

MARBLE MARBLE MARBLE
 WE HAVE HUGE READY STOCK OF
 ITALIAN CARRARA, PERLATO SICILIA,
 BOTTICINO, INDIAN KESSWARI GREEN,
 MALAYSIAN AND PAKISTANI MARBLE
 OF DIFFERENT TYPES.
NIRMAN INTERNATIONAL LTD.
 199, TEJGAON 1/A, DHAKA
 TEL: 805957, 807363 SHOW ROOM: 861985

The Daily Star

Day or Night
 Standard Chartered
 12 PAGES : PRICE TAKA 5.00

VOL. V NO. 144 REGD. NO. DA 781 ASHAR 4, 1402 BS, DHAKA SUNDAY, JUNE 18, 1995 MUHARRAM 18, 1416 HIJRI

Inside Today
Article
Free Trade, WTO and trade war: Some reflections
 Column: On The Record by Shah A M S Kibria Page 4

International
 Beijing announces to withdraw its envoy to Washington
 Washington plans to resume nuclear testing Page 5

Business
 No immediate impact of duty cuts on consumer, luxury items, traders' comment on proposed budget
 G-7 optimistic about world economy Pages 6, 7

STOCK MARKET
 DSE price index 741.18 (+0.47%)
 Market capital Tk 43.93 billion
 Transactions in volume 10680
 Transactions in value Tk 22.19 million

Travel & Tourism
 Father of tourism-1: A visit to Patenga, Sylhet: The land of shrines, waterfalls and tea gardens and Travel briefs Page 8

Metropolitan
 Dhaka Day by Day

To Rent or not to Rent an AC Page 3

Floods inundate fresh areas in 6 dists

By Staff Correspondent

Continued rise in water levels of the country's major rivers, caused by heavy downpour, flooded fresh areas in Manikganj, Sylhet, Moulvibazar, Sirajganj and Pabna districts, according to reports received in Dhaka last night.

The flood situation in Sunamganj, Netrakona and Jamalpur districts deteriorated further.

Meanwhile, the capital witnessed a heavy downpour for almost the whole day yesterday. City life was paralysed and there was thin traffic on the roads. Low lying areas were inundated.

The sudden rise in water levels of the Padma and the Jamuna during the 24 hours till yesterday morning, submerged vast areas of Manikganj district and disrupted ferry links between the country's northern and eastern regions.

At least 860 families were rendered homeless due to erosion of the Jamuna in Shibabaya, Harirampur and Daulatpur thanas. Ferry services in Aricha-Nagarbari and Aricha-Daulatdia routes were seriously affected as the BIWTA closed one of its two pontoons at Nagarbari ghat and another at Daulatdia.

A report from Sylhet said flood waters submerged the runway of the Osmani Airport yesterday. A scheduled flight was, however, operated in the afternoon. Flash floods also submerged five thanas of the



Roads in Shantinagar area of the city went under knee-deep water due to heavy rainfall yesterday. — Star photo

G-7 calls for moratorium on Bosnia war soon

HALIFAX—Canada, June 17: The Group of Seven (G7) nations and Russia today called on all sides in the Bosnia war to lay down their arms and allow political talks to begin, reports AFP.

"We appeal to all parties to establish an immediate moratorium on military operation in order to allow political negotiations without which no lasting solution is possible," they said in formal declaration, according to officials who helped prepare the text.

The text was to be released publicly later today.

They said in the eight-page declaration that political talks should be held as quickly as possible on the basis of the contact group proposals, already rejected by the Bosnian Serbs and accepted by the Bosnian Muslim and Croats.

They also called on Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic to recognise the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

"We are deeply concerned by the continuing escalation of hostilities in Bosnia especially in the area of Sarajevo," the leaders of the United States, Japan, Britain, Germany, Italy, France, Canada and Russia said.

In that respect they expressed support for sending a British and French-led rapid reaction force to protect UN peacekeepers in Bosnia.

They also called for new urgency to be given to the peace process following the appointment of former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt as the new European Union mediator.

