### DOWN TO EARTH

# Jackal psychology

Jackals are said to be the most cunning among animals on earth. But these dog-like

ent laxity which at times prove fatal for some of them. An expert on wildlife says. jackals stay in underground tunnels but the entrance to the holes is invariably narrow. The entrance is so small that a jackal finds it too difficult to enter the hole at dusk with a full load of its day's food. On rare occasions, a jackal dies from suffocation when accidentally it is stuck up at the exit with inflated belly as there

is none to extricate the animal.

creatures also show an inher-

Referring to the psychology of the jackals, the wildlife expert told me that in course of entering the tunnels, through the narrow holes they vow everyday to widen the entrance the next morning. But while coming out of the dens the following dawn, the jackals face no difficulty with he sunken belly after night-long digestion. Totally unconcerned, the animal quickly departs in search of food and again face the same trouble at dusk. But the entrance is never widened, the expert added.

Again a catastrophic cyclone, the worst in recent memory, has lashed the coastal belt of Bangladesh. One and a half crore people in the offshore islands have been badly affected. The immediate need is the supply of drinking water, food and medicines. In the absence of pure water the survivors are exposed to serious health hazards.

International agencies working in the affected areas have warned that nearly one crore cyclone victims are vulnerable to diarrhoea and of them, some 80 lakh cases may turn into cholera.

Such a situation could easily be tackled had we been able to dispatch adequate quantity of water purifying tablets. But we have no adequate stock of water purifying tablets though this land is frequently visited by natural calamities and need for those remains throughout the year. To understand the problem, one should know deBy Khalilur Rahman

tails about production, distribution and requirements of the water purifying tablets in the country. The basic ingredient of the water purifying tablet is chlorine. The material is imported from abroad. Two small local firms and the Essential Drugs Company Limited (EDCL), an enterprise under the Health Ministry, produce water purifying tablets mostly depending on the requirements. But when emergency arises, very often the tablets are not available. SOS is sent for the tablets and the UNICEF or other agencies then maintain supply of the item. By the time the tablets reach the country, the situation becomes more grave.

A Health Ministry source told The Daily Star that adequate stock of water purifying tablets must be kept ready to face any emergency. The country has very limited sources of pure water and majority of the population in rural areas depend largely on water from ditches, ponds and shallow pools in fields for daily use. Hand tubewells do not cover the whole population. As such vigorous drive to educate the bulk of illiterate people about the use of safe water must be conducted round the year. So we have emergency all the time, the source added. One of the small private

firms, out of two, engaged in manufacturing water purifying tablets cannot maintain production of the item regularly mainly because of the absence of requirements and the rate fixed by the government. An official of the firm told The Daily Star that the cost of production of per tablet of 15 mg comes to 26 paisa while the government has set the rate at 21 paisa. Three years ago the price per tablet was 17 paisa and after much persuasion the concerned authorities agreed to raise the price of a tablet to 21 paisa. the official added. He said that for a long time his firm was trying to impress the authorities to fix the price at 50 paisa per tablet but to no

The official informed that the firm can produce over six lakh tablets per day in three shifts but now it is producing only two lakh tablets in one shift. The tablets are prepared in strips and these can be preserved for at least one and a half years with full effectiveness. He claimed that each tablet of 15 mg can purify one to three litres of water depending on the degree of contamination.

An EDCL source, however, said the tablets made of chlorine are hygroscopic, which means their effectiveness is lost quickly when exposed to air. He, however, asserted that the effectiveness of the tablets is not more than nine months when manufactured in strips.

The whole quantity of the water purifying tablets produced at the manufacturing plant of the EDCL, in addition to 36 drugs produced there, is supplied to the government hospitals, dispensaries and health centres only. These are not sold to private traders.

An EDCL source said, the production of water purifying tablets is carried out most irregularly only on demand. Even the total stock, produced on specific demand is not lifted regularly by the concerned department, the source added.

Talking to The Daily Star a senior official of the Health Ministry stressed greater need for health education and mobilisation of public opinion in favour of adopting preventive measures than the curative ones. He stated that as the impure water causes so many ailments in our country. people must be guided to use safe water as far as practicable and for this the use of water purifying tablets should be encouraged. These can easily be distributed free of cost even at normal times in areas where people are forced to drink contaminated water.

