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# The Daily Star

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## Depression turns into cyclone

**By Staff Correspondent**

A deep depression, brewing out of a low in the South East Bay and near the Andaman Sea yesterday, turned into a cyclonic storm and headed north/northwestward, packing a 65 kph wind rising upto 85 kph in gust/squall. Meteorological Department said last night.

The storm, located about 1360 km south-southwest of Chittagong Port at 9 pm triggered a general alert in the Bay and the ports of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla, who were asked to hoist Distant Warning Signal Number 2.

All fishing boats and trawlers were advised to remain close the shore so that they

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## Top 20 defaulters owe Tk 898cr overdue loans to NCBs

**By Inam Ahmed**

The top 20 private loan defaulters owe a total of Tk 898.13 crore in overdue loans to different commercial banks, putting these institutions under great strain, according to the latest Bangladesh Bank report.

The report shows that in December, 1996 these defaulters, some of them well-known businessmen, owed a total of Tk 937.39 crore to the banks. Tk 898.13 cr or 96 per cent of this sum was overdue.

The list includes three publicly traded companies: Orion Infusion Ltd, Dhaka Vegetable Oil and Saleh Carpet. In addition, three companies, each with large defaulting loans and registered under the names of Beximco employees, are also on the list.

The 20 defaulters took loans from 14 Banks — nine private and four government-owned — and one development financing institution.

The bank that suffered the most was City Bank with Tk 163.5 crore in overdue loans, followed by Bangladesh Shilpa Bank with Tk 140.34 crore. The other banks with defaulted loans are: Sonali Bank (Tk 113.26 cr), Uttara (Tk 109.91 cr), Arab Bangladesh Bank (Tk 101.26 cr), Agrani (Tk 71.61 cr), IFIC (Tk 56.21 cr), Eastern (Tk 47.61 cr), Al-Baraka (Tk 40.56cr), UCBL (Tk 28.47 cr), Janata (Tk 13.91 cr), Rupali (Tk 9.04 cr), NCCBL (Tk 2.16), and BASIC (Tk 0.29 cr).

A big chunk of these defaulting loans were given under the influences of the directors of the banks and these are stuck up for years without any recovery.

The top defaulter, Emdadul Haque Bhuiyan of Narayan-ganj, individually owes 18 per cent of the total classified loans owed by the top 20 defaulters. Bhuiyan, a yarn trader, owes City Bank and BASIC Tk 163.79 crore in overdue loans. This includes Tk 163.50 crore in bad loans and Tk 29 lakh in sub-standard loans.

Construction firm Soiltech International Ltd is second in line with Tk 86.19 crore worth of overdue loans owed to the Sonali, IFIC and Eastern banks. Soiltech is owned by Begum Hasina Shams, Shams-Uz-Zoha, Shams-Ul-Haque and Shamsul Huda. Soiltech was once associated with the Beximco Group, but they later parted ways.

However, the aggregate loans of the three Beximco-linked companies — Khulna Fisheries, Sathkira Fisheries and Pharmatek Chemicals Ltd — place it second from the top, with Tk

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## Power crisis to ease, hopes PM Ashuganj-Bakhrabad gas pipeline opens

**ASHUGANJ, May 16:** Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today said necessary steps have been taken to attain self-sufficiency in power and hoped that the power crisis would be eased to a great extent with the completion of Ashuganj-Bakhrabad Gas Pipeline, reports UNB.

She said her government attaches high priority to setting up new power plants both in public and private sectors in shortest possible time.

"We are very much concerned about the power crisis... We want to attain self-sufficiency in power," she said while inaugurating the Ashuganj-Bakhrabad Gas Pipeline here this afternoon.

The A-B pipeline will supply gas to the country's southeastern region including Chittagong and help restart the Raosan power plant generating 210 megawatt power.

The Bakhrabad-Chittagong gas system has been connected with the gas field located in Brahmanbaria and greater Sylhet districts through construction of A-B pipeline.

Hasina observed that this integration of the national gas grid should have been done long before to avoid the undesired but possible disruption in the gas system.

The A-B pipeline project began on March 1, 1994 to transport natural gas from the northeastern fields to the southeastern region of Chittagong and adjoining areas to meet the growing demand of gas.

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## 13 major diseases

**By Nazmul Ashraf**

Helminthiasis (infestation with worms) tops the list of 13 major diseases in the country, affecting 60.02 lakh (11.86%) people.