The declaration was near identical to a statement made by the Group of Seven leaders alone late Friday after the Bosnian government had

Explorers see bright prospects of finding oil, gas in Bay

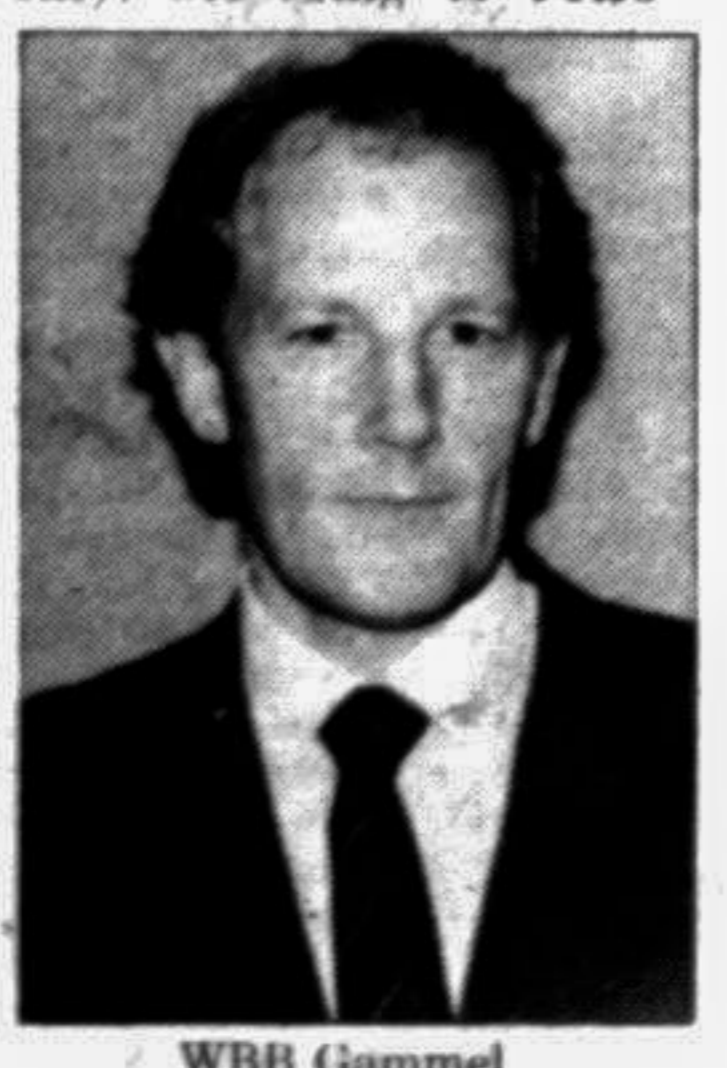
By Sharier Khan

Scottish and Dutch joint venture Cairn Energy PLC and Holland Sea Search see very bright prospects of finding gas and oil reserves in the Bay of Bengal and plan to drill at least two wells next year.

The two foreign companies had earlier signed two separate agreements to explore hydrocarbon reserves in the Bay of Bengal off the coasts of Cox's Bazar-Sandwip region known as Block-16 and of Chittagong region known as Block-15.

Initial survey in Block-16 was completed in March last. Seismic data of 1900 kms and gravity data of 2000 kms have already been processed to ascertain the existence of hydro-carbon reserves in the area. Seismic survey in Block-15 area will begin in December and two wells will be developed after assessment, said WBB Gammell in an interview with The Daily Star recently.

The joint venture is the first by a foreign group to start gas-oil exploration in the Bay following the government's 1992 Energy Roundtable in the USA. Since then the government has been following a 'first come-first



WBB Gammell

basis negotiations to attract foreign companies for exploration.

But after July 30 next there will be competitive bidding only, according to Petro-

pend on how quickly we can analyse the seismic data."

"If we succeed in drilling wells, we may increase our investment. We have already spent 3 million US dollars here."

Focussing on prospects in Block 15 where 28 million dollars would be invested over a period of seven years, Gammell said, "We hope to develop the Semutang gas field by 1997."