This is high time that we formulate a national health policy under which preventive measures are given top prior-

Ghorasal From Page 1 Col. 5

FACING the world alone .... With near and dear ones dead these two children, like many others, need not only food but also family. -Star photo

# Isles of misery

From S. Bari

The next day, not a single

structure was left standing on

this island. Monwara cannot

find a shred of her house, nor

"Shelters are far away," said

Unless shelters are close

Ghazi Mia, a 65-year old fish

erman, "we have no shelters

by, inhabitants are unlikely to

leave their homes at storm

warnings they no longer take

seriously. It is clearly a case of

crying "Wolf". Radio is now

fairly widespread, and on the

more remote islands, villagers

were forewarned. "But I've

heard that signal so many

times, how can I keep leaving

my house empty, unprotected

? Each time, the storm had

gone East or North, and

missed us," explained a

Cox's Bazar resident Abdus

"I have never seen such

On the islands of Koriardia

devastation in my life," he re-

Matarbari, Megnama, and their

neighbouring islands, people

had not seen food for the first

she fed her children grass.

Asma Bibi showed us how

Matarbari farmer.

Salam is 85.

five days.

the bodies of her family.

population.

KORIARDIA, May 9: The waves are still rough, and Monwara Begum's face wet in the rain. She stands in the mud waving at our boat.

One night, a week ago, she and her family heard storm warnings on the radio. As the wind grew and their little house shook in its onslaught. she crouched on the floor. gathering the younger of her seven children in her arms.

The nearest shelter was hours away by boat. Besides,"We hear the Number Ten danger signal all the time," she said.

"The house just blew away

bit by bit, and I sat holding on

to my children under the open dark sky. The wind was salty, it was hot, it burnt my skin. My babies were crying. "Then the wave came, so big, it was bigger than the

trees, it covered the sky. It picked us up, and my children slipped out of my arms. couldn't hold them. I saw them drop into the water." Monwara opened her arms

to show us how she lost her seven children, how the clothes were ripped off her

"My little girl's name was Dildara. She still suckled at my breast. Now there is no one at my breast." She holds out her hands and looks upwards, "Allah has left me emptyhearted."

by, so swollen they burst at the slightest touch. The stench and the spectre of cholera

Bangladesh's coastal belt has some 250 cyclone shelters This number is largely inadebirds remain in the area. quate for a sizeable island

have left cuts and wounds on medication and constant expoacross, fester with gangrene.

With husbands working on the mainland, many of the women did not dare leave their homes alone, and in some areas the percentage of female victims is disproportionately high.

There is an endless stony patience in the eyes of these survivors. How do they see the future? "What can we do, we wait for the government to give us a little."

People wander miles for water, they rebuild their huts, they eat the weeds and

Little Mansur pats his distended belly: "No, I don't wonder what will happen. My

hang low over the water. Curiously, there are no flies around, and no dogs left to

pick clean the bodies. Few Flying bits of tin and wood

many of the survivors. Lack of sure prevent the wounds from healing. Purple and greenish gashes, some five inches "All our women are dead

lamented a village shopkeeper The tiny islet we met him on lost 90 per cent of its female population.

stomach is empty."

### The Midnight File

#### **Bush undergoes treatment**

WASHINGTON, May 9: Prestdent George Bush's thyrotd condition Thursday was diagnosed as graves' Disease and he was immediately treated with a radioactive iodine dose, his doctors said. Once the doctors treat Bush's overactive thyroid. the President's recent tendency toward an irregular heartbeat will probably disappear," said Dr Kenneth Barman, an Army colonel and thyroid expert from Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Graves' Disease is the same illness that caused eye troubles in his wife, Barbara, reports AP

#### US shuts down checkpoint in Iraq

ZAKHO (fraq). May 9: US soldiers shut down the biggest Kurdish guerilla checkpoint in occupied Iraq on Thursday, in a sign of growing impatience with Kurdish leaders for not cooperating with moving refugees down from the mountains, The allies also said they had received assurances from a representative of President Saddam Hussein that Iraqi troops would avoid shooting incidents like the firing of anti-aircraft guns at a US Navy plane early Wednesday, reports AP.

#### Political relaxation in Thailand

BANGKOK. May 9: Thailand's military-dominated legislature today approved a government proposal to scrap laws that had curtailed political freedom of individuals and political parties since a coup in February. The legislature's decision followed a government move last week to left martial law which was enforced when the military ousted former Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan. Student and academic groups had urged the interim government of Prime Minister Anand Panyarachun to relax political restrictions saying they had dampened Thatland's investment atmosphere, reports

### Parliament

From Page 1 Col. 7 the Leader of the

Opposition Shetkh Hasina. Jatiya Party Parliamentary

Party Leader Moudud Ahmed taking part in the discussion demanded the formation of an all-party relief committee to coordinate relief activities and mobilise international initiatives and support to face the national crisis.