It is followed by diarrhoea, attacking 59.62 lakh people (11.78%), according to latest statistics available with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The ministry statistics shows that mental diseases affect the least, 0.77 lakh (0.15%).

The killer diseases include tetanus, pneumonia, diarrhoea, those caused by road accident injuries, hepatic coma, hypertension and child-birth complications.

Anaemia alone causes 3.90 per cent of the deaths, 25 per cent of the victims being children below five years. Next comes diarrhoea, claiming 2.60

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## Ashura tomorrow

Holy Ashura, the 10th of Muharram, will be observed tomorrow all over the country in a befitting manner with religious fervour, reports UNB.

The day commemorates the supreme sacrifice made by Hazrat Imam Hussain, grandson of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (SM), along with his family members at Karbala, presently in Iraq, in the Hijri year of 61 to uphold truth and justice.

Different religious bodies, including Panjaton Mokam and Hussaini Dalan Imbarara, have drawn up elaborate programmes on the occasion. These include majlis, discussion meeting, milad mahfil and procession.

The day is a public holiday. On the occasion, Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television will broadcast various programmes, including *Hamd, Naat* and discussion on the great sacrifice of Karbala. Newspapers will also publish special supplements.

In Bangladesh, Ashura's

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Unauthorised occupation of road at Kazipara in Mirpur area in the city. —Star photo

## Plan to change rules of 'safe custody'

**By Staff Correspondent**

The government is planning to change the rules of 'safe custody' so that all 'victims' could be kept in rehabilitation centres of the Ministries of Social Welfare and Women and Children Affairs, according to official sources.

At present the 'victims' are sent to safe custody in different jails under court orders. On an average 100 to 150 such victims are sent to jail custody daily. Most of them are women and children who are victims of marriage-related cases or trafficking, the sources said.

The sources said that the proposal for changing the laws on safe custody has been incorporated in a National Action Plan expected to be launched by July this year.

The plan also envisages that all under trial women prisoners and convicts will be looked after by women police. Female prisoners will have separate prison vans to be driven by female police drivers.

## Kibria tells press on return ADB to provide \$400m this year, Japanese ban to go

Bangladesh will receive over 400 million US dollars from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) this year, which is 170 million US dollars higher than the last year's financial assistance, Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria said yesterday, reports BSS.

He was talking to the newsmen at the airport on his return home from Japan where he attended the meeting of the ADB Board of Governors.

The Finance Minister said the amount of ADB's financial assistance came down to 166 million US dollars in 1994-95 due to the 'cooling off' relations between the bank, one of the major donors, and the then government.

Highlighting the outcome of his talks with influential leaders of Japan including the Japanese Finance Minister, Kibria said Japan had decided to withdraw the suspension on loans for Bangladesh immediately.

The minister said Japan would provide 15.3 billion yen equivalent to 130 million US dollars as loan assistance this year for the first time after the imposition of the suspension during BNP's rule.

He described the development of bonds of relations with Japan and ADB during his visit as significant in the context of future economic development through international cooperation.

"I am very pleased to say that the shadow which was casting over relations between Bangladesh and major bilateral donors is being removed successfully," he said.

The Finance Minister said his visit was preparatory to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to Japan in July next.

He said, "I have returned with a firm belief that a new horizon of cooperation will open up between Japan and Bangladesh during the forthcoming year."

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## Ties with Dhaka extremely well, says Gujral

**NEW DELHI, May 16:** Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral today described his meeting with his Bangladesh counterpart Sheikh Hasina in Male as "most friendly" and said the relations between the two countries have developed extremely well and "we have greatly strengthened our mutual cooperation," reports BSS.

Making a *suo motu* statement in parliament on the just concluded ninth SAARC summit in Male, he said during his meeting with Sheikh Hasina, they reviewed the implementation of the landmark water sharing treaty which, he added,

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## Donors meet soon to fix lending strategy for energy sector

The donors are expected to fix strategy of future lending for the Bangladesh's energy sector at the 4-day meeting beginning in Dhaka on May 19, reports BSS.

Representatives of the major donors including the World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Germany, United Kingdom, Japan and Norway who have invested in the Bangladesh's energy sector will attend the meeting, an official of ADB resident mission in Dhaka said yesterday.

