

All for cyclone victims

Opposition MPs in Ctg

Several prominent opposition MPs left Dhaka Sunday afternoon for the cyclone-hit areas of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar to see the condition of the affected people. They will join Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina in distributing relief materials among the affected people today and the day after, an Awami League press release said, reports UNB.

BNP sends relief teams

Two relief teams of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party are leaving Dhaka today for the cyclone-affected areas in Chittagong and Bhola with four trucks load of relief materials and medicine. The relief materials include chira, gur, biscuits, baby food, potatoes, match boxes, candles, oral saline, drinking water cans, water purifying tablets and garments, reports BSS.

Armed Forces relief operation going on in full swing

Armed Forces relief operation at the coastal areas and the offshore islands is going on in full swing, reports BSS. A Formation Commanders' conference of Bangladesh Army was held at the Army Headquarters Monday with the Chief of Army Staff Lt. General

Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan in the chair to co-ordinate and gear up the relief operations being carried out by the Army personnel. All Formation Commanders were present at the conference.

The army personnel supplied three lakh eighty eight thousand pieces of ruti for the distressed people Monday. Out of these, one lakh fifty thousand supplied from the Dhaka and the Savar Cantonments were airdropped at inaccessible areas of Kutubdia and Maheshkhali. About fifty thousand pieces of ruti supplied by the Jessore Cantonment were airdropped at the affected islands of Patuakhali and Bhola, while one lakh twenty thousand ruti from the Chittagong Cantonment and seventy thousand from the Comilla Cantonment were sent to different affected areas including Sandwip, Kutubdia, Maheshkhali, Urir Char, Anowara, Bashkhali and Chakoria in Chittagong, Jahajmara in Hatiya, Nijhum Deep and Tamaruddin by helicopters.

The Chittagong Area troops distributed twenty thousand kgs of relief materials including emergency food packets, chira, gur, biscuits and other essentials among the distressed people. The Comilla troops also distributed dry food including chira, gur and muri worth about fifty thousand taka at different places.

The Rangpur area troops sent 8447 kgs of chira and 2345 kgs of gur to Chittagong and Jessore for distribution in the affected areas.

Other relief activity of the Chittagong, Comilla and Jessore Area troops are continuing. Besides, army medical teams engaged in different places are also carrying on their medical assistance.

Bangladesh Navy deployed a total of 15 Bangladesh Navy ships of different class and weight for the smooth distribution of the relief materials in the greater coastal areas including Kutubdia, Sandwip, Monpura, Bhola and Urir Char in spite of adverse sea condition.

In several sorties Bangladesh Air Force transport aircraft dropped cooked food, medicine, and clothing at Kutubdia, Maheshkhali and Sandwip.