Moudud Ahmed said that due to lack of preparedness to combat the effects of cyclone the damage was colossal. He said that if the Leader of

the Opposition would not inform the parliament members, none would know that so many atreraft were damaged during the tidal surge. He said that the airforce

and navy did not take adequate steps to face the tidal surge. which caused massive destruction to national property. He cautioned that it would

be a wrong approach if the government tried to did party politics with the relief mea sures. He also demanded a white paper on the loss of lives and property.

Pointing to the present dual character of the government Moudud Ahmed said that according to the Constitution the present government is the government of Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed. But the BNP is the integral part of this government. which can't avoid its responsi

#### CEPZ

From Page 1 Col. 8

considering the economic importance of the CEPZ and the step is aimed at preventing entry of sea water in the CEPZ area during unusually high tide.

The cyclone and tidal surge of April 29 caused extensive damage to plants and raw materials and finished goods of several industrial units at the CEPZ

The Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) earlier requested the Acting President, who is also the Chairman of the Authority. to issue necessary order for construction of the embank ment from the Zero Point at the estuary of the river Karnaphuly upto Kumira Point

#### Mrs Fantani

to the north.

From Page 1 Col. 8

Crescent Society AFM Abdul Hug. Italian Ambassador Sandro M Siggia was present . During her five-day stay in

Bangladesh, the Italian Red Cross chief will call on Acting President Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman. She will also visit the cyclone affected areas.

Two American aircraft will arrive today carrying relief goods for cyclone victims. Foreign Ministry sources quoting US Ambassador William B Milam said the consignment would include food. medicine, water purifying ta-

bles and tents. Moulvibazar

said three people were killed as houses collapsed in flood. Meanwhile, the Monu river

is flowing 1.19 meter above

State Minister for Energy Dr. Khondaker Mosharraf Hossain said that due to prompt action taken by the government and the concerned departments eighty per cent of the total affected lines of the electric supply was restored within nine days of the April 29 cyclone. Jamaat Leader Matiur Rah-

man Nizami said that the proposal of forming a national relief committee with the representatives of all political parties was a pragmatic proposal. He said that the govern-

ment gave warning about the disaster ahead of the day, but that the post-disaster relief activities were not so effec-He said that generally the

naval force has to play a vital role after such a devastation, but, in this case, its role was not effective. He informed the parliament

that about 95 per cent installations of the Naval Base at Patenga had been destroyed in the cyclone. AL leader Begum Sajeda

Chowdhury said that the people of cyclone affected areas are going unfed, suffering from diarrhoea and getting no

She alleged that Ministers often visited those areas in helicopters without relief materi-

Awami League member Tofael Ahmed repeated his party's demand for constituting a relief committee headed by the Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed.

Workers Party member Rashed Khan Menon cautioned the government about the consequences of mistakes and criticised it for allegedly not accepting the offer of cooperation from the Opposition.

### Hasina

From Page 1 Col. 7.

bodies lying all along the coastal areas wherever she went. Human bodies were also seen floating in the Bay, she said alleging that bodies were being buried without clothes along with carcasses.

The Awami League Chief said acute shortage of food was prevailing in the affected areas and people were starving to death. She also claimed that people were living under the open sky and were counting their days for death.

She said no effective programme was taken for saving the life and property of the coastal people by the governments that formed after 1975.

Sheikh Hasina alleged that the government could not take proper steps for ameliorating

the sufferings of the distressed people even after 10 days of the catastrophe. She claimed that the governments relief activities were confined in publicity through radio, television and its controlled media like that of the autocratic The opposition leader who

visited the cyclone and tidal surge battered areas for five days complained lack of coordination and sincerity of the government in facing the calamity.

#### 5 more die

From Page 1 Col. 5

less in the tornado. The tornado has damaged 15 villages. The district administration has provided tents for the homeless families. Relief op-

### Greenhouse effect

From Page 1 Col. 7 scribe storms in the geographical area comprising Bangladesh.

He, however, said that it was possible such storms were less deadly in the past, because the density of the population was low, and were recorded merely as severe no'westers. Dr Atiq Rahman, Director,

Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies said that the intensity of cyclones have increased according to global warming productions. We can only ask: Is it the beginning of the phenomenon? Or is it an isolated event?

He said that in 1988 Bangladesh experienced not only the worst flood of the century but also a devastating cyclone which took a toll of 10,000 human lives. Another devastating cyclone had hit within just three years, on

April 29. Western scientists have predicted that a global temperature warming of 1.5 to 4.5 degree celsius, due to accumulation of 'greenhouse gases' is expected in another 50 to 100

Higher temperatures will cause the water of the earth to expand and the polar ice to melt raising the sea level.