Gammell sees good prospects for marketing gas and gas-fired electricity in Bangladesh.

"We are also discussing with Midland Electricity of England to set up a 40 Megawatt power plant utilising the natural gas of the Semutang gas field," he added.

According to the agreement foreign companies will sell gas or oil to Petrobangla in case of selling oil-gas to a third party, approval from the Petrobangla will be necessary.

Besides the ever increasing domestic market, the Karnaphuli Fertilizer Company (KAFCO), which consumes 60 million cubic feet gas daily as a potential buyer, according to Gammell.

14 killed, 31 injured in 3 districts

Staff Correspondent

At least 14 people were killed and 31 others injured in separate incidents in Dhaka, Narsingdi and Faridpur yesterday.

Four people were killed and one sustained bullet injuries in separate incidents in the city yesterday, according to our DMCH correspondent.

A pedestrian, identified as Liton, 25, was run over by a speeding truck on North South Road in the city early yesterday.

Sujan, 18, a coolie, reported fatal injuries when a sack of rice, he was carrying, accidentally fell on him yesterday afternoon. He died soon after being admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Badal, 18, a pipe-fitter, was

BB monitoring loan repayment by leading defaulters

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Bank Governor Khurshed Alam, while talking to The Daily Star yesterday, reiterated that two leading business houses, Beximco and Islam Group of Industries, involved in three private sector banks are "struggling" to pay back instalments of undue loans taken from the IFIC, Uttara and Arab-Bangladesh Bank.

However, he denied that the business houses were defaulting on their loan repayments. He said the two groups have paid their instalments till December last and they have repaid about one-third of the amount so far.

The central bank governor was responding to questions

More business bodies hail budget

By Staff Correspondent

More business organisations have hailed the proposed budget for the year 1995-96.

Redwan Ahmed MP president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) termed the budget as a "step in time".

Welcoming the budget in a statement yesterday, Redwan Ahmed said, the proposed ex-

2 Shantibahini men shot dead

By Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, June 17: Two Shantibahini men were shot dead after an exchange of fire with security personnel on Friday afternoon at Balaichhari near Rajshatali under Rangamati hill district, official source said today.

Some arms and ammunition including a rifle, one SMC and one revolver were recovered.

The security personnel while on a hunt for rescuing two bank officials abducted recently by Shantibahini had the encounter for half an hour. But in the face of resistance rest of the Shantibahini men fled into deep forest.

Mother, baby slaughtered

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, June 17: A mother and her baby were reportedly slaughtered and left on an embankment adjacent to the town today, police said.

The victims could not be identified immediately.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them to the Sadar Hospital for autopsy. Police also found a polythene bag containing a hand-fan inscribed with a name — Farida Parveen Mannan — left beside the bodies, on the Bakalghapsa Sringer Barrage.

EC will seek amendment to law regarding ID card

By Krishna P Roy and Morshed A Khan

The Election Commission (EC) has decided to seek necessary amendments to the existing law so that it can issue identity (ID) cards only in selected areas, sources concerned said yesterday.

The EC took the decision after examining different aspects of the issuance of ID cards to the voters.

Under the EC Bill passed by Parliament last year, every eligible voter must be provided with ID cards before holding general elections, scheduled for early next year.

But, after holding a series of meetings with computer experts, the EC has perceived that it would not be possible to issue ID cards to all voters within the stipulated time,

Moudud under fire at JP presidium meet

Star Report

Jatiya Party leader Moudud Ahmed faced severe criticism at the party presidium meeting yesterday for the observations against JP-chief Ershad in his book published recently.

The presidium meeting began at 8 last night at the Gulshan residence of acting party chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury.

Chaired by Mizan, the meeting continued for three-and-a-half hours and was adjourned till 5 pm today.

After discussing the political situation and on-going programmes of the party, the presidium took up the issue of the controversy created by Moudud's book 'Democracy and the Challenges of Development'.

Moudud, a former vice president and prime minister under deposed president Ershad and presently a member of JP presidium, was also present at the meeting.

