

Directive to raise production of saline, water purifying tablets

Health sector suffers colossal loss

Star Economic Report

Infrastructure losses in health sector following last week's devastating cyclone are colossal.

Experts say diarrhoeal diseases are being broken out in epidemic form.

Tens of thousands of people who survived the cyclonic storm and tidal surge on April 29 are now facing possible deaths following outbreak of dysentery and diarrhoeal diseases in an epidemic form throughout the affected areas.

According to official sources, diarrhoea has already claimed lives of 900 persons and affected 70,000 but unofficial estimate suggests two times higher than that of the official record.

Health Directorate sources said essential drugs worth Taka 5 crore were sent to the cyclone hit areas till Monday.

Except food and shelter drugs are the crying need of the hour. The medical teams sent by government and private organisations and NGOs in the battered areas after cyclone and tidal surge can hardly tackle the situation.

Health institutions in these areas were badly damaged by the cyclone. Among them, five district hospitals including Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, 68 health centres, 131 health sub-centres and 391 union health and family welfare centres cannot cater to the huge medical requirements of the distressed people.

A report of the Health Directorate said that in Chittagong office of the Deputy Director (Health) was totally damaged. Office of the Civil Surgeon and General Hospital have partially been damaged.

Andwip, Bashkhal, Anwara, Mirsarwar, Shitakund Upazila hospitals and all other health sub-centres, health complexes under Chittagong district were also damaged.

Besides, Burichar in Hatiya, Mafzia, Sonadia, Afezia, Jahazmara, Tamruddin, and Kabirhat and Char Jabbar un-

der Noakhali district and Begumganj hospitals, health complex and sub-centres have been destroyed.

Health complexes, health union and family welfare institutions under Bhola district were partially or completely damaged.

Sunamganj, Lalimohan Upazila, Manpara Upazila and others including Char Fashon, Mangal Shikdar, Char Pankhi were completely destroyed.

Government till Monday has sent 1285 medical teams to the cyclone hit areas. Each medical team is comprised of two doctors, three paramedics and one class four employee.

Essential Drugs Company situated in Bogra and Dhaka has been directed by the Health Ministry to increase its production of saline, water purifying tablets and other essential medicines. Other pharmaceu-

tical industries of the country also increased their production to combat the situation.

Specialists said that dysentery, diarrhoea and other troubles have been broken out as the people were eating rotten meat of animals and fishes and drinking polluted water due to lack of foods and pure water.

They said proper steps should be taken immediately to check the epidemics in large scale.

World Health Organisation (WHO), UNICEF and USAID have already sent essential drugs and other government and non-government organisations have provided emergency mini medical kits and essential medicines to Bangladesh in response to the appeal of Prime Minister Begum Khaleida Zia.

Some foreign countries including France also supplied emergency drugs.

Iraqi oil revenues were about 15 billion Dollars.

Kuwait claims would likely include losses from the hundreds of blazing oil wells still on fire as well as the destruction of infrastructure in the Emirate.

In addition, there would be claims from Saudi Arabia for the costs for cleaning up the pollution in the Gulf, from Israel for damage caused by Scud missile and from thousands of workers who fled Kuwait after the August invasion.

Iraq reacted to the report by asking the United Nations for a five-year moratorium on reparation payments.

His report set criteria to fix Iraq's payments, including how much money Baghdad spent on arms imports in the past, and what is needed to feed its people and rebuild its economy.

The official said a realistic Kuwait claim for reparations would be about 45 billion Dollar. Before the crisis, annual

175 leather industries face closure

By Inam Ahmed

Leather export earning in the first three quarters of the fiscal year '90-'91 have slumped far behind the earning of the previous fiscal due to lack of modernisation of the leather industries.

Earning during the July '90-March '91 was 108 million Dollars while it was 140 million Dollars during the corresponding period of last fiscal year. The quantity of export also dropped from 121 million square foot to 81 million square foot this year. This drop in the leather performance was due to ban on wet blue leather, sources said.

Industrial sources said the government decided to stop export of wet blue leather in view to export more valuable finished and crushed leather in '90. As most of the indus-

tries are not equipped to produce finished leather, government also decided to sanction loans to 25 leather industries for modernisation.

