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BUDGET '95-96
 Business leaders speak out
 Today: Sajjad Hossain, President, Bangladesh Computer Society.
 Tomorrow: M. H. Khan, Chairman, Pesticides Association of Bangladesh.
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Don Quixote's Fertiliser Ride
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 TADA won't be renewed
 Russia, China pledge to boost military ties Page 5

Business
 Trade traffic through Ctg Port increases by around 30 pc
 US targets Japanese luxury autos in trade sanctions Pages 6, 7

STOCK MARKET
 DSE Index: 761.69 (-0.34%)
 Market capitalisation Tk: 45.11 billion
 Transactions in volume: 83525
 Transactions in value Tk: 18.67 million

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Metropolitan
Dhaka Day by Day
 Books at a Bargain Price Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS
Appointment
 By Staff Correspondent
 The Executive Chairman of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA) M Saifur Islam was made Director General of the Bureau of Anti-Corruption, an official handout said yesterday.

Radio programme on EPZ
 The Radio Bangladesh will put on air at 7:30 am on May 27 a question-answer programme on the export processing zones (EPZ). In the "phone-in programme", interested businessmen, industrialists, investors or any person can ask questions over the telephone. Radio Bangladesh said that it would receive the questions and suggestions on its telephone no 817670 today, reports BSS.

DB to investigate Khairul murder
 By Staff Correspondent
 Detective Police is likely to take over the investigation of the killing of a Jubo Dal leader, Khairul Islam, in the city Sunday, sources said. Meanwhile, no one had been arrested in this connection until last night, Dhanmondi police said. Some unidentified gunmen shot dead Khairul, 24, near the Jhikotola Bazar under Dhanmondi thana at around 6:30 pm Sunday.

Girl electrocuted
 SIRAJGANJ, May 16: A female student of Sirajganj University College was electrocuted at Victoria Quarters of the town today at 10 am, reports UNB.

Five deaths confirmed; lakhs affected; crops destroyed

Vast areas inundated

Star Report
 Cyclone Preparedness Programme said, two people died on Monpura island Monday night. The exact cause of their deaths could not be known. Also, according to reports from our correspondents, a passenger launch carrying an estimated 200 people had gone missing in the Bosekhali river of Barguna district while a seatruck operating on the Hatiya-Noakhali route had run aground in a shoal with nearly 150 passengers on board. The fate of the passengers of either vessel could not be known. High winds whipped up by gale-force winds following a depression in the Bay, rising at places to nearly 10 feet above the normal, accompanied by continuous torrential rainfall swamped vast areas along the coastal belt and the off-shore islands in the south of the country. Many of the flood protection embankments had been severely breached by the gushing waters in the regions of Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Barguna, Barisal, Pirojpur, Bhola, Hatiya, Sandwip, Kutubdia, Maheshkhali, Anwara, Banskhali, Char Fashon, Char Nizam, Nijhum Dweep, Char Kukri, Lalmohan, Luximpur, Sonagazi, Majdee Court, Urir Char, and Cox's Bazar district. Thousands of acres of croplands, shrimp and salt beds had been inundated and people in hundreds of villages marooned. In Hatiya seven of the unions had been flooded affecting nearly two lakh people. According to Noakhali Police Super Md Shahidullah Khan, contacted over telephone at 10:30 last night, there was fresh fear of flooding in Hatiya island because of a high tide scheduled to begin at eleven last night. He said, district administration officials accompanied by police and Red Crescent squads were hoping to go to the island with relief supplies this morning once the storm and rains abated. The Noakhali DC Moshir Rahman estimated that groundnut and chili crops on nearly ten thousand acres and Char, and Cox's Bazar district. Thousands of acres of croplands, shrimp and salt beds had been inundated and people in hundreds of villages marooned. In Hatiya seven of the unions had been flooded affecting nearly two lakh people. According to Noakhali Police Super Md Shahidullah Khan, contacted over telephone at 10:30 last night, there was fresh fear of flooding in Hatiya island because of a high tide scheduled to begin at eleven last night. He said, district administration officials accompanied by police and Red Crescent squads were hoping to go to the island with relief supplies this morning once the storm and rains abated. The Noakhali DC Moshir Rahman estimated that groundnut and chili crops on nearly ten thousand acres and

LATEST
The depression over the Bay and Orissa coast had weakened and moved north-eastward and was centred near Faridpur district of Bangladesh at midnight last night, agency reports said.
The Met Office in Dhaka said according to its latest radar observations, the land depression is likely to move in an easterly or north-easterly direction.



