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The World on Time



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the SPARSO office in the city yesterday to have the latest information about the cyclone. —PID photo

## Hurricane: 500 feared killed

From Page 1

ister for Labour Manpower, MA Mannan, who is staying in Chittagong to coordinate the government activities.

Our Staff Correspondent reports: The cyclone pounded the coastal districts of Bhola, Feni, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar and off-shore islands including St. Martin's whipping up tidal surges up to 7 feet, deluging low lying areas along the coast before petering away towards north-eastern India. It crossed the Chittagong-Feni coast through Shitakunda at about 8:30 pm, and turned into a land depression.

Before weakening, the cyclone battered the coastal areas of Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna, Noakhali and Laxmipur, whipping up two to three feet tidal surge.

Its core, packing 230 kph, struck the funnel shaped estuary of Meghna near Sitakunda at 8:30 pm. But the low tide apparently saved many as the surge was not so high. The Daily Star's Chittagong correspondent Nurul Alam reported.

The Daily Star Chief Photographer AKM Mohsin and Correspondent Mizan Ali reported at 11:40 pm from a dark and dank port city, reeling under a heavy pounding of rains in the aftermath of the storm, that trees fell like matchsticks, littering the streets of the city.

People were still wandering in search of a shelter when their straw huts and tin sheds collapsed under heavy winds and blasting showers till midnight.

Firemen were seen clearing the debris.

Mohsin reported that he, along with other newsmen negotiated the howling winds when the eye of the storm swept the Highway to Chittagong as their vehicle zigzagged its way through fallen trees, snapped wires and crumbled electric poles.

This was the scene all the way down Comilla when they dared to drive. Tumbled cars and trucks and buses littered the road alongside the debris of trees and twisted power lines.

Preliminary reports said that five people were killed and over a hundred wounded in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar as their homes collapsed. Roof of a police barrack in Chittagong city was blown away when the core of the hurricane, packing up to 230 kph speed, tore through the districts before it moved towards north-eastern India.

Mohsin quoted the Mayor of

Chittagong A B M Mohiuddin Choudhury at 12:30 last night that eight wards in the city suffered severe damage. These are North and South Patenga, Bandartila, South Halishahar, North and South Kattali, Lal-dar Qhar, Char Para and Maljapara.

The Mayor told The Daily Star 76 relief centres have been opened in the city to provide cooked food to the affected.

Besides, the corporation mobilised 72 vehicles to shift people to safety, the Mayor said. He was in touch with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, apprising her of the latest situation.

Two children, 5-year-old Nasima Begum and 1-year-old Joshim, died when a wall collapsed at Station Road in Chittagong.

Abdullah, 50, died in hospital after a tree fell on him in Kadamtali area. Another person, 32-year-old Ullah Ahsan, was killed in lightning at Moshakkhal in the afternoon. His body was sent to the Cox's Bazar general hospital morgue for autopsy.

According to Disaster Management and Relief Ministry's control room, the cyclone hit Chittagong at around 4 pm yesterday, with winds of more than 200 kph. The storm cut the city's electric supply at 2 pm.

T&T operator at Chittagong's Anwara thana Shamsuddin said: "All the kutchas housed in front of our three-storied building have been demolished".

UNB reported that a tidal surge of 5 to 7 feet breached an under-construction cross-dam, entering five villages of Raipura under Anwara thana and severely damaging almost 40,000 houses.

The low-lying areas of Shahpori Deep, Nila, Bahar Chara, Tambrue and Palankhali under Teknaf thana were inundated by the tidal surge which broke the coastal embankment in several places.

Sources said four border outposts of the Bangladesh Rifles had been withdrawn from the cyclone-affected areas.

A UNB report said some remote thanas of coastal districts were cut off from their district headquarters when disrupted electric supply rendered wireless communication facilities inoperative.

Officials at the control room at the Bangladesh Secretariat, said that Cox's Bazar airport was inundated by a tidal surge at 2 pm. They added that Chittagong's telecommunication

## Tk 10.60cr budget of Islamic Foundation approved

A meeting of the board of governors of Islamic Foundation was held yesterday at its conference room with State Minister for Religious Affairs Mohammad Nurul Islam in the chair, reports UNB.