But only five of these industries have been modernised till now. Eight other industries are awaiting modernisation.

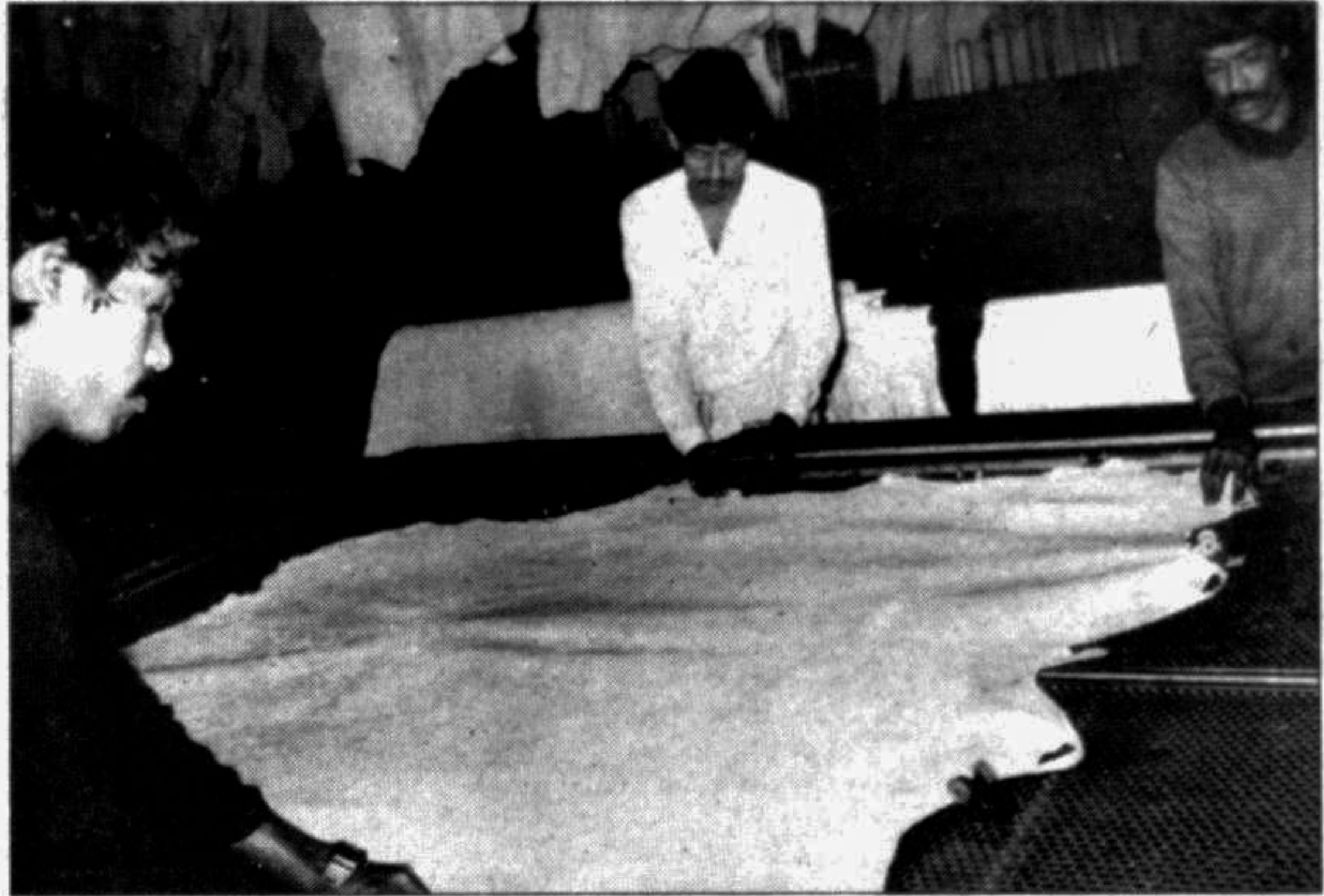
Except these 25 industries, other 175 leather industries are facing closure as wet blue leather have been banned. Sources put low leather export this year to such lack of modernisation of industries.