Jute-mills workers staged a sit-in in front of the Privatisation Board Office in the city's Motijheel area yesterday protesting the privatisation process of the six state-owned jute mills. — Star photo

Reforms under 'uneasy' political situation difficult: Saifur

By Staff Correspondent
 Envoy to the Prime Minister, also spoke on the occasion. While MPs, senior government officials, members of the donor community, business leaders, economists, academicians and the authors of the report also participated in the discussion at the inaugural session of the dialogue chaired by Prof Rehman Sobhan. The review, carried out by a group of noted economists led by Prof Rehman Sobhan, has contradicted official version on economic performance in recent years, and detected stagnation in the country's growth, particularly in the agriculture sector. While the participants shared the concern of Saifur Rahman, government's weaknesses in implementing its economic agenda came under attack. M Sayeduzzaman, former bureaucrat turned finance minister said: politics is often made "scapegoat" for non or poor performance. Indicating at hesitation and lack of determination on the part of the government, Sayeduzzaman said the country required "competent and determined leadership with vision." Many a participant, the officials in particular, categorically disagreed with the depressing findings of the CPD review and argued that reform was already delivering results and the national economy doing better than before. They also criticised the review for not making any recommendation. Saifur Rahman identified two primary reasons for the poor micro sector response to the reform measures and the

Struggle for vote, food to continue: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent
 BARISAL, May 16: Awami League president Sheikh Hasina today said her party, if voted to power, will ensure development of the neglected areas in the country, reports UNB. Addressing people, the AL chief demanded election under a neutral non-partisan caretaker government. She said struggle for vote and food will continue. People's welfare and overall development are not possible ignoring development of parts of the country, she told way-side gatherings on her way to Barisal from Patuakhali. The inclement weather forced Hasina to postpone her scheduled public meetings at Baula and Khepupara in Patuakhali and Barisal on the fourth day of her tour of southern districts. Thousands of people braving torrential rains and strong wind gathered at different road crossings and ferry ghats to listen to Hasina while she was on her way to Barisal from Kuakata. Earlier, Hasina visited a Buddhist temple at Khepupara and exchanged views with members of the Rakhain community.



Indian troops keeping a watch on the holy Kashmir town of Charar-e-Sharif yesterday before a scheduled pull-out. — AFP photo

High tide in coastal regions forecast

By Staff Correspondent
 In the capital, the sun hid behind dark rain clouds for the whole day yesterday. At times, the heavy downpour relented, giving way to drizzles which were accompanied by strong gusty wind. Traffic movement in the capital was relatively thin due to the rainfall. Offices, banks and business centres were also rather poorly attended. The Met Office recorded only 14mm rainfall in the capital during 6 am to 6 pm yesterday. However, it also recorded 71mm in Dhaka in the 24 hours till 6 am yesterday. The highest 94mm rainfall in 12 hours yesterday was recorded in Feni. Rainfall recorded in other areas were: Chittagong 82mm, Cox's Bazar 80, Kutubdia 62, Majdi Court See Page 12 Col 3

Saudi team arrives

A seven-member delegation of the Saudi Development Fund arrived in Dhaka yesterday morning on a week visit to Bangladesh. During the trip, the delegation will hold meetings with ministers and officials, besides seeing the progress of projects financed by the Fund. "Saudi Arabia gives special consideration in providing assistance to Bangladesh, as a brotherly Muslim country," said Deputy Managing Director of the Fund Dr Abdul Aziz Bin Muhammad Al-Turky on his arrival. He is leading the delegation. Talking to UNB at the airport, Dr Al-Turky said that Saudi Arabia responded quickly to Dhaka's approach for help after cyclonic catastrophe that ravaged Bangladesh in 1991. He referred to the existing friendship between the two countries and hoped that it would be further strengthened in days ahead.

News Analysis

Now it all depends on the two leaders

By Farid Hossain
 It is too early to start a celebration. But never mind if one greets the news with a grin. As monsoon rains poured on Monday ending a five-month drought, Abdus Salam Talukdar picked up his phone and dialed the number of his counterpart in the Awami League, Zillur Rahman. Confined by rains, Rahman was home and calmly he received yet another offer of a dialogue between the government and the Opposition to end a political dispute that has paralysed Parliament for more than a year. This was not the first time Rahman had received a phone call from Talukdar. Secretary General of the ruling BNP and a top aide of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Talukdar had made a similar offer to Rahman on April 17. There was a difference. Last time Rahman rejected outright the offer saying, the government was trying to mislead the public and create confusion. This time he was pondering over Talukdar's message. Rahman did not turn down his proposal. Rahman told The See Page 12 Col 1

Hearing of Manzur murder case resumes today

From Staff Correspondent
 CHITTAGONG, May 16: The court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate is scheduled to resume hearing of the Manzur murder case tomorrow. The date was fixed on May 2. The three retired army officers arrested in connection with the murder were produced in CMM's court on the day. They are expected to be produced again tomorrow in the court of CMM, court sources said. Among the three army officers, Major Emdad is being detained in Comilla Jail, Gen Abdul Latif in Dhaka Jail and Col Shamsur Rahman in Tangail Jail.

