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# The Daily Star

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## Inside today

### International



Former cinema heartthrob Jayalalitha Jayaram is riding the crest of MGR charisma Page 5

### Metropolitan

Our usual page - 3, Metropolitan page, is shifted to Page-8 because of a full-page Scimitar advertisement clarifying its position.

### Dhaka Day by Day

is dropped today due to unavoidable circumstances. The feature will, however, continue to appear from tomorrow.

### Metropolitan



Phoebe Fraser, daughter of former Prime Minister of Australia Malcolm Fraser and current Chairperson of CARE Australia flew in Wednesday with relief goods Page 2

### Parliament proceedings

'Government unstable under a parliamentary system' Page 6

## NEWS BRIEFS

### BNPPP meet May 18

A meeting of the BNP Parliamentary Party will be held on May 18 at 4 pm at Committee Room No. 1 of the Sangsad Bhaban, a press release said Wednesday night, reports BSS.

### Maguid new Arab League chief

CAIRO, May 15: Arab Minister elected Egyptian Foreign Minister Esmat Abdel-Maguid as Secretary General of the 21-member Arab League today. The election crowns Egypt's return to the Arab mainstream, reports Reuter.

### Japanese aid team

By Staff Correspondent The first group of 11 Japanese assistance personnel will arrive in Dhaka today. The second group of 39 personnel will arrive in Dhaka on Friday. Two helicopters from Japan will be flown to Dhaka in a special chartered plane on Saturday, an Embassy press release said.