ADB, the biggest lending agency in the energy sector of Bangladesh, will coordinate the meeting which will be held at its resident mission office in the city.

Two meetings of the 4-day meet will be held between Bangladesh and the donors, while the other meetings will be held among the donors.

Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Lt. Gen. (ret'd) Noor Uddin Khan is expected to preside over a session on the first day between Bangladesh and the donors. Bangladesh will present two papers respectively on gas and power sectors at the meetings.

The official of the ADB resident mission in Dhaka said the basic objectives of the meeting are to review the energy sector performance, ongoing project status, progress of sector reforms and fixing the strategy of future lending for Bangladesh in the energy sector.

The ADB headquarters has already prepared a review report on the basis of the said objectives and it will be submitted at the meeting, he said.

The official said the donors lending in the energy sector specially oil, gas and hydro-power generation project may increase in the next fiscal year (1997-98) in the event of the congenial investment climate created following the initiative of sub-regional cooperation by

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## NOTICE

Due to space constraint the STAR LITERATURE is held over for next week. The inconvenience of our esteemed readers is regretted.

## Inside Today

**Article**

**Male Declaration for a Better South Asia**

Column: Time and Tide by Shah Husain Imam Page 4

## International

Israel, PA begin 1st meet in two months: US sees glimmer of hope Page 5

## Business

Investors regaining confidence in share market Page 6

## Supplement

Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a 2-page supplement on World Telecommunications Day Pages 7, 8

## Mobutu gives up power, leaves Kinshasa

**KINSHASA, May 16:** President Mobutu Sese Seko gave up power today, his information minister said. He left Kinshasa for his northern palace, apparently ending a 32-year dictatorship as rebels closed in on the capital, reports AP.

Mobutu flew off to Gbadolite today for what his spokesman called a "short rest."

Hours later, the information minister announced that Mobutu had "ceased all intervention in the conduct of affairs of state."

"He reigns but does not govern," Information Minister Kin-Kyey Mulumba said at a news conference. He said Mobutu retains a title.

He read a handwritten statement to a crowd of reporters and TV cameras on the lawn of the prime minister's office.

He said the government still assumes responsibility for defending the capital and maintaining order and to negotiate.

**Earlier story on page 5**

with the rebel alliance.

In other signs that Mobutu's 32-year regime was crumbling, Gen. Nzimbi Ngale, the head of the dreaded presidential guard, climbed aboard a small speedboat today and crossed the Congo River to Brazzaville, Congo, witnesses said.

With Nzimbi gone, speculation mounted that a deal had

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## JN College girl kidnapped

**By Staff Correspondent**

A female student of Jagannath University College was allegedly kidnapped by a gang of youths from the college gate Thursday afternoon, police said yesterday.

Roksana, a first year student of Economics, was standing at the college gate at about 3 pm with one of her friends when five youths took her away in an autorickshaw, police said.

Police arrested Abdur Rahman Bhuiyan from RK Mission Road under Sutrapur thana.

Advocate Nurul Huq Khondaker, father of the kidnapped girl, in a FIR filed with Kotwali thana under the Women and Children Repression Act of 1995 accused five persons in connection with the alleged kidnapping. Roksana resided with her family at Dhalpur under Demra thana.

## Delhi taking advantage of flaws in water treaty: Khaleda

**From Our Correspondent**

**RAJSHAH, May 16:** BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday claimed that there was no guarantee clause in the Ganga water sharing treaty signed by the government and that India was unilaterally withdrawing water taking advantage of this and many other flaws in the treaty.

"Even the minister concerned acknowledged that Bangladesh did not get Ganges water as per the treaty," Begum Zia, also leader of the Opposition in Parliament, said at a big public meeting at the Madrasa maidan here.

The meeting was organised by the city BNP commemorating the historic Farakka Long March, organised by late leader of the masses Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani on this day in 1976.

Begum Zia alleged that the present government was signing treaties which were against the interests of the country. "The government is actually selling the freedom and sovereignty of the country in the name of those treaties," she said. She called upon all "patriotic forces" to unitedly resist the government's "evil designs."

Begum Zia also alleged that the government was offering a corridor to India in the name of transit facility which would be used for transporting arms and soldiers to suppress insurgency in its north-eastern region. "This will create anarchy and freedom and sovereignty of the country will be at stake," she said.

