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NEWS BRIEFS

Telegraph line with Teknaf restored

The Bangladesh T&T Board restored the Telegraph services between Teknaf and other parts of the country from yesterday morning. The telegraph line has been restored as a special measure to facilitate transmission of Telegraphic messages to and from Teknaf, reports UNB.

Li Peng shocked

Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng has expressed shock at the loss of life and property in Monday's cyclone in Bangladesh. In a condolence message sent to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Li Peng hoped that the government and people of Bangladesh would be able to overcome the disaster soon, reports UNB.

CHT truce extended till July 15

Back to armed struggle if talks fail: Shanto Larma

KHAGRACHHARI, May 5: J B Larma alias Shanto Larma, president of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), the parent organisation of the Shantibahini rebels, today threatened to resume armed insurgency if the ongoing peace talks failed.

The Shantibahini leaders, at the seventh round of peace talks held here today with the parliamentary committee has, meanwhile, agreed to extend the ceasefire in the CHT until July 15 to continue the talks.

The ceasefire now in force was to expire on May 15.

Briefing newsmen separately at the Khagrachhari Circuit House after the dialogue Larma said "We will return to armed struggle if the

present government fails to guarantee our fundamental and democratic rights in the CHT.

"We want autonomy and a separate entity for the tribal people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts," the rebel leader said, adding "We're not fighting whimsically but for the cause of our historically recognised rights to our homeland."

"It is like a civil war in which my people as well as others of the country faced death, and if the government recognises our democratic rights, there is no need for this bloodshed," he said.

About the progress in the talks held so far with the parliamentary committee, Larma said "It all depends on the realities and complete achieve-

ment of our demands."

"We can not give up our basic demand for a separate entity of the tribal people, but we may consider the question of the outsiders (non-tribals)."

Replying to another question he said the present democratic government was yet to make the CHT free of security forces.

Turning to repatriation of the Chakma refugees, Larma said they would not be safe and secure unless a political settlement of the CHT issue is reached with the Shantibahini.

He attributed the existing relatively peaceful situation in the CHT to the continuation of the ceasefire.

Compared with the past six



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia visiting a stall after inaugurating the three day fifth annual Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition (Batexpo) '94 at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday. On her left is BGMEA president Redwan Ahmed, MP. — PID photo

2 Chinese among six killed in boiler blast

NARAYANGANJ, May 5: At least six people, including two Chinese engineers, were killed and seven others injured in a boiler explosion at a spinning mills in Sonargaon near here today.

The boiler of the Reliance Spinning Mills, Kanchpur, Sonargaon exploded at about 11 in the morning causing panic all around.

Among the dead were two Chinese engineers — Wang Ke Wean, 56, and Chan Le Gian 28. The other deceased were two electricians, Akhteruzzaman, 32, and Yunus Mollah, 35, a head fitter Shahadat Ali 42, and a generator operator Nannu Mia, 35.

All but Yunus died on the spot. Yunus was rushed to the Orthopaedic Hospital in the capital where he succumbed to his injuries.

Among the injured, Jang Le King, another Chinese engineer and Nazrul Islam, an assistant supervisor of the mills were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

According to witnesses, the Chinese engineers were installing generators some 20 yards from the boiler.

Reliance Spinning Mills imported eight generators from China recently and the engineers came to Bangladesh

Seven killed in Rupganj road mishap

NARAYANGANJ, May 5: At least seven people were killed and some 30 others injured in a road accident at Bhulta on the Dhaka-Narsingdi highway under Rupganj police station this morning.

A Brahmanbaria-bound bus from Dhaka rammed into several auto rickshaws, tempos, rickshaws and pedestrians at Bhulta bazar, killing five people on the spot and injuring many others at about 7:30 in the morning. Two other victims died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Abdus Samad, 45, Abdullah, 30, Ali Hossain, 30, and two other unidentified persons



The mangled remains of an auto-tempo and an overturned bus that collided near the Bhulta bus stand on the Dhaka-Narsingdi highway yesterday. — Star photo

Crimes in city decrease by 37 pc

By Farid Ahmed

The number of crimes, suicides and road accidents in Dhaka metropolitan area decreased by 37 per cent last one month compared to those in the previous month.