However, this ban on wet leather have been able to rise the price of our leather in the world market. This year's leather price per square foot was about 1.33 Dollars per square foot. It was about 1.16 Dollars last year.

Bureau sources said this price may increase to double if the country can ultimately switch over to finished leather product export, the value of leather per square foot will push up to five Dollars.

Trading sources said that Bangladesh have good market in leather in the international scene. If the country could produce to its limit, the earning would have increased substantially. But for this modernisation in the sector is essential, they pointed out.

Presently, the premature ban on wet blue leather has fuelled smuggling of wet blue across the border. This in turn made the ban void and at the same time the government is losing revenues, sources stated.



Indigenous way of tanning hides and skin at a local factory. These are being readied for exports.

Snippets

Arab boycott of firms should end: US

WASHINGTON, May 7: The United States on Monday reaffirmed its opposition to the Arab boycott of firms doing business with Israel but took a neutral view of how adding 110 new companies to the list may affect Arab-Israeli peace efforts, reports Reuter.

State Department Deputy spokesman Richard Boucher reiterated the US view that the boycott, enacted in the 1950s, should be ended. But under repeated questioning at a daily news briefing, he refused to say whether adding firms to the list might adversely affect intensive new US efforts to bring Israel and its Arab adversaries into peace talks.

Canada selling wheat to Iraq?

OTTAWA, May 7: Canada's Wheat Board, the sole agency that sells Canadian wheat abroad, declined comment on a report it has a negotiating team in Baghdad to sell wheat to Iraq, reports Reuter.

We have no comment, Pat Keena, a Wheat Board spokesman, said in response to a report that negotiations would begin Tuesday.

Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammed Mehdi Saleh told Reuters in Baghdad that talks with the Canadian team would begin Tuesday. Analysts said that Canada may be willing to sell wheat to Iraq, but the question remains whether Iraq will be able to pay for the imports.

Taiwan's gold imports fall

TAIPEI, May 7: Taiwan's gold imports fell sharply in April as some investors switched their attention to the fast rising stock market, dealers said, reports Reuter.

Physical imports of gold bars, coins and plate fell to 6.35 tonnes in April from 9.98 tonnes in March and 13.19 tonnes in April, 1990, the Finance Ministry said.

Dealers said gold imports would remain relatively low in the next two or three months if prices did not fall below 350 US Dollars per ounce. Prices were around 354 Dollars in early Asian trade today.

Libya's GDP grows by 9.4 p c

TUNIS, May 7: Libya's gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 9.4 per cent in 1990 largely to a surge in oil revenues, the Libyan news agency JANA reported, says Reuter.

JANA, quoting a report from the economic planning secretary, said Libya's 1990 GDP was 7.8 billion dinars (27.37 billion Dollars). The oil industry accounted for 9.7 billion Dollars or 28.2 per cent.

US stocks close slightly higher

NEW YORK, May 7: US stocks closed slightly higher on Monday in quiet trading as investors awaited the launch of the US Treasury refunding this week, reports Reuter.

The Dow Jones industrial average closed up 2.78 points at 2,941.64, according to early unofficial tallies. Declining issues led advances just slightly on volume of about 129 million shares on the New York stock exchange.

Some computerised buying boosted prices slightly, but trading was lackluster ahead of the US Treasury's 37 billion Dollars auction beginning on Tuesday.

BSCIC Officers Assoc executives

Star Economic Report

The election of the Executive Committee of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) Officers Association was held recently in BSCIC Head Office. Nineteen members of the 21-member committee were elected from Zafar-Mustafiz Parishad for the next two years. Mr Abu Zafar and Mr AKM Mustafizur Rahman were elected President and Secretary General respectively.

