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# The Daily Star

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Human rights cases decline in the Philippines  
Protecting the human rights of all Filipinos has been one of the hallmarks of the Aquino government for the past five years. Page 4

## Metropolitan Dhaka Day by Day



In a city that offers few options to those who are not lucky Jasim found his own answer to survival. Page 3

## Feature

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Oh, those cruel heart attacks! Page 6  
All for cyclone victims Page 9

## NEWS BRIEFS

### 40 pc forests destroyed

About 40 per cent of the forest resources worth about Taka one crore were destroyed along the coastal belts and in offshore islands and southern districts by the recent cyclone. According to the primary reports of the Forest Department the devastation that wrought havoc on life and property left 1.10 lakh acres of the region's 2.75 acres of forest area severely destroyed, reports UNB.

### Emergency EC meet on aid

BRUSSELS, May 7: The European Commission today called for an emergency meeting of European Community Aid officials to coordinate efforts to help cyclone devastated areas of Bangladesh and ensure supplies reach the needy. A spokesman said the 17-strong EC executive would ask current EC President Luxembourg to arrange the meeting, reports Reuters.

### Embankment threatened

HABIGANJ, May 7: The town protection embankment is threatened as the river Goral was flowing 90 centimetre above danger mark Tuesday evening, official sources said. Local people said the rising water level posed a threat to the embankment at several points on the outskirts of the town, including Mashajan, Mahmudabad, East Bhadoi, Lashkarpur, Tarugata and Khowatmukh, reports UNB.

### Dhaka to cut mission staff

The government is considering a squeeze in Bangladesh missions abroad as part of austerity measures against the backdrop of last week's devastating cyclone. Highly placed sources told UNB Tuesday those likely to be withdrawn would be absorbed in equivalent posts in the country. Country's missions in Berlin and Namibia have been closed after the April 29 cyclone.

Inclement weather hampers relief operations: Terrible stench fills offshore air

# Bury the dead



REACHING SUCCOUR: Restive survivors of the cyclone and tidal bore huddle together on the offshore island of Hatiya as an Air Force helicopter with relief tries to land but the chopper's every bid turns to nought as the islanders close in making it to go up and hover over them again Tuesday. — Photo Mohsin

## Star Report

Relief and rescue operations in vast tracts of the coastal belt could not be carried out smoothly due to the inclement weather that persisted almost throughout the day on Tuesday. Relief workers still find it extremely difficult to move freely in the affected areas because of horrible stench from decomposed human bodies and carcasses.

Local authorities in offshore islands, which were hit by the cyclone and tidal bore on April 29, the worst in recent memory, could not mobilise people to bury the dead as yet. Unless organised efforts are made to deploy grave-diggers, relief operation is bound to suffer. Relief workers will not approach the survivors till the bodies of human beings and animals are fully disposed off in natural process.

Air Force planes dropped relief materials by parachutes at Hatiya and Sandwip on the day. Air Vice-Marshal Montazuddin Ahmed landed at Hatiya to see for himself the latest situation and coordinate relief measures. He talked to the survivors and was told that his was the first batch to reach there since the disaster struck eight days ago. Hundreds of people thronged the chopper as soon as the Air Force Chief landed at Hatiya.

Our senior photographer, A. K. M. Mohsin, who accompanied the Air Chief during his relief mission said the islanders did not see the face of any relief worker till Tuesday. The survivors had no food, shelter and drinking water. Most of them were bare-bodied and found to be broken, physically and morally. From Hatiya, the Air Chief dashed to Sandwip. His helicopter

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## Taka 50420m needed for rehabilitation

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh will require Taka 50420 million to rehabilitate the cyclone affected people of the coastal belt.

The number of people affected by the April 29 cyclone that left the coastal belt devastated is estimated at about 1.5 crore.

The official death toll now stands at 1,25,730 with over a million houses either fully or partially damaged.

A government spokesman, briefing newsmen on Tuesday, said that at least Taka 23936 million would be required for the relief operations while Taka 26484 million would be necessary to rebuild houses and infrastructure in the devastated areas.

Details on the losses as stated by the Information secretary in Dhaka on Tuesday are as follows:

- Death toll: 1,25,730.
- Houses damaged completely: 6,42,553.
- Houses damaged partially: 5,64,371.
- Cattlehead lost: Over 9,00,000.
- Educational institutions damaged completely: More than 2000.
- Educational institutions damaged partially: 4000.
- Bridges and culverts washed away: 50.
- Coastal embankments washed away: 122 miles.
- Immediate requirements for relief and rehabilitation: Taka 23936 million.
- Long-term requirements for rehabilitation: Taka 26484 million.

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## Master plan for rehabilitation : PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said on Tuesday that a master plan for rehabilitation of the cyclone affected people will be completed by tomorrow.

Addressing a crowded news conference at the International Conference Centre in the city she said preparation of the master plan was delayed because, for the past one week the government was more preoccupied with saving the lives of the survivors than collecting data for the plan.

She said the April 29 cyclone was the severest in living memory. Relief and rehabilitation work was very difficult due to inaccessibility to the affected areas. But we are trying our best and have reached relief materials to all affected areas by helicopters, she said.