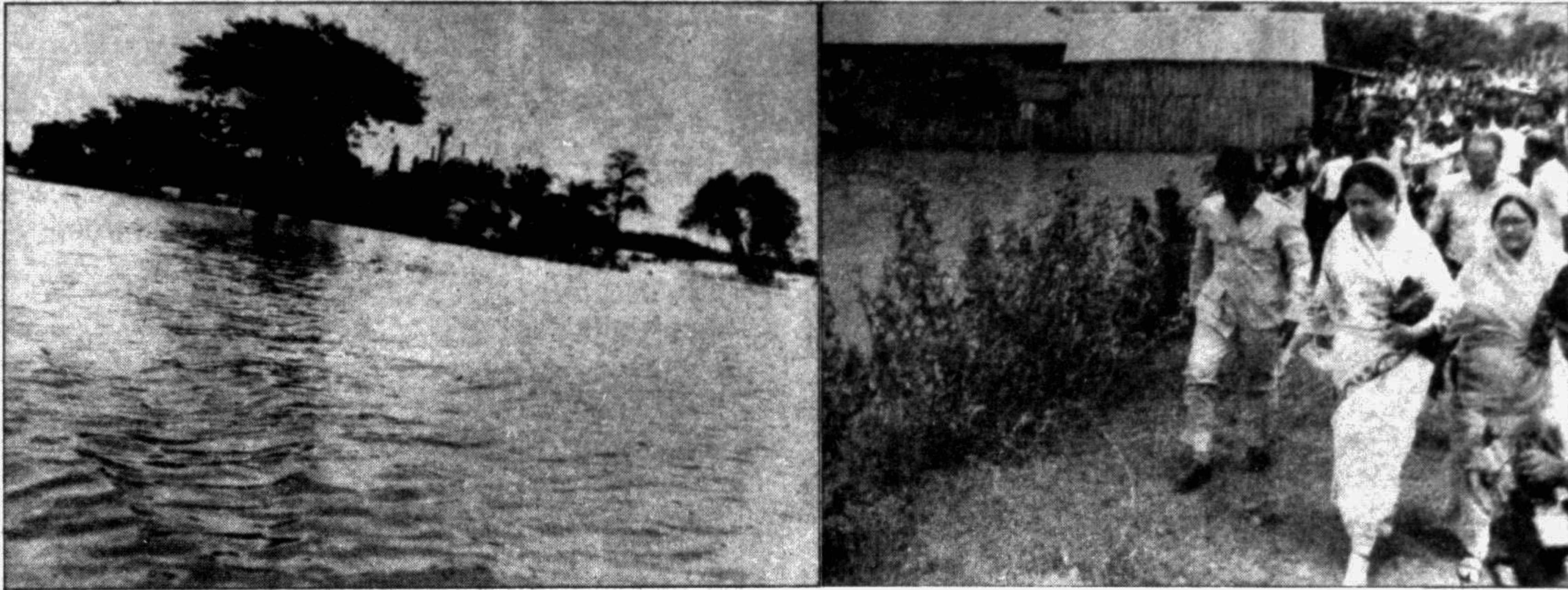
### Mother Teresa

CALCUTTA, May 15: A five-member team of Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity left today for Bangladesh to provide medical relief to cyclone victims, reports AFP.

### HMA Gaffar released

TANGAIL, May 15: H M A Gaffar, a former Minister of the Ershad regime, was released on bail from the district jail Wednesday morning. He was released on bail under an order of the High Court Division of the Supreme Court, jail sources said.

## Overall flood situation in Habiganj, Sunamganj and Netrakona improves



Left: Shimultola Bazar and Shamsheernagar road of flood-affected Moulvibazar district. Right: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visited a worst-hit area of Sylhet district. — Star photo

## Sylhet still reeling under floods

By Staff Correspondent

The overall flood situation in Sylhet and Moulvibazar district remained unchanged on Wednesday while it improved in Habiganj, Sunamganj and Netrakona districts, deputy commissioners and district flood control room sources said.

The Surma and the Kushiara at Sylhet receded slightly but were flowing 17 cm and 63 cm above the danger mark respectively and the

Manu in Moulvibazar was flowing 34 cm above the red mark. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia flew in a helicopter to the affected areas and landed at Kaliganj Bazar in Zakiganj upazila.

Sylhet control room said, all the 95 unions of the 11 upazilas are flood affected. Road communication with Balaganj, Companyganj, Zakiganj, Bianbazar, Kanaighat, Fenchuganj and Goainghat re-

mained disrupted while telecommunication with Companyganj, Goainghat and Kanaighat also remained snapped.

The death toll in the district rose to 32 with fresh reports of 12 deaths reaching from the different upazilas. Upazilawise death toll is: Zakiganj-4, Kanaighat-3, Goainghat-7, Bishwanath-1, Bianbazar-2, Sylhet Sadar-8, Fenchuganj-4, Balaganj-1 and

Golapganj-2.

The source said, nearly 13 lakh people of the district were flood affected.

Standing crops of 1,60,000 acres have been washed away while 312 culverts and bridges, 5896 houses fully and 14884 partially and 885 miles of roads were damaged by the flood.

Two hundred and 10 miles of the embankment along the Surma and the Kushiara were

damaged.

All the tubewells of the district are now under waist-deep water causing scarcity of pure drinking water.

Outbreak of diarrhoeal diseases was reported from Zakiganj, Bianbazar, Companyganj, Goainghat and Kanaighat upazilas, but the district flood control room could not confirm the death figure.

Half of the Sylhet city was under water.

Incessant drizzling and onrush of waters from upstream kept the water level almost unchanged.

Moulvibazar control room said, the Manu was flowing 34 cm above the danger level. The overall flood situation in the district however remained unchanged. A total of 51800 people of 55 unions of six upazilas have been affected.

Crops of 557 sq mile areas See Page 10 Col. 2

### Shahabuddin thanked for holding free, fair polls

## Sangsad prorogued

By Staff Correspondent

The first session of the Fifth Jatiya Sangsad was prorogued at 1.09 am Thursday. Speaker Abdur Rahman Biswas read out the order of prorogation from Acting President Justice Shahabuddin.

The Fifth Sangsad, elected after the fall of autocracy, besides transacting legislative business deliberated on national issues in a free, democratic atmosphere and discussed measures to face the aftermath of cyclone devastation.

The discussion on the inaugural address of Acting President was wound up by Deputy Leader of the House

MQM Badruddoza Chowdhury and Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad.

Prof Badruddoza, amidst strong opposition plea for switchover to parliamentary democracy, proposed a system of governance with check and balance.