The other elected persons are: Vice-President Messrs Md Taslimuddin, AHM Shamsul Anam and Abdullah Mahmood, Joint Secretary General Messrs Abu Taher Khan and Md Shamsul Haque, Finance Secretary Mr SA Rahman, Organising Secretary, Mr Mahbul Alam, Office Secretary Mr Md Abdul Basit, Publicity Secretary Mr Md Anzad Ali, Cultural Secretary, Mrs Nazma Akhter, Sports Secretary Mr Md Jalaluddin Ahmed, Social Welfare Secretary Messrs Md Manunur Rashid and Abdul Wahab Biswas and six executive members Miss Nasreen Rahim, Messrs Md Badsha Miah, Md Nurul Amin Bhuiyan, AKM Fazlul Haque, Abdul Wadud and DS Barua.

US seeks half Iraq's oil revenues as reparation

WASHINGTON, May 7: The United States, taking issue with allies that want to treat Iraq more leniently, believes Baghdad should pay up to half its future oil revenues as reparations for victims of the Gulf crisis and war.

A Bush administration official told Reuters that setting a lower rate would mean lengthening the period during which Iraq would have to pay reparations to an unrealistic degree.

"At 50 per cent we estimate it would take Iraq six years just to pay off Kuwait claims. At 10 per cent as some suggest, it would take 30 years," said the official, who spoke on condition that he was

not named. United Nations Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar last week recommended a general framework for reparations payments from Iraq, but left open the question of the percentage of oil revenues Baghdad would be compelled to pay.

His report set criteria to fix Iraq's payments, including how much money Baghdad spent on arms imports in the past, and what is needed to feed its people and rebuild its economy.

The official said a realistic Kuwait claim for reparations would be about 45 billion Dollar. Before the crisis, annual

Iraqi oil revenues were about 15 billion Dollars.

Kuwait claims would likely include losses from the hundreds of blazing oil wells still on fire as well as the destruction of infrastructure in the Emirate.

In addition, there would be claims from Saudi Arabia for the costs for cleaning up the pollution in the Gulf, from Israel for damage caused by Scud missile and from thousands of workers who fled Kuwait after the August invasion.

Iraq reacted to the report by asking the United Nations for a five-year moratorium on reparation payments.

Bush urges Congress to reform banking

WASHINGTON, May 7: President Bush urged Congress to back a broad reform of the US banking system or else the bank insurance fund could be put in danger, reports Reuter.

If the Congress fails to adopt a broad-based solution along the lines I have suggested, we may have to face another recapitalisation of the insurance fund. Bush said in a letter to Rep. Henry Gonzalez, Chairman of the House Committee on banking, finance and urban affairs, and other congressional leaders. This additional exposure of the bank insurance fund imposes risks on savers and taxpayers that no one can seriously desire, Bush wrote.

Bush said he wanted to reiterate his support for an earlier White House proposal to modernise the country's financial system. He thanked Gonzalez's committee for rejecting what he called a more narrow approach to the system's ills.

We must fix the fundamental problems in the banking industry, not just fund them, he said.

Oil-polluted island cleaned

NICOSIA, May 7: Experts have cleaned up an oil-polluted island used as a breeding ground by endangered turtle species, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said on Monday, reports Reuter.

SPA quoted a report by the Dhahran-based meteorological and environmental protection agency saying nearly 900,000 barrels of oil spilt in the Gulf was had been sucked up from Saudi shores.

Oil lapped the shores of Karan island, 100 km (60 miles) northeast of the Saudi port of Jubail, threatening Hawksbill and Green Sea turtles during their April-July nesting season.

Gulf environmental officials say up to four million barrels of crude oil spilled into the shallow waterway during the war.

The US led allies accused Iraq of deliberately releasing most of the oil.

Tough contracts for businessmen in Kuwait

KUWAIT, May 7: Businessmen conversing on Kuwait expecting to land lucrative contracts to help rebuild the Emirate are finding the going tough, reports Reuter.

The thought that post war Kuwait is a gold mine is not true. The days of tremendous profits here are gone, said Bob Nilsson, Vice-Chairman of the US contracting firm Turner International.

Kuwaitis are excellent businessmen and shrewd negotiators. They'll give you fair but not excessive profit.

Scores of businessmen, engineers, architects and designers started arriving in large numbers after Iraqi troops were driven out by a US led alliance in late February.

In Britain and the United States people have a vision of taking a ticket and standing in line at the Kuwait money ma-

chine, an economic analyst said. There is money to be made but it won't be the amounts people were talking about earlier.