With a predicted 209 centimetre sea level rise by the year 2100, one-third of Bangladesh will go under water, and one-third of its population will be forced to relocate. The economic efforts will

be disastrous. According to one estimate Bangladesh will suffer seven per cent of the global damage in terms of area coverage. habitat loss and other forms of

In terms of displacement of population the country will have to bear 16 per cent of the global burden. An Indonesian researcher has estimated that of the about 300 million people who will have to be relocated because of a sea level rise of a 200-centimetre-scenario, 50 million will be from Bangladesh.

But who will pay for this human induced environmental disaster? Industrial countries with one-fourth of the world's population account for threeforth of the 'greenhouse gas'

Two world climate conferences have failed to persuade the major polluters of the world's atmosphere to cut down their emissions.

Commented one scientist "the world thus does not provide poor countries like Bangladesh with any mechanism to sue those who are responsible for global warming and resultant catastrophic floods and cyclones.

An estimate made by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies shows that in a scenario of a 100-centimetre sea level rise Bangladesh will have to spend over one billion dollars to construct embankments to protect habi-

The April 29 cyclone is estimated to have caused damage to property worth one billion

#### The question is: Who pays? SAARC food

From Page 1 Col. 8

even of emergency. Bangladesh will notify the

SAARC nations including India and Pakistan have come with friendly and sympathetic response to the needs of Bangladesh in the wake of the cyclone and both nations provided relief assistance to the

#### Khaleda

visited a number of relief camps and temporary shelters of affected people in Bakolia area of Chittagong city. She distributed relief goods among the affected people and talked to some of them. She wanted to know if they were receiving relief goods. The people replied in the affirmative and expressed their gratitude to her for visiting the area.

In the evening Begum Zia visited Jobra in Hathazari upazila and went around some relief camps.

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by a rickshaw, mill workers The worst-affected areas are Khalapara, Moolpara, Tekpara,

and Tesda villages. UNB correspondent visiting the area in Palash upazila today saw many mud-and-straw houses razed to the ground, trees including some Banana plantation uprooted by the fury

of the Nor'wester. Two tin-shed roofs of the Bangladesh Jute Mill godowns were also blown away and canteen and a mosque inside the

mill damaged. A primary school at Khalapara village. Pilot High School here were also badly damaged while walls of a charitable dispensary and Amír Saw Mill near the railway station

collapsed. Power supply, snapped Wednesday night, could not be restored and, as a result.

Local UP Chairman Md. Helaluddin said 100 houses in Miapara were completely damaged while about 110 mudhouses in Moolpara and in Khlapara were partially dam-

Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, State Minister of Jute, and Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Youth and Sports, accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner and the UNO of Palash visited the

area Thursday morning. Witnesses said the sky over Ghorasal turned red before a whirlwind accompanied with rain lashed the areas.

A boat and a launch also capsized during the storm, but details were not available. Worst affected upazilas are Ghorasal, Jinardy and Danaga.

#### Microwave tower

From Page 1 Col. 8

ment of the technical and financial need for rebuilding the

According to a preliminary estimate, the reconstruction of the tower will cost about six crore taka and it will take eight months to complete the

BSS adds: The cyclone snapped 456 NWD lines between Dhaka and Chittagong. 60 NWD lines between Chittagong and Khulna and 60 and Bogra.

tower damage, 10 trunk circuits between Dhaka and Chittagong including a total of 586 Dhaka-Chittagong internal telephone circuits and 259 external circuits via Betbunia ground satellite station were

From Page 1 Col. 5 upazila chairman Abul Kalam Azad named seven dead in his upazila. They were Rokeya Sayeed Montazuddin (61), Monowara (24). Ayub (12). Jodduf Islam (6) and Shamsunnahar. Three others in the Sadar upazila

Nor'wester

were identified Asgar Ali (40) Jahanara (30) and an army jawan Shamsul Huque of Kuralia village. Seventeen people were reported missing after a boat, caught in the violent storm, sank midstream in the

Jamuna, the report quoted witnesses as saying. The boat carrying 35 people capsized near Nailchar island.

7 miles off the district headquarters, it said. Five tin-sheds of Holimabala Cirls High School in Sirajgani where SSC examinations were being held were blown away.

Thousands of kutcha houses were damaged, trees and electric poles uprooted in the town throwing it into dark-

Some 50 examinees were in-

UNB adds: Tornado battered Shahjahanpur union of Habigang district today, killing at least nine people and injuring over a hundred, officials

The intensity of the storm with a windspeed of 100 to 120 kilometre per hour and accompanied by heavy rainfall disrupted city life for about 90 minutes. Met Office recorded the highest velocity at the Zia International Airport area at 112 km and the maximum rainfall at 29 mm. The storm came from north-western direction, it added.