Murders and road accidents in the capital decreased in April while the number of suicides was the same as in March, according to a study conducted by The Daily Star.

Besides, muggings and skirmishes in different areas kept the city tense during the month.

Thirty-nine people died in various crimes in the month of April.

Of them six were murdered, five committed suicide and 22 fell victims to road ac-

idents. The police recovered six bodies from different areas of the capital.

In March, 63 people died in various crimes. Of them seven were murdered and 32 died in road accidents.

A senior officer of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police said the number of crimes in the

city decreased by 37 per cent.

Phensidyls are being sold in different busy city places like Gabtoli, Sayedabad, Gopbagh and Fulbaria at a cost of Tk 80 to 100 for each bottle, according to sources.

A number of city dwellers and organisers of anti-drug campaigns said the failure of the police to nab the drug traffickers was the cause of increase in the sale of drugs.

However a senior officer said the police are frequently raiding the places where injurious drugs are sold.

"If we could curb the use of injurious drugs, we could at least curb street mugging.... We found that most of the street muggers are drug-ad-

Protesters block roads as bus kills college girl

FARIDPUR, May 5: Road communications of 16 southern districts came to a halt as protesters and transport workers clashed after the death of a college girl in an accident here today (Thursday), reports UNB.

Popy Akhter, 18, a 2nd year student of Government Sarada Sundari Women's College, was run over by a Dhaka-bound bus of Saudia Paribahan at Kumarpur on the Faridpur-Dauladia highway, eight kilometre north of the town, at 2:45 pm.

Popy, the daughter of Akramuzzaman, a retired government official of Kumarpur, was returning home from the college by another bus. She

PM opens Batexpo '94 in city

Peace must for export, foreign investment

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday underlined the need for peace and stability to maintain the present trend of foreign investment and uninterrupted export-trade, reports UNB.

The government or the businessman alone cannot ensure peace. A national commitment and consensus among the political parties are essential for this. Peace and stability must be maintained in the greater interest of the nation," she said.

Begum Zia was inaugurating the 5th Bangladesh Apparel and Textile Exposition-94, the only international event of its

kind in the country, at Sonargaon Hotel in city yesterday morning.

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has organised the three-day exposition aimed at promoting export of domestic products.

About 100 foreign buyers are participating in the exposition.

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh is still dependent on aid and imports. She stressed that the country's exports must be increased and dependency on imports and foreign aid reduced to achieve

Mandela close to two-third majority

JOHANNESBURG, May 5: Results released Thursday showed the African National Congress edging toward the two-thirds parliament majority that would give it control over the country's new constitution, reports AP.

Meanwhile, a respected financial newspaper accused the judge in charge of South Africa's historic election of "dissembling" in the face of possible massive electoral fraud in KwaZulu-Natal, stronghold of Mangosuthu Buthezi's Inkatha Freedom Party.

Although the ANC has already claimed victory and the losers have conceded defeat, the vote count has dragged on nearly a week after the polls closed and parties have been trading charges of vote-rigging. Acknowledging some problems, election officials say they have only slightly influenced the overall results.

Severe food crisis grips cyclone-hit areas

By Staff Correspondent

Severe food crisis has gripped the cyclone-hit areas of Cox's Bazar district where the relief supplies appeared to be in adequate.

Our Cox's Bazar Correspondent Abdul Monayem Khan, after visiting a number of affected areas yesterday, reported that relief goods distributed among the affected people was not enough.

Prices of food and other essentials have shot up due to supply shortage in the remote areas of Ukhia, Ramu and Teknaf thanas.

Paddy stored at the farmers' houses were drenched during Monday's cyclone while all the rice mills in Ukhia and Teknaf remained inoperative because there was no power supply.

The cyclone that hit Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts Monday evening left 165 people dead and thousands injured. It also caused extensive

damage to property, houses, crops and forest resources. No further deaths were reported yesterday.

Meanwhile, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al-Noman yesterday visited a number of relief distribution centres to supervise relief operation.

Officials at the Cox's Bazar control room said that they had so far distributed Tk. 5.35 lakh as gratuitous relief among the affected in Cox's Bazar, Ramu, Ukhia, Teknaf and Chakoria thanas.

They also distributed 213 metric tons of rice, in addition to biscuits, chira, gur, sarees, lungis and utensils.

