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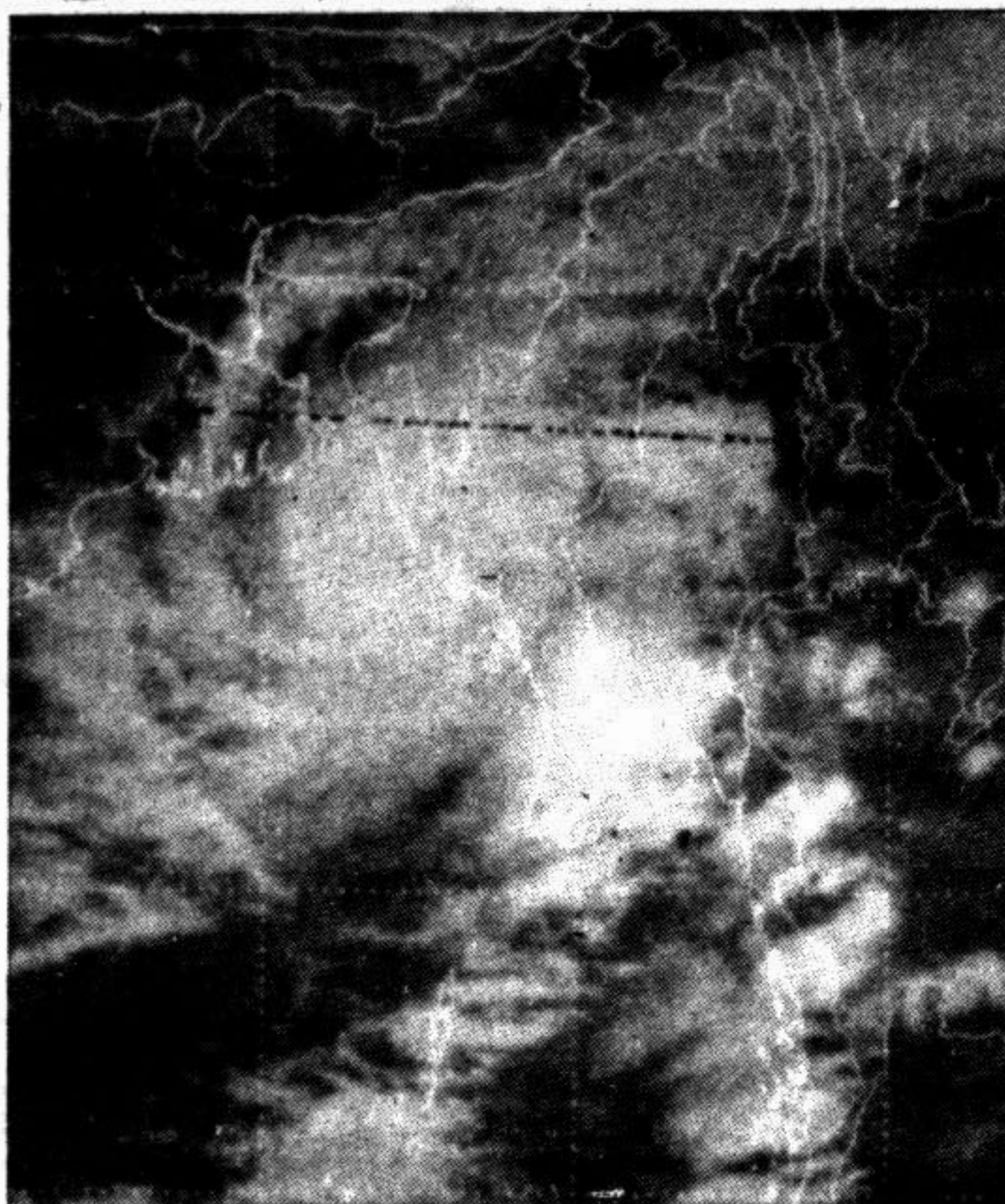
NEWS BRIEFS

BNPPP meets today

The Parliamentary Party meeting of the Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Dal (BNPPP) will be held today at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan at 5 pm to discuss the prevailing political situation of the country and the forthcoming Parliament session, reports UNB.

Cyclone hits: Casualty, damage not yet known Cox's Bazar bears brunt

By Staff Correspondent



A SPARRSO satellite picture showing the eye of yesterday's cyclone.

The cyclonic storm that brewed in the Bay of Bengal for the past several days finally came to shore yesterday, battering the Cox's Bazar coast and some off-shore islands and leaving a trail of devastation in its path.

The storm had moved further inland in a northeasterly direction and was centred at midnight last night between Ramu and Ukhia.

The Met Office, in its latest special bulletin, said it was likely to move further inland in a northeasterly direction before weakening gradually.

The maximum sustained wind within 75 kilometres of the storm centre was about 130 kilometres per hour, rising to 150 kph in gust or squalls.