She apprehended that the government was trying to turn Bangladesh into a province of India through Sub-Regional Grouping. "This will also destroy the SAARC," she claimed.

Begum Zia warned the government that people will not allow any such design to materialise.

The BNP chairperson observed that the government was trying to establish "Baksalist autocracy."

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## Kibria, Rina to sue some newspapers

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria and his daughter-in-law Rina Sultana Kibria will soon sue the newspapers which, they said, have run defamatory, false and irresponsible news reports against them, reports UNB.

Kibria told newsmen yesterday that he has no option but to seek the protection of law against the newspaper which recently ran a report alleging that he worked in favour of India as the chief executive of ESCAP.

"It was totally untrue," the finance minister said when asked about the report at the airport on his return from Japan. He said the report against his daughter-in-law Rina Sultana Kibria was equally false and motivated.

He said Rina, a housewife like thousand others, had invested her money in the share market. And the money she invested was from her father's life insurance. Kibria explained and said she is also going to court.

"I believe in freedom of the press, but freedom does not mean false reporting," the minister said.

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**Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh**

**Privatization Board, Cabinet Division**

Jiban Bima Tower (14<sup>th</sup> Floor)  
10, Dilkusha Commercial Area, Dhaka - 1000

No. : CD/PB/Dir (C&E)/Misc-2/95/885 Date : 14.5.97

**Sub : International Tender Notice for Sale of Enterprises**

Sealed International Tenders on the prescribed forms are hereby invited from local and foreign buyers for sale of the following enterprises owned by the Government on as is where is basis. Intending buyers will have to submit separate prescribed tender forms and other required papers duly filled in and supported by necessary documents for each enterprise.

**Name of the Enterprises to be sold**

1. Karim Jute Mills Ltd., Demra, Dhaka	Land- 46.65 acres, Capacity - 520 Looms, 18,539 MT PA
2. Jessore Jute Industries, Rajghat, Jessore,	Land- 79.63 acres, Looms - 456, 12,223 MT PA
3. Noakhali Textile Mills, Raipur, Lakshmpur,	Land - 25.36 acres, Spindles - 25,056
4. Khulna Textile Mills, Boyra, Khulna,	Land - 25.99 acres, Spindles - 12,500 looms - 97
5. Engineering Industries Ltd., Tongi, Gazipur,	Land - 4.058 acres, Spare parts production
6. Monno Cotton Mills, Tongi, Gazipur	Land - 27.69 acres Spindles - 28,244 Spindles - 12,400
7. Fine Cotton Mills, Tongi, Gazipur	Land-6.31 acres Capacity 1800 MTPA
8. Bangladesh Can Company, Chittagong	Land-23.57 acres,
9. Bangladesh Diesel Plant, Gazipur,	Capacity 8000 Diesel Engines Annually
10. Panchagarh Sugar Mill	Land-227.15 acres, Capacity 10,160 MT PA
11. Kaliachapra Sugar Mill, Kishoregonj	Land -343.803 acres, Capacity 10,161 MT PA
12. General Electric Manufacturing Company	Land-116.20 acres, 10,000 MT PA Transformers & Electrical Goods

(2) Set of prescribed tender forms, tender conditions and other related papers can be procured from the Secretary on all working days from 20.05.97 to 15.06.97 between 9.00 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. on cash payment of Tk. 5,000/= (Taka Five Thousand only) or US\$ 125 (US Dollar One Hundred Twenty Five only) which is non-refundable. No tender form will be sold after 2.30 p.m. on 15.6.97.

(3) Interested foreigners, Bangladesh citizens living abroad, overseas commercial firms etc., willing to procure the tender forms may contact Bangladesh High Commissions/Embassies in London, Washington, Brussels, Kuala Lumpur, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Islamabad, New Delhi, Tokyo and Singapore on or before 15.6.97.

(4) Relevant data relating to the enterprises are available with the Privatization Board (Tel 9563763-5 Fax : 880-2-9563766) and can be seen by the intending buyers during all working days from 20.05.97 to 15.6.97. These documents will also be available in the above mentioned High Commissions/Embassies.

(5) The tender box will be closed at 11.00 a.m. on 16.6.97 and opened at 11.30 a.m. on the same date.

(6) Tenders found incomplete or otherwise faulty shall stand cancelled. Any explanation, appeal or request made to review or reconsider such a cancellation shall not be entertained.

(7) The Privatization Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**Secretary**