Businessmen say Kuwait, apart from its blazing oilfields, has not suffered the massive destruction first feared.

There is no large scale destruction in Kuwait as first reported, said Marl Services a 55 year-old engineer looking at business potential for this company Pacific Architect and Engineering.

Outside the oil business, what is needed here is a gigantic clean up job not a rebuilding process.

Retreating Iraqi troops blew up more than 600 oil wells, setting more than 500 of them ablaze scores of buildings power plants and other installations were sabotaged.

Use of child labour banned in China

BEIJING, May 7: China has drafted new rules banning the use of child labour and setting fines and criminal penalties to enforce them, the China Daily said today, reports Reuter.

The regulations ban children below 16 years of age from working for pay or becoming self-employed, and set punishment for employers who hire them illegally, the newspaper said.

Beijing would soon join an international convention, sponsored by the International Labour Organisation, that sets minimum age levels for employment, it said.

Child labour has become a serious problem, particularly in China's coastal regions, where rapid economic growth has boosted demand for industrial workers.

East German joblessness to continue swelling

BONN, May 7: East German unemployment will continue swelling well into next year and nearly half the region's workers could lose their jobs as the former Communist state struggles to adjust to market forces, economists said, reports Reuter.

"Unemployment in Eastern Germany will not start declining before the middle of next year," said Gerhard Grebe, Chief economist at M.M. Warburg Brinckmann in Hamburg.

"Industry production there will begin increasing only in the second quarter of 1992. And it takes a while until that has an effect on the labour market," he said.

Stiehler said unemployment in the West would reach its low point in the second quarter and could start rising again thereafter.

German unemployment to drop below 1.70 million in April, while eastern unemployment and short-time work will continue to rise sharply. Exact forecasts were not available for the East due to lack of statistical detail.

Rainer Schroeder, an economist at Dresdner Bank AG in Frankfurt, said recent union agreements to bring eastern wages up to Western standards by 1994 were accelerating closures of companies in the former Communist region.

"Only companies with western productivity can afford to pay wages at western levels," Nomura's Stiehler said. The thirds of workers in Eastern Germany would have to be laid off from the productivity point of view.

Economists said unemployment in the East would jump in July.

Exchange Rates

Table with columns for Currency, Selling, and Buying rates for various international currencies like US Dollar, UK Pound Sterling, etc.

Gold & Silver

Table showing Gold and Silver prices in various units and currencies.

Hides & Skin

Table showing prices for various types of hides and skins, such as Cow, Goat, Sheep, etc.

Price Barometer: Essentials

Large table listing prices for various commodities like Rice, Vegetables, Fish, Pulses, Meat, Oil, etc. with columns for item name, unit, and price.

NCR's merger with another firm soon

NEW YORK, May 7: American Telephone and Telegraph Co. the world's largest telephone company, said on Monday it had signed a definitive agreement to buy NCR Corp., a US computer firm, in a 7.4 billion dollars stock swap, reports Reuter.

The New York-based AT&T has been pursuing NCR since last December, when it unveiled a takeover bid worth about 6.12 billion Dollars, or 90 dollars a share.

It has been seeking to buy Dayton, Ohio-based NCR aggressively because it wants to turn its money-losing computer operations around and become a major presence in the field — a goal that had eluded it, despite its other communications successes, for nearly a decade.

NCR, America's fifth-largest computer maker, originally resisted the offer, at first saying it would remain independent and later saying it was worth more than AT&T's offer price.

Dollar closes lower in New York

NEW YORK, May 7: The Dollar closed lower in quiet trading, as a rally spurred by US President George Bush's release from the hospital fizzled during the afternoon, reports Reuter.

There was a feeling that the Dollar is still trending up, and the only reason that it was trading off was because of Bush's health problem. But the Dollar came back off because the Mark was oversold. The oversold Mark condition is finally starting to have some influence," said William Arnold, chief dealer of Chemical Bank.

The Dollar ended at 1.7312/22 Marks, down from the opening of 1.7430 Marks, and Friday's finish of 1.7490/00 Marks.