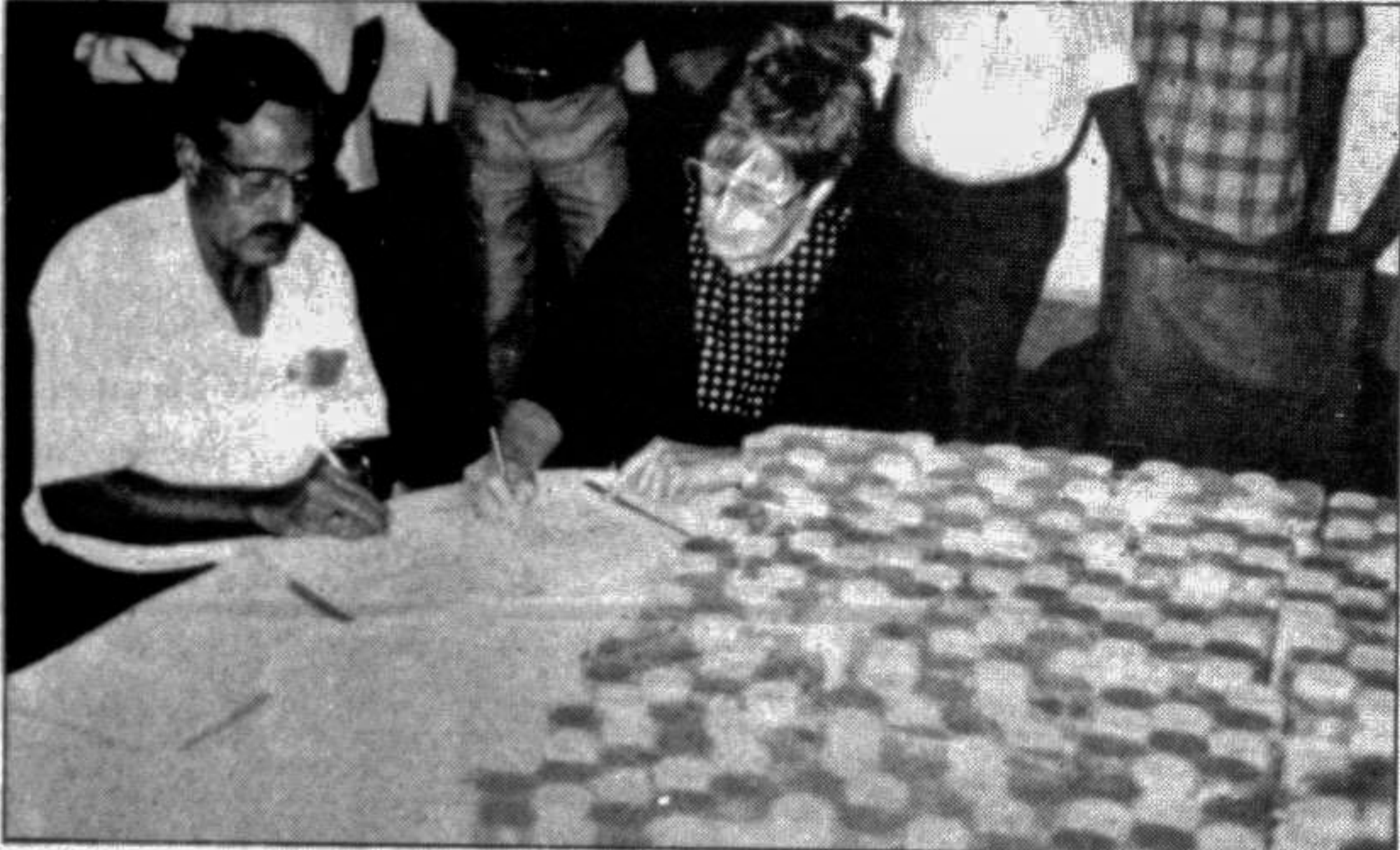
Australia to give AUD 250,000 for cyclone victims

Australia will provide AUD 250,000 in emergency assistance for the cyclone affected people of Bangladesh. Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Gereth Evans announced on Monday, says a press release.

Australia has provided 50,000 tonnes of wheat to Bangladesh over the past month under the bilateral development assistance programme.



Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who came to Bangladesh on Sunday, handing over a cheque to Prime Minister Khaleda Zia for the cause of the cyclone victims —PID photo



USAID Director Dr. Mary Kilgour turned over an initial shipment of water purification tablets to Minister of Communications and Relief Coordinator Oli Ahmed at Chittagong on Friday. Delivery of the tablets was made following a survey of disaster affected areas by USAID officials. The supplies are part of the ongoing United States relief effort for the cyclone victims. —USIS photo

BOI opens 'control cell' to estimate extent of damage

By Staff Correspondent

The Board of Investment (BOI) has opened a 'control cell' at room no. 214 of the Shilpa Bhaban to monitor and estimate the extent of damage suffered by private industries in the cyclone and tidal surge.

The cell will be operated under the supervision of Mahmudul Huq, a member of BOI executive council, between 9 am and 10 pm every day.

Managements of concerned industries have been requested to submit information about the extent of damage in terms of lakh Taka by separately showing damages caused to buildings, machinery, raw materials and finished goods, to the cell of division officer of the board.



Noted singer Sabina Yasmin rendering songs at a cultural function of Bangla Academy, arranged on Monday to collect donations for cyclone victims —Star photo



A relief co-ordination conference of the Formation Commanders was held at the Army Headquarters on Monday which was presided over by Chief of Army Staff Lt. General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan.

National

Upazila roundup

CHANDPUR

305 shops being constructed

May 6: Construction of 305 shops at Chandpur Railway Hawkers Market is going on in full swing at the Balurmath area adjacent to Chandpur Court Station, sources said, reports UNB.

According to sources, the work started with the approval of Chittagong Divisional Railway and local Pourashava authorities.

Chandpur Railway Hawkers Samity is funding the construction which involves an amount of Taka 31 lakh.

The construction work, expected to be completed by July next, benefit 500 people.