The Jatiya Sangsad adopted a resolution thanking Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed for his inaugural address in the House.

MPs from both the Treasury and the Opposition Benches who took part in the discussion on the motion thanked the Acting President for successfully holding free and fair See Page 10 Col. 5

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### France gets 1st woman PM as Rocard resigns



Edith Cresson

PARIS, May 15: Premier Michel Rocard resigned Wednesday after three years in office and was replaced by Edith Cresson, a former Cabi-

See Page 10 Col. 3

### Comilla, Jessore Board SSC exams from June 30

SSC examinations of Comilla and Jessore boards, which were earlier postponed on account of recent cyclone and tidal wave, will now be held from June 30, an official source said in Dhaka Wednesday, reports BSS.

The HSC examinations of four boards of the country will be held from August 22, as per changed schedule and the detailed programme of the examinations of the boards will be announced soon.

The source further said the reconstruction and repair works of the different examination centres, damaged by the cyclone have already been undertaken through the Deputy Commissioners of affected districts.

### Tk 14 lakh, 60,000 mds rice for greater Sylhet PM assures all help for flood-hit people

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Wednesday flew over the flood-affected areas of greater Sylhet district to see for herself the extent of damage caused by the flash floods, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister's helicopter flew low over Moulvibazar, Beanbazar, Raj Nagar, Kamalganj, Kanaighat, Companyganj and Zakiganj. Begum Zia, who was scheduled to land at Moulvibazar could not land there due to the inclement weather. She, however, landed at Kaliganj bazar of Zakiganj upazila.

Talking to the people there, Begum Zia said she came to see their condition. Begum Zia enquired about their welfare

and wanted to know about their requirements. She assured them of all possible help to mitigate their sufferings.

She said her government would make all-out efforts to assist them in their rehabilitation. "The government is determined to help you in the hours of need", she stressed.

The Prime Minister gave immediate instruction to provide relief materials to the flood affected people of the greater Sylhet district.

She announced a grant of cash Taka 14 lakh for the flood affected districts of Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Habiganj and Sunamganj from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. She See Page 10 Col. 2

### Congress playing 'stability' card Voters favour no party yet

From Reazuddin Ahmed

CALCUTTA, May 15: With hardly a week to go before the tenth Lok Sabha polls in India, there is no wave in favour of any party.

Even the Mandal-Mandir-stability issues could not create any euphoria among the 521 million Indian voters.

Congress leaders and activists all over India seem hopeful that the voters will finally turn to their slogan of 'stability'. And that "a stability wave will take the Congress (I) back to the Delhi Masnad." Rajiv Gandhi's rival V P

Singh makes mockery of Congress's so called stability saying that only two Hartiyana constables could destabilise the Congress backed Chandra Shekhar government.

Moreover, the Congress during its forty-year 'stable' rule could not succeed in the 'garibi hatao' programme.

Indians have become poorer during the forty-year stability rule and the country's integrity has been destabilised by encouraging separatist forces in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam. See Page 10 Col. 7

## Leftists, liberals vying for power in Nepal

KATHMANDU, May 15: Nepali communists and liberals were vying neck and neck for power on Wednesday after the first free general election in the Himalayan Kingdom in 32 years, reports Reuter.

With 170 of the 205 seats in the new Parliament declared from Sunday's polls, the liberal Nepali Congress had won 67 and the United Marxist-Leninist (UML) Party and its allies 73.

The close race between the communists and liberals, allies last year in mass protests that compelled King Birendra to surrender absolute power, has raised new fears for Nepal's infant democracy.

The Nepali Congress could emerge with a tiny majority to face a strong communist opposition with the power to organise protests among voters who have high hopes that democracy will eradicate the Kingdom's endemic poverty.

The UML swept Kathmandu taking four of the capital's five seats and defeating Nepali Congress Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, who



Mandan Bhandari

mediated the Kingdom's transition to democracy, by a tiny margin.

That leaves headline anti-communist Giraaj Prasad See Page 10 Col. 2

## JS resolution for shifting of bye-elections

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Sangsad on Wednesday adopted a resolution calling for shifting the bye-elections in 10 vacated JS constituencies by at least three months.