The press conference was also attended by foreign jour-

nalists. Replying to a question she said, only a small channel of the sea port of Chittagong had been cleared making it operational for small vessels. "We need assistance from friendly countries to make the port fully operational" she said.

Replying to another question she said the civil administration and the armed forces were working together in the relief and rehabilitation programme for the cyclone affected people. The armed forces are a part of the government, she added.

She said the NGOs were carrying out relief operations in their own. The government had a meeting with them so that they could function smoothly. "Ours is a people's government and we do not obstruct the functioning of

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## Hasina blasts govt for 'failing to reach relief'

CHITTAGONG, May 7:

Awami League chief and Leader of Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Sheikh Hasina today alleged the government had failed to reach relief materials to cyclone and tidal surge affected people of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference at the Power Development Board rest house here this evening after visiting some affected areas of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, she said there was lack of co-ordination in relief work and the affected people did not receive relief materials even six days after the calamity. The people have been groaning for food, shelter, clothes and medicine but there was nobody

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## PM postpones visit to Saudi Arabia

Star Report

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has postponed her visit to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in view of the urgency of the situation at home following the devastation wrought by the cyclone. She was scheduled to go to Saudi Arabia on May 12 and visit Kuwait on May 14 on her way back home.

Begum Zia's programme included talks with Saudi King and other leaders. She was to perform 'umrah' and visit Medina.

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## 20 killed, 650 hurt in tornado, nor'wester

Star Report

At least 20 people were killed and over 650 injured in a tornado and a nor'wester that hit different parts of the country Monday night and Tuesday.

According to reports reaching The Daily Star office Tuesday at least 16 people were killed in Gazipur, three in Mymensingh, one in Sherpur districts.

At least 16 people were killed and more than 350 injured when a tornado ravaged at least seven villages of Gazipur district, Tuesday evening.

More deaths are feared as the debris could not be removed due to lack of electricity.

Contingents of the Fire Service and a 100-man army team were engaged in rescue operations till midnight Tuesday.

About 5000 houses were damaged in the tornado that lasted for only twenty minutes.

A ceramic industry, a metal industry, a madrasa and a mosque were totally destroyed. Not a single house was found

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## Massive international aid needed : Essafi

United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation Coordinator and Special Envoy of UN Secretary General, Hamed Essafi, Tuesday said Bangladesh needed "massive international assistance" to cope with devastations caused by the recent cyclone, reports BSS.

"It is a grave situation — everything possible is being done but international help in a big way is still required", the

UNDRO Coordinator told a press conference as the wound up his three-day visit.

Essafi, during his stay in Bangladesh, flew over cyclone affected areas and visited parts of Chittagong hit by the catastrophe on the night of May 29.

He held talks on the situation with government leaders including Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and also with representatives of the

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Why can't I see my son, Ershad screams at Tribunal

## Certificate of Iraqi Envoy contradicted

By Staff Correspondent

Hearing in Ershad's arms case concluded yesterday at the Special Tribunal with the deposition of a court witness and a second-time statement by the accused deposed President Ershad under Section 342.

Protocol Officer of Bangabhaban Abdul Jalil, pre-

sented as court witness, contradicted a certificate of the Iraqi Ambassador in Dhaka that said the accused Ershad had visited Iraq in 1985.

Abdul Jalil said that there was no record of Ershad's visiting Iraq in 1985. He, however, said that Ershad had vis-

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## Health sector suffers loss of Tk 600 cr

By Shahiduzzaman Khan

humanity and we are doing our level best," he added. Stressing on coordinated efforts to streamline medical supplies to the affected areas, the Minister said health officials, doctors and paramedics included, are working day and night to serve the distressed people.

The Minister instructed officials of the health complexes around the battered zones to rush to the nearest affected


areas with whatever medicine and equipment they have with them. Besides, medical teams formed earlier are working in the affected areas.

He said that 200 medical teams have so far been sent to Chittagong, 47 to Cox's Bazar, 106 to Noakhali, 35 to Laxmipur, 59 to Feni, 46 to Bhola, 44 to Barguna, 72 to Patuakhali, 111 to Bartsal, 87 to Bagerhat, 89 to Satkhira and 37 to Jhalakati districts.

Besides, some NGOs are also working in the affected areas in close cooperation with the health officials, the Minister added.

On the question of diarrhoeal diseases breaking out in an epidemic form in the cyclone-hit districts, the Health Minister said, "It's natural that such diseases will break out after a catastrophe like this. But we have taken adequate

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### The Chittagong Port Authority Notification

Due to devastating cyclone and tidal bore on the night following the 29th and early hours of the 30th April, 1991, Chittagong Port suffered severe damages to its property, installations, sheds, equipments, jetties and river crafts. Large numbers of crafts and vessels were sunk in the river. Navigational buoys were either sunk or displaced. Due to this reason the Port operation was suspended upto 4-5-1991. The Port Authority has taken prompt action to identify and locate wrecks in the main navigable channel. The Port is now declared open for vessels' draft upto 7 metre during day light hours only. Two vessels have already sailed out on 5-5-1991. Draft restriction will be lifted after further survey of the main channel. Concerned persons are requested to contact Harbour Department for inward and outward passage of sea-going vessels.

The Port is now operational for handling cargo and vessels.

DFF(BA)-3727-7/5  
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Secretary  
Chittagong Port Authority