In addition, the Government's Railway Department and the Pour-ashava authorities will annually earn about Taka five lakh as revenue from these shops, it is learnt.

KHULNA

Mourning Day observed

May 6: National Mourning Day was observed here yesterday as elsewhere. In the country in memory of those who lost their lives in Monday's worst cyclone and tidal surge that hit the coastal belt of the country.

National flag flew at half mast over all public and private buildings as a mark of respect to those who lost their lives due to the cyclonic storm.

Special prayers were offered yesterday in all mosques in the city for the peace of the departed souls.

RAJSHAHI

Storm kills two

May 6: A mother and her two children, burnt in a fire sparked during nor'wester here Friday afternoon, died yesterday, reports UNB.

They were among at least five people killed by the violent storm, officials and hospital sources said.

Seven other were fighting for life at Rajshahi Medical

College Hospital with serious burns suffered in the blaze at village Rajabari near Premtoli, 15 kilometre from here.

The nor'wester that swept the town and its adjoining areas at about 100 km per hour destroyed many kuthcha houses and uprooted fruit-bearing mango and other trees.

During the storm, Rumi (8), a student of class two, died instantly when the wall of Helenabad Girls High School in the city collapsed.

A seven-year-old boy was also killed in Hariara area, 10 km from the city, when the branch of a mango tree broke upon him.

NOAKHALI

Rash driving causes accidents

May 6: Reckless driving of motorised vehicles in the town here has been threatening movement of pedestrians and causing frequent accidents, reports UNB.

Drivers of buses, trucks and tempos allegedly run their vehicles rash crossing speed limit.

The vehicles often carry passengers beyond capacity and do not even bother to reduce speed at speed breakers before schools and markets, it is alleged.

Motor-bike riders are also running at a speed of 60 to 70 kilometres per hour endangering the lives of passersby.

Traffic police reportedly remain indifferent to the growing problem.

Besides, increasing numbers of rickshaws further aggravate the situation.

SIRAJGANJ

Diarrhoea claims 118 lives

May 6: Diarrhoea claimed at least 118 lives and attacked over 7,000 others in seven districts of northern part of the country during the last month, reports UNB.

Officials said 37 people died in Rajshahi, 30 in Pabna, 22 in Nagan, 15 in Bogra, three in Naore and 10 in Sirajganj districts.

About 425 medical teams are working in the affected areas to contain the menace, health officials said.

Floating population rises in Jamalpur town

JAMALPUR, May 6: People affected by the erosion of river, are now rushing to the district headquarters increasing the floating population in the town.

The town's added population whose houses and lands were grabbed by the rivers at the char areas of the district, are vigorously searching for their employment opportunity. Besides, a large number of poor people from the district's rural areas is also joining the erosion-hit people.

The landless job-seekers along with their family members have found their shelter at different busy points of the town including the bus terminal and the railway station.

Unhygienic living by these poor people is also causing pollution to the environment of the district town.

A segment of this incoming population are serving the town dwellers as day-labourers while others are engaged in begging finding no other alternative. Yet there is some others moving the town areas everyday in quest of work.

This correspondent found

as many as 20 families residing at the Jamalpur railway station. Head of such a family, Abdul Kuddus, narrated tale of his misfortune which forced him to such an inhuman life.

As he said, the river Brahmaputra annexed his five acres of land at a village under Islampur upazila two years back. Later, he managed his shelter on the flood control embankment along the river.

From Our Correspondent

But severe cyclonic storm also damaged the embankment, compelling him and five other members of his family rush to the town for survival.

Now Kuddus works as a labourer on daily-basis. His wife who works as a maid servant also contributes to the family.

Similar is the life being led by the fortunate ones. And for the rest the scene is worse.

There is a significant number of floating people who cannot imagine of having meals thrice a day. Half-fed and even non-fed people are common on the roads begging mercy of the passers-by.

No initiative by the district administration has yet been taken for the unlucky people hit either by flood or by river erosion.

The district relief and re-

habilitation officer told the Daily Star that they are yet to receive any allocation for the affected families.

Cattle lifting

Four stolen cows were recovered by police from Shekh Shadi Village under Ghaugora union in Melandah upazila recently.

A case has been lodged in this regard with Melandah upazila police investigation is going on. None has yet been arrested.

Reception

Mrs. Rahima Khandakar, MP was accorded a reception recently on her first arrival at her home in Islampur.