Police said two passengers and a rickshawpuller were injured when a tree fell on them near Asad Gate. The rickshawpuller was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Two others were wounded

them was taken to DMCH. The nor'wester also caused damage to many slums in and around the city areas. Heavy downpour submerged most of the city roads under

when tin roof of a house at

Kawran Bazar fell down. One of

About 30 industrial units in tanneries, food processing and steel rerolling sectors are located here. At Sagorika industrial belt,

### mate-rials, finished goods, ma-

From Page 1 Col. 4 Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Factory and innumerable other units got major jolts. It is impossible to find any unit unscathed. The cyclone and tidal bore

wiped out industrial assets, valued at tens of crores of Taka, within a few hours. The loss will be more, if dis locations and disruptions in production which are likely to

continue for few more weeks,

are taken into account. The cataclysm played havoc with machinery and equipment, stocks of inventory and finished Products, buildings, transport, vehicles and all other conceivable assets.

Even eight days after the cy-

clone, a complete picture is

not available. More staggering

losses are likely to come from industrial units when they complete their stock-taking and assessment. In the private sector, the disaster has sent shock-waves. For most units, the shock is

almost impossible to absorb without an emergency programme to bail them out of the prevailing straits. Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry

assessment on the losses to private sector industries. Chamber sources reported that the disaster put almost all heavy industrial units, located at Kalurghat on the western

(CCC&I) has started its

side of the city, out of gear. Chittagong Manufacturing Ltd. located at Kalurghat, estimated its loss at about Taka 12 crore, according to the Chamber. Lever Brothers made a ten-

tative estimate about its losses and damages at Taka four crore. There are about 30 heavy industrial units at **Kalurghat BSCIC** industrial estates where fish processing, small

engineering and many other

smaller units are located sus-

tained heavy losses likewise. At Nastrabad, Sholashahar on the northern side of the Port City, the damage is also extensive, according to the CCC&I.

adjoining the coastal line along Sitakunda area, mills and factories reported losses of raw

#### chinery and equipment. Frozen food, salt crushing

and deep sea trawling operations along the coastal zone have lost several hundred crores of Taka worth of assets. said Taher Sobhan, a noted industrialist in the Port City.

The CCC&I chief. Amir

Mohammad Khasru Chowdhury, told the Daily Star that an emergency recovery programme should be taken up by the government to resuscitate the industrial operations the Port City. He underlined the need for restoration of infrastructural facilities. "Whatever programmes or initiatives are taken by the entrepreneurs they will not be implemented without the restoration of infrastructural facilities", he ob-

The government should sit with the representatives of different industrial sectors to identify the areas of action for the revival of industries, he

suggested. AS Shahudul Huque Bulbul, Director of Eastern Cables Limited, a unit of Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC) under the holding company scheme pleaded for effective and all out support by all concerned agencies to make the industrial wheels move again. If there is any delay in this connection, the production losses for the industrial sector will be

could have been avoided had there been adequate precautionary steps by the management personnel in many en-Industrial circles here suggested that the government keep aside a portion of relief and rehabilitation assistance from the external sources to

fund industrial recovery pro-

grammes in the cyclone-bat-

tered areas on easier terms

progressive, he contended.

He observed that some

losses during the cyclone

#### and conditions. Schools, colleges to remain closed

All educational institutions in the cyclone affected areas of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar districts and the affected upazilas of greater Noakhali, Patuakhali Barisal and Khulna districts will remain closed till May 16, reports BSS.

#### From Page 1 Col. 8 Unofficial sources from Kulaura

danger level. The five-kilometre Moulvibazar town embankment may give in any time flooding the town under 20 feet of water. Panicky people have taken shelter in high buildings. An unusually tense situation prevail in the town which is encompassed by wa-ter held back only by the embankment.

#### people were injured and 700 families were rendered home-

eration is going on and, dried and cooked food is being distributed among the affected people. The administration is also assessing the extent of damage.

## of member countries in the

member countries about its requirement to draw its own allocation and also from Indian and Pakistani reserve. Dhaka is requesting India and Pakistan for drawing a part of their

### cyclone affected people.

From Page 1 Col. 7

work.

NWD lines between Chittagong As a result of the microwave

> knee-deep water. A case of electric short-circuit was reported from Dhaka Sheraton Hotel after a tree fell on line wires.

#### Human bodies are floating Industrial loss