According to meeting sources, the presidium members, who took part in yesterday's deliberations, resented the casting of aspersions on the party chairman and said that this had damaged the image of both Ershad and the JP.

The discussion on Moudud's book would continue today and the party is likely to come to a decision in this regard.

Meanwhile, the party leadership has reportedly received advice from Ershad, now in jail. Party sources said that Ershad advised the leadership not to go for extreme action

11 lakh MT security food stock planned

Star Report

The government has fixed a target of building a security stock of 11 lakh tonnes of foodgrains for fiscal 1995-96 to meet any possible shortage of supply in the market.

"Our plan is to maintain this stock and we have already arranged more than eight lakh tonnes," an authoritative source in the Food Ministry said yesterday.

Elaborating, the source said about seven lakh tonnes have reached government godowns while over one lakh tonnes are being unloaded at the Chittagong and Mongla ports.

The government plans to build the security stock through imports and internal procurement.

Under the ongoing IRRI-Boro procurement drive, the government has a target of buying three lakh tonnes of rice for the security stock. But it is unlikely to be achieved due to poor response from the farmers, one source pointed out.

Official sources said that the Food Department has so far procured about 70,000 tonnes of rice and 20,000 tonnes of paddy since the beginning of the drive last month.

"Farmers are reluctant to sell their rice and paddy to the Food Department since they are getting higher prices in the market, the sources said.

The procurement price of IRRI-Boro for the current season is Taka 11.25 per kg for rice and Taka 7.15 per kg for paddy.



The frontal view of the burning hospital in Budennovsk, Russia yesterday after intense fighting between a group of Chechen rebels and Russian Special Forces. (Story on Page 5). — AFP photo

50.30m enrolled as voters

By Staff Correspondent

Some 50.30 million people have been enrolled as voters in the new voter list, according to a preliminary estimate of the Election Commission (EC).

The EC, however, said data from some areas of the country are yet to reach.

The previous voter list, had put the voters' number at 60.25 million but as per the 1991 census the over-18 population should be some 50.70 million in 1995.

The difference in the figure is because many voters had enrolled themselves in the voter list more than once, EC officials said.

'Govt working to establish Islamic values'

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said her government is fulfilling its pledges to the people and also working for establishing Islamic values and justice in the society, reports UNB.

The BNP government has been working up to its pledges given during the anti-autocracy agitation and before the 1991 election, she said.

Begum Zia was addressing a grand conference of the Bangladesh National Muslim Marriage Registrar and Kazi Samity on the occasion of its centenary at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the afternoon. The samity came into being in 1892.

The Prime Minister said Almighty Allah says in the Holy Quran: 'Fulfill commitments, you have to account

Solution to crisis still possible: Khandaker Delwar

Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain felt the urgency of a consensus between the ruling party and the Opposition to end the current political impasse.

"People want an immediate solution to the political crisis the country is passing through," he told UNB in his parliament office yesterday afternoon.

Hossain, who had played an active role in the government-Opposition parleys in the past, said, "We should not get disappointed for what we have lost, rather political leadership should come forward to hammer out a solution to the crisis."

"It's not impossible to find a solution... It's still possible," he said, "We have already been late, but better late than never."

In the wake of an impending deterioration in the situation in case of Opposition

Azad rejects polls under party in power

Awami League leader Abus Samad Azad yesterday said there cannot be any by-election or fresh election in the country under a political party in power.

"It will not be possible in this country and it will not help them stay in power," Azad said while talking to UNB over the prevailing political situation.

Azad, a Presidium member of the party, blamed the government for pushing the country towards a total crisis by making parliament ineffective as well as ignoring the people's demand for a caretaker government.

How the government could place the budget in an "illegal parliament" deserted by the entire Opposition which represents 69 per cent of the electorate, said Azad,

Ovi arrested

Former Chhatra Dal leader Golam Faruk Ovi was arrested from a residence at Eskaton in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

He was arrested at about 1-30 pm by Detective Branch of Police following an order from the Home Minister for 120 days detention, police sources said.