A meeting was held at local Girls' High School ground, with Shafiq Alam Khaza Miah, president of Islampur upazila unit of BNP in the chair. It was addressed, among others, by Abu Syed Chowdhury, Dudu Miah, Asrafzaman Liton, Selim Reza Butto and others.

Notes from Jamalpur

From Our Correspondent

May 6: A theft was committed in the Melandah Government College campus recently. Five thieves entered the residence of Mahmuda Iqbal, a professor of the college and took away one colour television along with other valuables worth TK. 40,000.

Law and order situation in seven upazilas of the district has hit the lowest ebb.

According to the police crimes including eight killings, seven dacoities, 15 burglaries and other crimes were committed in Madarganj, Jhenai ferry ghat, Jamalpur town, Sarishabari, Dewanganj and Melandah areas.

BNP meeting

A workers' meeting was organised by Madarganj upazila unit of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) at its office premises recently.

The meeting was presided over by BNP president, Mr. Jahangir Alam of Madarganj upazila unit. The meeting was addressed, among others by Sonu Miah, Meherullah, Antsur Rahman, Nurul Alam Siddiqui and Abdur Razzak.

SM Khatrul Bashar Chisty, president of Jamalpur district unit of BNP was the chief guest at the meeting.

AL meeting

Awami League MP Mr. Golam Azam in a statement urged the government to take immediate measures to rehabilitate the erosion affected people at Madarganj upazila in Jamalpur district.

He said that the affected people have been passing their days through hardships and living under the open sky.

Key books

Note books are selling unabatedly in Jamalpur town.

The government banned the publication and selling of note books upto class eight in order to discourage the students to depend on prepared answers.

The order has not been obeyed as note books are easily available at all book stalls.

A section of unscrupulous persons is publishing standard note books under fictitious names of authors and publishers which contain numerous errors and distortion.

Fuel crisis hits irrigation

THAKURGAON, May 6: Irrigation of land under the summer cultivation scheme in Balladangi, Haripur, Pirganj, Rantsankali and Thakurgaon Sadar upazilas of the district is being hampered due to scarcity of fuel.

It is learnt that Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation authority in different upazilas of the district did not supply fuel to the owners of shallow tubewells, low lift

From Our Correspondent

pumps and scheme managers of DTWs, this year.

According to a farmer, who has got a shallow tubewell, diesel is being sold at Taka 18-20 per litre in the open markets instead of Taka 15 per litre. Mobile is also being sold in the open markets at an exorbitant price due to irregular supply. Petrol is being sold as per wish of the traders, subject to the availability.

It may be mentioned that all the fuel traders in different upazilas have no safety accommodation or underground tank though these substances are explosive in nature. Fuel trading shops are growing by the road side, dwelling house and business centres which may aggravate health hazard, occur fire incident and loss of lives and property.

Farmers who are enjoying irrigation facility, urged upon the concerned authority.

Despair overwhelms survivors in coastal belt

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, May 6: Despair gradually overtakes survivors of the cyclone and tidal bore that lashed the coastal belt of the country on April 29 as vigorous relief operation is still lacking.

Hundreds of thousands of cyclone victims in the offshore islands are passing their days under the open sky without food, medicines and pure water.

They have crossed the limit of their endurance.

According to the Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP), more than one lakh people were killed alone in the char areas of coastal belts. Now numerous people are facing death due to absence of food, drinking water and clothing.

Standing crops of Rabi and Boro in thousands of acres of land in these islands have been washed away. In the embankment areas water still remains stagnant.

Doctors fear that if this condition prevails for few more days water borne diseases may break out in an epidemic form.

Sandwip is the worst affected area where the death figures rose upto 20 to 25 thousand till today destroying 95 per cent of crops, dwelling houses, and educational institutions. This area looks like a haunted place with the cries of distressed people.

Meanwhile, the Red Crescent Society has dropped some dry foods in the areas and decided to instal 6000 tubewells on an emergency basis to supply drinking water to the people. More than 850 medical teams have already been sent to the distressed areas.

According to a report, 50,000 cattleheads have been lost in the storm and tidal surge where 10 to 15 medical teams deployed by the Livestock Department. Loss to crops and other property in seven upazilas of Bhola district is colossal.

Telecommunication links between Bhola Sadar and other upazilas could not be restored fully.



BARISAL: Waiting for relief materials in Daulatkhana upazila in Bhola district. —Star photo by Aroop Talukdar