According to preliminary reports, strong winds with speeds of 250 km per hour at places and high tidal surges caused yet undetermined damage to homesteads and crops in Cox's Bazar district, especially along Teknaf, St. Martin's Island, Maheshkhali, Kutubdia and Sandwip. Some of the adjoining districts, including Chittagong city, also

experienced strong winds and heavy rainfall, with many low-lying areas going under low tidal surges.

The maritime ports of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar were advised to keep hoisted Great Danger Signal Number 10.

However, reports of casualties in human lives, though feared, could not be confirmed even late last night, but damage to standing crop was stated to be extensive.

Our correspondents in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar reported that gale force winds, accompanied by heavy rains, lashed the Cox's Bazar region before the storm gradually weakened and crossed into neighbouring Arakan of Myanmar. They also reported that the storm, which first unleashed its fury around Teknaf at about 4:30 pm, continued until midnight, although its severity had dissipated to a great extent by then.

Tele-communication between Teknaf and Cox's Bazar, Cox's Bazar and St. Martin's, and Cox's Bazar-Chittagong had been snapped by late afternoon.

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Govt prepared to face any eventuality

By Special Correspondent

The government and relevant authorities took all preparations since Sunday to face the possible eventualities of the severe cyclonic storm that hit the Cox's Bazar coast last night.

As advised by the government, the control rooms of the Relief Directorate, the Red Crescent Society and the relevant ministries and divisions are to remain open round the clock until further orders to monitor the situation and to take measures accordingly.

The Cabinet, at a special meeting in Dhaka yesterday with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in chair, reviewed the disaster preparedness and precautionary measures. The Prime Minister assigned special responsibilities to ten ministers for taking measures to face the emergency following the cyclone and to coordinate relief activities in ten coastal districts.

Meanwhile, evacuation of people from the disaster-prone areas of the coastal districts, particularly those of Chittagong and Cox's Bazar, continued until yesterday evening during which period several lakh were taken to the cyclone shelters and other safe places.

In five coastal thanas of Cox's Bazar district, about three lakh people were evacuated to safer places as the storm was nearing the mainland. Evacuation from the coastal thanas of Banashkhali, Sandwip and Anwara in Chittagong district had almost been completed by yesterday evening.

The massive evacuation operation was carried out by the local administrations with support and assistance from the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and several non-government organisations. About 27,000 volunteers of BDRCS remained on alert in the vulnerable areas and cautioned the people with loud-speakers about the impending danger.

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Shelters still inadequate

By Masud Hasan Khan

Inadequate number of cyclone shelters still pose a major challenge to the evacuation of tens of thousands of people living in the coastal region of the country.

Everytime a cyclone with all its fury approaches the coasts of Bangladesh, a single question becomes more and more intense in the minds of the people — 'Are we prepared for the cyclone?'

'Yes,' in terms of human resources and 'no,' in terms of safe housing, say experts in disaster management.

Some 1500 cyclone shelters dotting the coast line of the country, along with 161 killas (high earthen mounds) were too inadequate to house some 51 lakh people living in the high risk areas in 46 thanas, they point out.

The total capacity of all the coastal shelters is 6,04,952 persons.

For example, the population of Maheshkhali thana in Cox's Bazar district is two lakh nineteen thousand, whereas all the cyclone shelters in the thana

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Cabinet meets Save human lives : PM

All precautionary measures have been taken to face any eventuality in the country's coastal regions likely to be hit by the cyclone, the cabinet was told yesterday, reports UNB.

The cabinet in an emergency meeting with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair reviewed the latest situation and discussed possible measures to cope with the impending disaster.

The Prime Minister directed the authorities concerned to concentrate more on saving human lives than on the protection of property.

The cabinet was informed that all precautionary measures had been taken to save human lives and property from the possible lashes of the cyclone and preparations completed to undertake post-cyclone relief operations, if necessary.

Tens of thousands of people have already been shifted to safe places from the coastal belt as part of the precautionary measures.

The meeting was also told that the Army, Navy and Air

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Mandela becomes president Friday

JOHANNESBURG, May 2: President FW de Klerk conceded defeat today in South Africa's national election, saying he was ready to hand power to Nelson Mandela and work with him to create a multiracial democracy, reports AP.

"Next Tuesday I shall lay down my responsibilities as state president," de Klerk told a news conference at National Party headquarters in Pretoria. "I shall be handing over the presidency to Mr.

Mandela."

"Mr. Mandela has walked a long road and now stands at the top of the hill," he said of the ANC leader, who spent 27 years in prison for opposing the policies imposed by de Klerk's party. "I hold out my hand to Mr. Mandela in friendship and in cooperation."

