remained cut off from the mainland to the district of Noakhali.

Noakhali control room told The Daily Star that till Monday a total of 3233 bodies were recovered in Hatiya. Besides 34 bodies from sadar upazila, 19 from Compantganj, two from Begumganj and one from Senbag were recovered.

The communication within the 40-mile-long Hatiya island has become impossible as there is no vehicle. The district administration could not send any transports due to lack of sea trucks to cross the Bay. The control room said that sea trucks might be available today.

One Khulna correspondent reports: the worst hit areas of Bhola are Char Fashion and Monpura upazilas where in many offshore islands normal life has become a nightmare to thousands of men, women and children. Casualty figures are rising everyday with the recovery of decomposed bodies from the banks of the river Meghna.

People of Char Nizam and Dhal Char along with Monpura and Char Kukri Mukri are still under the open sky with a very little quantity of food they received as relief from different sources.

Principal Nazrul Islam. See Page 10 Col. 2



Army troops engaged in clearing the Chittagong Port of sunken vessels and debris. The port was partially opened to ships yesterday. —Star photo

Commentary

Media needs an open channel for information

by S.M. Ali

As it happened during previous crises, people in Dhaka and other places have started listening avidly to foreign broadcasts, especially of BBC, for news about the damage caused by the last week's cyclone and, what's more important, about the relief operation. The reaction of the administration of Begum Khaleda Zia to this familiar phenomenon may well be somewhat mixed. It will rightly assume that reports of the grim suffering of the people of Bangladesh,

broadcast by foreign electronic media, would help in generating assistance from friendly nations abroad. On the other hand, it is obliged to accept — swallow may be a more appropriate word — criticisms, including some sweeping ones, of its performance in the relief operation.

A case in point is the BBC commentary, in English, broadcast on Sunday night. It dealt almost entirely with the lack of preparation on the part

See Page 10 Col. 1

Writ petition heard

'Acting President cannot complete ex-President's tenure'

By Supreme Court Correspondent

A Division Bench comprising Justice M.A. Jalil and Justice M. Badruzzaman of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court heard on Monday the writ petition raising the question of interpretation of the Constitutional provisions in order to determine as to when the elections to the offices of the President and the Vice President would be held and what would be the constitutional position of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed as Vice President if the election is not held by June 4, 1991.

The court will pass necessary orders. See Page 10 Col. 3

Chittagong open to hazards of the sea

Protection embankment washed away

From Moinuddin Naser

CHITTAGONG, May 6: The Chittagong city protection embankment has been totally washed away by the cyclonic tidal surge leaving the city completely open to any onslaught of the sea.

The embankment constructed in the late 70's, stretched from Patenga to Sitakundu protecting Chittagong city and other industrial installations in the area from inundation by the waters of the sea.

The embankment was 18 feet high and three times broader at the base. The height of the tidal surge

that hit the Chittagong coastal areas claiming hundreds of thousands of lives and crippling Chittagong industrially and economically was over 22 feet.

After construction of the embankment many installations were set up on the coast particularly in Patenga.

The Export Processing Zone (EPZ) at Halishahar was also planned after construction of the embankment considered a protector of the coast.

The embankment also protected the airforce and the naval bases and the Patenga Airport.

Industrial units, both public and private, at Patenga, Halishahar and adjacent areas were severely affected.

The destruction of the embankment has left Chittagong totally unprotected against the sea.

See Page 10 Col. 6

Court of Inquiry to probe causes of damage to aircraft, ships

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed who is also the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces has constituted a court of inquiry to probe the causes of damage to several aircraft of the Air Force and a number of vessels of the Navy in Chittagong, reports UNB.

The four-member court of inquiry will be headed by Maj Gen Nurul Haq and include a

See Page 10 Col. 1

Doomsday took more than nukes did in Japan

Waheedul Haque

O brother! O my sister! How did you survive? How could you? Is it because some one made some preparations that helped? Or you made the preparation yourself? What preparations could you make really? You couldn't just go off to the mainland all by yourself, leaving your family and all the kinsman in the village. Had you a cyclone shelter within miles of your home? What's the capacity of that?

So you didn't go for the so-called 'preparedness' although you know of the danger some twelve hours or a full day ahead — exactly like they did at the Patenga airport and that some dozens of planes. You had no way but to take it in your stride. And you thought perhaps it wouldn't come after all. The only thought left for those having no choice. And it came.

But how? You couldn't have

been standing than on your 15-foot high tin roof for that had been blown away. And the all-enveloping sea, obliterating every sign of human settlement was now swallowing you. You are now swimming and have cost all idea of where the others were gone. Only some of the tree tops were your last hope. Did you make for that? Were you in your senses to discern them?

Perhaps you only hit one. Or

you got hold of something floating. And survived. And you were — by so many things and hurt. By them. You did not lose your grip and survive. This is a miracle. This is a miracle of miracle that perhaps every other soul — one in every two-survived in Sandwip and Kutubdia and Hatiya and all those islands over which the — stood full 20-foot high for a whole night and more.

Talking of preparation —

surely they were made over 16 long years so that you would die. And the preparations paid well — lakhs died. Ah! to think of how they died. As heroically and horribly as you survived.

And when you came to — after passing out and remaining all but dead for — of time — how did you hold yourself together? How could you? There was not a living soul around. The vicinity — a

See Page 10 Col. 8

Shahabuddin, Khaleda talk relief measure

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia called on the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at his residence Monday evening, reports BSS. During the meeting she discussed with the Acting

See Page 10 Col. 1

President's Relief Godown placed at PM's disposal

The Rashtrapati Tran Bhandar (President's Relief Godown) and the Relief Coordination Cell have been placed at the disposal of the high-powered Relief Coordination Committee headed by the Prime Minister.

See Page 10 Col. 8

Petrol rationed in city

By Staff Correspondent

Distribution of petrol and octane has been rationed in Dhaka city for the last two days. Dislocation in supply from Chittagong by oil tankers due to April 29 cyclone has made the authorities take this step, sources say.

Filling stations in Dhaka city See Page 10 Col. 4

France to give short, long term assistance

France will propose that United Nations convene a conference of donors in New York to raise funds for reconstruction of areas battered by last week's cyclone and tidal surge, reports UNB.

French Minister for See Page 10 Col. 7

UNDRO to mobilise world support

The United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation (UNDRO) Coordinator, Hamed Essafi, Monday called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her Secretariat office, reports BSS.

The visiting UNDRO official See Page 10 Col. 6

Appeal For Relief To Devastating Cyclone Victims of April 29

It is notified for all concerned that the need of the hour for the survival of the Cyclone Victims of April 29 is dry food, milk powder, lantern, matches, kerosene stove, cooking vessels for a family comprising four to five members, dishes, pure drinking water and water purification tablets etc. These relief materials will be received by the Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation on behalf of Bangladesh Government at the Relief Centre at 92, 93 Mohakhali and in the ground floor of Jamiatul Modarresin mosque everyday from 9 a. m. in the morning till 9 p. m. These materials are being dispatched to devastated areas on emergency basis.

Director General

DPP(G)—5179-6/5 Relief and Rehabilitation G—80 Directorate.