Meanwhile, the government yesterday sanctioned Taka 10 lakh as house building grant, 3000 bundles of CI sheets and 100 metric tons of rice for the cyclone victims in Cox's Bazar

Gas rate hike

Sylheties gherao DC's office

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, May 5: People protesting the increased gas rate here today gheraoed the office of the Deputy Commissioner and handed over a memorandum to the ADC (General).

Earlier a meeting was held at the Court Point with Toran Miah, convener of the Committee for resisting increased gas bill, in the chair. It was addressed by Syed Mostafa Kamal, Zafar Ahmed Chowdhury, Syeda Zebunnessa Haque and advocate Khokan Dutta.

The speakers called for withdrawal of the increased

Accord to explore oil, gas in Bay signed

By Staff Correspondent

The government yesterday signed a final agreement with Holland Sea Search Holding NV of the Netherlands and Cairn Energy Plc of Britain for the exploration of oil and gas in the Bay of Bengal.

Energy Minister Khandker Mosharrar Hossain, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh P J Fowler, the Dutch Charge d' Affaires, high officials, Petrobangla officials and six representatives of the two foreign companies were present at the signing ceremony.

This is the first agreement for oil exploration in the country since 1974.

Under the agreement, the two firms will explore for oil and gas in the Bay off the Cox's Bazar-Sandwip coast, covering an area of 821 sq km, including the 242 sq km Kutubdia gas field.

Sources say, another foreign company, American Snyder, would assist the two companies in the exploration. The government signed initials with Cairn and Holland Sea Search on August 5 last.

During the initial contract period of seven years, the companies would conduct seismic survey and gravity survey.

Slow customs clearance piles up parcels at GPO

Star Report

The foreign mail section of the General Post Office (GPO) is failing to clear up taxable parcels from abroad due to shortage of Customs officials, GPO sources said.

More than 15,000 such parcels are waiting to be cleared by the Customs at the foreign mail section.

While some 1000 such mails arrive at the section everyday, the Customs officials can hardly dispose of 200 to 300 packets. There were only three Customs officials doing the enormous job, the sources pointed out.

As a result, persons to whom the parcels and packets are addressed have to wait for as long as four to six months for clearance.

"We have parcels awaiting clearance since last January,"

Power shortage due to gas crisis

Star Report

Sudden crisis in gas supply to power plants in Ashuganj from April 25 has created a power shortage of 150mw to 250mw everyday, sources said.

The situation worsened as power generation was disrupted at the 210mw Raizan power plant in Chittagong on Monday. However, it resumed normal operation yesterday. Source said the power crisis would continue for the next two weeks.

A Titas Gas source said the gas processing of plant in Rashidpur of Sylhet gas field is undergoing maintenance operations since April 25.

The plant which supplies 85 million cubic feet gas (cft) per hour is now supplying 45

Hasina visits Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, May 5: Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina today visited Marichyla, Kutupalong, Bhalukia and Courtbazar cyclone-hit areas under Ukhia thana of Cox's Bazar district, reports BSS.

Sheikh Hasina distributed money among the families whose earning members were killed in the cyclone. She also visited the damaged mosques, mandirs and buddhist kiangs in the affected areas.

Sheikh Hasina talked to the affected people and asked about their welfare. She urged them to face the post-cyclone situation with courage and fortitude.

Later addressing a spontaneous way-side meeting at the Courtbazar Sheikh Hasina alleged that the official relief operations were not sufficient to cope with the situation.

Sheikh Hasina called upon the well-to-do persons to

Govt college teachers suspend programme

The Bangladesh Government College Professors' and Lecturers' Associations have called off their strike programme scheduled to begin tomorrow as the government assured to look into their 12-point demand, reports UNB.

The associations took the decision yesterday following a fruitful discussion between the associations' leaders and Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar in view of the ongoing SSC examination.

Demands of the associations include creation of new posts in 233 government colleges, increased salary, filling up of vacant posts through promotion.

Rush! Rush!! Rush!!! and Enter

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Quiz 3 ends TOMORROW Saturday 7th May—Lucky Draw will be held on Sunday 8th May '94 at Press Club

Send as many entries as you like to multiply your chances of winning

See Page 11 for details

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