With 41 per cent of the votes counted, de Klerk's National Party had 24.3 per cent to 61.9 per cent for the ANC. The Zulu nationalist

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F W de Klerk



Nelson Mandela

Hasina rejects PM's call to attend JS session

By Staff Correspondent

Sheikh Hasina yesterday rejected the Prime Minister's call to the opposition legislators Thursday to attend the Jatiya Sangsad (JS) session scheduled to begin tomorrow.

Hasina, Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League (AL) chief, explaining her stand, said the government was yet to create a congenial atmosphere for the Opposition to return to the House.

"The Prime Minister herself and her government have been

out to make the JS inoperative since its formation back in 1991," the Leader of the Opposition added.

Hasina was addressing the inaugural session of a two-day extended meeting of her party's central working committee at the Institute of Engineers yesterday afternoon.

Sheikh Hasina told her partymen that most of the bills passed by the present government had originally been promulgated in the form of order in the Jatiya Sangsad bhaban.

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May Day observed

By Staff Correspondent

As elsewhere in the world, the country observed the historic May Day on Sunday with a renewed pledge to protect and uphold the fundamental rights of the working class.

Different trade unions and socio-cultural organisations planned programmes which included rallies, processions and discussions on the significance of the day. The day was a public holiday.

Radio and BTV aired special programmes while the national dailies carried special articles on the occasion.

The Labour Directorate organised a discussion meeting at the Shilpakala Academy Sunday morning. Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum addressed the meeting.

Chief guest Mannan Bhuiyan urged the workers to maintain unity and discipline to help build the industrial base of the country.

The Dhaka city unit of the Jatiya Samik League held a special workers' meeting at the Dhaka District Sports Association premises in the morning.

The Bangladesh Newspaper Employees' Federation held a

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Rallies around JS bhaban prohibited

The Commissioner of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has prohibited holding of meeting, rallies and processions and carrying of weapons, explosives and other lethal items in and around the Jatiya Sangsad bhaban from midnight today, reports BSS.

A DMP press release issued yesterday said the prohibition order has been issued to ensure smooth holding of the 14th session of fifth Jatiya Sangsad, beginning tomorrow and for maintaining law and order in an around the Jatiya Sangsad bhaban.

NEW DATE FOR Star Quiz 3 Lucky Draw

Due to the severe cyclone which hit parts of Bangladesh Monday, the Lucky Draw for Star Quiz No:3 scheduled for Wednesday, 4 May '94, has been shifted to Sunday, 8 May, 1994.

SO RUSH YOUR ENTRIES NOW TO REACH BY 7 MAY, 1994. SEND AS MANY ENTRIES AS YOU WISH TO MULTIPLY YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING FABULOUS PRIZES.

Star QUIZ ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to repeated requests from our valued Star Quiz participants for more time, the schedules for Star Quiz No: 4, 5 & 6 have been revised as under:-

Round	Starts	Ends	Entries Close	Lucky Draw On
Quiz No: 4	1 May '94	14 May '94	16 May '94	17 May '94
Quiz No: 5	15 May '94	31 May '94	5 June '94	6 June '94
Quiz No: 6	1 June '94	23 June '94	25 June '94	26 June '94

(BUMPER)

MAKE SURE YOU PARTICIPATE IN ALL THESE CONTESTS TO WIN FABULOUS PRIZES INCLUDING AN ALL-PAID TRIP TO LOS ANGELES AND A TICKET TO THE WORLD CUP '94 FOOTBALL FINAL.

449 expelled on first day of SSC exams

By Staff Correspondent

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations under four education boards of the country began smoothly yesterday although most of the non-government school teachers were boycotting the examinations.

However, the Education Ministry officials said 50 per cent of the non-government teachers who were on strike since April 18 joined their duties and were conducting the exams. The examinations under all the four boards started on schedule and no report of any dislocation was received from anywhere, they added.

Some 449 students were expelled for adopting unfair means to answer questions on the first day of the SSC examinations under the four boards yesterday. The expulsions during the Bengali first paper exams were 72 under the Dhaka Board, 136 under the Comilla Board, 211 under the Rajshahi Board and 30 under the Jessore Board.

The Central Teachers Action Liaison Committee, the

coordinating body of the striking teachers, said 90 per cent of the non-government teachers were boycotting the SSC exams. Committee leader Prof Abdur Rab while talking to The Daily Star, however, admitted that a section of the private school teachers in the capital served as invigilators of the exams. He termed them collaborators of the government.

The liaison committee, a platform of six organisations of the non-government school and college teachers, staged demonstrations all over the country on the first day of the SSC examinations to press a 15-point charter of demands including financial benefits equivalent to the teachers of nationalised educational institutions. The committee organised rallies and processions at all the districts.

Some 6,92,741 candidates are appearing in this year's SSC exams at 644 centres under four boards of Dhaka, Comilla, Jessore and Rajshahi.

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Students appearing at the SSC examination at a city centre on the first day yesterday.



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