Maid's death Mother, daughter on fresh remand

By Court Correspondent
 Rukhsana Choudhury and her teenage daughter Sharmin Choudhury were placed on another two days' police remand yesterday, in connection with the suspected murder of their maid at the Concord Tower apartment in the city recently. Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) Shahiduddin Ahmed granted the remand. Detective police had interrogated the two suspects on May 7-8 and produced them in the CMM's court on May 9, praying for another five days' remand for further interrogation. But the court, on hearing the two sides, fixed May 16 for issuing an order on the matter. See Page 12 Col 3

Polls after completion of term: Khaleda

BADALGACHI (Naogaon), May 16: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today urged the people to vote again for her party in next general elections for maintaining present trend of development and democratic process, reports UNB. She said the next elections, due early next year, is very crucial for development, democracy and independence of the country. "Only the ENP can give full guarantee to the countrymen on these issues," she added while addressing a mammoth public meeting at Badalgachi thana Eidgah maidan in the afternoon. "We'll complete our five-year term in 1996. The next elections will take place after completion of our term," she told the huge crowd and observed "a tough test is ahead of us." "If you want development and democracy and protection of independence of our motherland, you must return the BNP to power as there is no alternative patriotic party like it in the country," she said. Begum Zia told the people, if they do not vote for the BNP, all development programmes, including construction of the Jamuna Bridge, extraction of Barapukuria coal and Madyapura hardrock, would be stalled. The Prime Minister said, massive development works initiated by her government were now going on in full swing and urged the people to continue their support to the BNP for carrying forward the programmes and policies to make the country self-reliant. She observed that the status of the nation would change if the present trend of development continued for next five years. "Bangladesh will advance in education, health and See Page 12 Col 8

Voters' ID cards: CEC holds meet May 21

By Staff Correspondent
 A final decision on the issuance of identity (ID) cards for voters would be taken only after a meeting between the Election Commission (EC), software experts and the computer companies who have already applied for enlistment with the EC for the work. Chief Election Commissioner Justice A K M Sadeque told a meeting of computer and database experts Monday that he would hold the talks on May 21 at 4 pm for eliciting the considered opinions of all concerned before taking any decision. "The EC would welcome any constructive suggestion regarding introduction of ID cards," he told the meeting where some noted computer experts of the country were present. Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury and Prof Mujibur Rahman of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and director of BUET's computer centre Dr Ali Murtuza were also present. Secretary of the EC A Z M Shamsul Alam, Additional Secretary S M Zakaria, Director of the EC's ID cards project Muhammad Omar Faruq and Joint Secretary of the Cabinet Division M Idris Ali, too, attended the meeting. The meeting was told that the ID cards project was formulated on the basis of recommendations of a technical committee which was approved by the ECNEC. Secretary Shamsul Alam said at the meeting that if necessary the proposed methodology and technology for issuing ID cards could be modified for the sake of completing the project on time and at minimum cost. See Page 12 Col 8

KNM resumes partial production today

KHULNA, May 16: The Khulna Newsprint Mills (KNM) will resume partial production tomorrow night, mill sources said, reports UNB. The KNM management suspended its production Sunday due to increasing salinity in the river Bhairab from which water is used in the boiler and the turbine of the mills. The mills needs about 500 metric tons of sweet water for the boiler and 5,000 metric tons for cooling. Salinity of water has increased abnormally due to unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water by India at the Farakka barrage.

Police evicts 10 shops in city

By Staff Correspondent
 Police, upon a court order, evicted ten shops from a building in the city's Purana Paltan area yesterday. The owners of the building at 68/2 Purana Paltan, which also houses the state-run news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), after a long-drawn legal battle, won a decree from the court of the Third Sub-judge, Dhaka, ordering the forceful eviction of all the tenants. Consequently, police from Motijheel thana, in the presence of court officers, managed to throw out the ten shops located at the ground floor. However, according to the officer in-charge of Motijheel thana, the BSS office located on the top floor of the two-storeyed building, could not be evicted because of a subsequent court order that reached the police later in the day yesterday.

Delimitation of 57 more JS seats finalised

By Staff Correspondent
 The Election Commission (EC) yesterday finalised the delimitation of jurisdiction of 57 more parliamentary constituencies in 12 northern districts. The districts are: Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Joypurhat, Bogra, Nawabganj, Naogaon, Rajshahi, Natore, Sirajganj and Pabna. The EC finalised the jurisdiction of the respective constituencies after hearing both the sides concerned coming from the districts and reviewing the documents and reports. Earlier, the EC on Monday finalised delimitation of jurisdiction of 15 constituencies in the districts of Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur and Nilphamari.