The Dollar also closed at 138.20 Yen, down from the opening of 138.35/45 Yen and Friday's close of 138.80/90 Yen.

Dollar closes lower in New York

House, said Bob Hatcher, a dealer for Barclays Bank in New York.

Speculators bought Dollars, hoping the currency would break through 1.75 Marks and thereby trigger stop-loss buying, Hatcher said. But the Dollar was unable to break above 1.7480 Marks, and the speculators were forced to liquidate their long positions.

The speculators were unsuccessful. Trouble set in, and they had to sell Dollars when there was no one to buy. So the Dollar tumbled quickly, Hatcher said. The Dollar reached a low of 1.7258 Marks during the New York afternoon, before rebounding a bit due to late position-

squaring, traders said. Traders anticipate the Dollar will continue slipping in the short term and then move higher later on.

I think the Dollar should be closer to 1.70 Marks now than 1.80 Marks, said Earl Johnson, Vice President of Harris Trust and Savings Bank in Chicago.

The market had grown somewhat bullish after better than expected US April employment data were released Friday. But on through reading, the numbers were not as strong as they first appeared, and one month's data do not represent a trend, traders noted.

Marked rise in share transactions

Dhaka bourse witnessed a marked rise in transactions Tuesday. In volume terms it stood at 5,122 from Monday's 2,930.

But decliners continued to dominate trading. The Composite Index of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) declined further.

It went down to 350.6213 points compared with Monday's 350.8372.

The index is the broad indicator of price movements of all the listed stocks.

Traded issues valued Taka 2,74,945.00 against Monday's Taka 2,34,125.00.

Transactions involved twenty three stocks. Of them eleven lost, three gained and nine remained unchanged at their previous quoted prices.

Usmania Glass lost Taka 9.00 to Taka 130.00.

Dulania Cotton and 6th ICB Mutual Fund declined Taka 3.00 and Taka 2.49 to Taka 100.00 and Taka 93.34 respectively.

Dhaka Vegetable and Eastern Cables lost Taka 2.00 and Taka 1.40 to Taka 147.00 and Taka 77.00.

BGC Insurance, 2nd ICB Mutual Fund, Bangladesh Thai Aluminium, Paper Processing, Tallu Spinning and Apex Tannery lost within the range between Taka 0.06 and Taka 1.00.

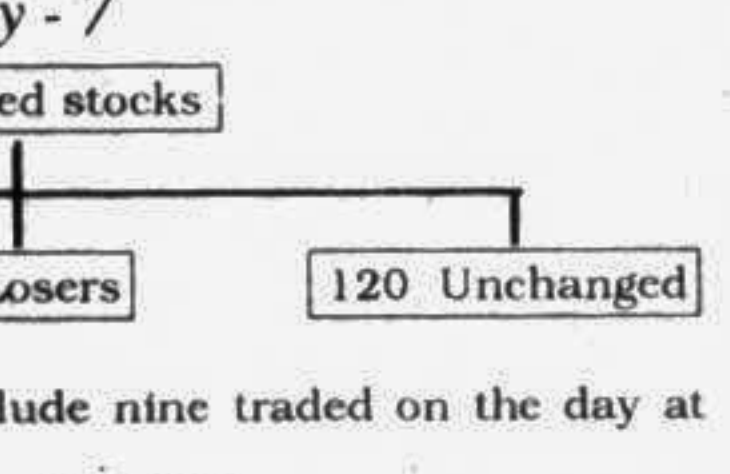
Bengal Food moved up Taka 10.00 to Taka 190.00.

Chittagong Cement and Ambee Pharma advanced Taka 1.23 and Taka 0.28 to Taka 139.00 and Taka 15.00 respectively.

Quoted Prices of Traded Stocks

Table listing stock prices for various companies like Sul ICB Fund, Eastern Cables, etc. with columns for stock name, price, and change.

Dhaka Stock Exchange Market Profile



120 Unchanged stocks include nine traded on the day at their previous quoted prices. DSE All Share Price Index = 350.6213 Issued Capital=Taka 10,146,289,601.00 Market Capitalisation = 10,019,094,326 Turnover = Taka 2,74,945.00 (Value) 5,122 (Volume).