The resolution was moved by the Deputy Leader of the House Dr. Badruddoza Chowdhury. It called for shifting the bye-elections in view of the cyclone which affected the coastal regions, and storms in different parts of the country including the greater Sylhet region.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Abdus Samad Azad spoke in support of the resolution and the House adopted it unanimously. Our Staff Correspondent See Page 10 Col. 4

## Armed clash on DU campus: One injured

By DMCH Correspondent

A Dhaka University student was shot and injured in an armed clash between supporters of BNP-backed Jatiyatabad League Dal (JCD) and pro-Awami League Chhatra League on Wednesday evening.

The critically injured student Jahan, a preliminary student of the Marketing Department, was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and later shifted to Suhrawardy Hospital.

During the clash, which ensued over a JCD member joining Chhatra League, at least 15 rounds of gunshot were fired and 30 crackers were exploded by the two rival See Page 10 Col. 8

## Eastern Refinery resumes production

CHITTAGONG, May 15: Eastern Refinery Limited (ERL), a subsidiary company of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation, resumed its production today, a press release said, reports BSS.

ERL, the only refining unit of the country was badly hit by the recent cyclone and it suffered a loss of Tk 10.50 crore. Immediately after the cyclone, Petroleum Corporation, oil companies and refinery officials started repairing works without any help of any foreign expert or consultant.

## Over 1.6 lakh diarrhoea patients in cyclone-hit areas

Star Report

More deaths due to diarrhoea have been reported from the cyclone-hit districts. During the last 24 hours ending Wednesday evening, 16 more people died and 11,886 were attacked with diarrhoeal diseases.

Nearly 1,60,000 have been attacked with diarrhoea since March 1, 1991 of whom 1,235 died so far. Unofficial estimate however suggests more deaths following the outbreak of diarrhoea.

Our Chittagong-based Correspondent Nurul Alam reports that over one lakh were

attacked with diarrhoea in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar districts during the last 14 days. According to unofficial sources, 5,000 died of the disease so far in both the districts.

In the two districts, around 70,000 survivors were attacked with diarrhoea and 1100 died. Chittagong Civil Surgeon Office sources said on Wednesday. Excepting Sandwip, in 13 upazilas of the districts and in the city areas about 60,000 people were attacked with diarrhoea and nearly 300 died. Civil Surgeon

Office source said. Reports from Sandwip could not be collected due to lack of communication but medical teams and medicine had been sent to the island.

Sandwip upazila administration sources told The Daily Star over 600 people died there upto May 10 where 20,000 were attacked. In Patiya upazila of Chittagong District 20,000 people were attacked and about 200 died so far.

Meanwhile affected people in some areas started repairing and rebuilding their houses as

the weather was clearing up.

### Forest resources

At a press briefing on Wednesday, Information Secretary Manjur-i-Mowla said losses to the forest resources were substantial following the cyclone. More than 20,000 trees were uprooted and 85,000 acres of forest land partially damaged.

Forest Department's loss was estimated at Taka 97 crore. About 250 buildings were totally damaged, 12 trawlers, eight speed boats and 20 boats were lost. More than

4,000 buildings belonging to the department were damaged. Five trawlers, three motor vehicles, five speed boats and 25 boats were reported missing.

Besides, seven rubber gardens of Bangladesh Forest Development Corporation were badly damaged as a result of which the rubber production target of 30,000 metric tons will not be achieved. The production may decrease to 1,760 metric tons only. The loss is estimated at Taka eight crore. Annual production loss of rub-

ber is estimated at Taka four crore.

### Rural electrification

Rural electrification in 65 upazilas of 11 coastal districts were badly affected. Electric installations in 20 upazilas were severely affected and partially damaged in 45 upazilas.

Maximum losses to rural electrification were in Chittagong, Noakhali, Cox's Bazar and Bagerhat. Taka 15 crore is immediately needed to repair the damaged installations. For long-term rehabilitation. See Page 10 Col. 1