The meeting approved Tk 10.60 crore budget of the Foundation for the current fiscal and undertook various programmes to expand its network, said a PID handout.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Saber Hossain Chowdhury MP, Sheikh Helaluddin MP, Justice Ruhul Islam and National Prof Dr Nurul Islam.

Vice Chairman of the board and Religious Affairs Secretary Abdus Sakur, Chairman of Madrassah Education Board Moulana Mohammad Yunus Sikder and Islamic Foundation DG Mohammad Morshed Hossain was also present.

## Raghnath to succeed Salman Haider

NEW DELHI, May 19: K Raghnath will be the new foreign secretary succeeding Salman Haider who retires on June 30, an official announcement said here today, reports PTI.

Raghnath, Secretary (East) had earlier been India's high commissioner to Bangladesh and ambassador to the Philippines.

## Water management

From Page 1

and the US had earlier submitted proposals on behalf of various consortiums for preparing the NWMP, the sources pointed out.

A total of 20 consortiums had expressed their interest in doing the job, of which six were shortlisted in February last. After that, an independent consultant was appointed and the expert committee was formed to evaluate the proposals.

Before awarding the contract to any consortium, it will have to be validated by the independent consultant for the transparency of the selection process.

The five-member committee headed by the Director General of Water Resource Planning Organisation (WARPO) comprises two others from the same organisation and one each from the Ministry of Water Resources and the Water Development Board.

The major portion of the eight million dollar funds for the project would come as loan from the development partners and the rest as grant, officials said.

## Rice export

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Statistics showed that private import of foodgrain was also declining over the years. A total of 850 lakh tonnes of foodgrains were imported in 1995-96 financial year compared to 1,013 lakh tonnes in fiscal 1994-95.

This year, only one lakh tonnes of wheat has been imported. But the FAO is importing 4,486 tonnes of non-boiled (atapi) rice this year, for the repatriated Chakma refugees.

The government fixed this season's foodgrains procurement target at 3.20 lakh tonnes. Of this quantity, 133,984 tonnes of Aman paddy and more than 75,000 tonnes of wheat have already been procured.

The procurement price for paddy is Tk 700 per quintal and for rice Tk 1,100.

Against its required ready-stock, the government has built a stock of 965,799 tonnes of foodgrains in its 5 silos, 13 central storage depots and 623 local storage depots.

Another DF official said Bangladesh could also export fine and aromatic rice varieties, especially to countries with Bangladeshi ethnic communities.

He said some exporters were already selling aromatic rice in the international market. But he said, "We can do it in a more organised way." The official emphasised developing linkages before beginning the regular export of rice. "Linkages between farmers and exporters and importers and exporters are essential to sustain such a venture in the international market," he pointed out.

## Begum Zia: Cyclone

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multi-purpose cyclone shelters. She said these cyclone shelters, being used as school, mosque and community centres, were constructed in a planned way to accommodate large number of people in case of calamity.

Before the joining programme began, a special prayer was offered seeking divine help to save the people from the cyclonic disaster.

Two important leaders of Jatiya Party—Sirajul Hossain Khan and Khaledur Rahman Tito—along with several thousand leaders and workers of the party from Sylhet, Habiganj, Laxmipur, Noakhali, Narsingdi, Jessore, Chuadanga, Meherpur, Jhenidha and Kustia formally joined the BNP.

Addressing the newcomers, Begum Zia said no patriotic people can coexist with those conspiring to sell out the independence and sovereignty of the country.

The present government has made all arrangements to sell out the country, the BNP chair-

person alleged, saying that the so-called 30-year water sharing treaty is the first step towards implementing the conspiracy.

Begum Zia said that during her recent visit to Rajshahi she went to the bank of river Padma (Ganges) and learned from the local people that the flow of water was much less than the previous year.

After signing the "treaty of hoax" in the name of water sharing, she said that in exchange, the present government is now planning to give corridor to India, allow the use of Chittagong port, form sub-regional grouping and hand over the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Turning to the campus situation, the BNP Chairperson said the residential halls of the universities across the country have become the "dwellings of and safe haven for the terrorists."

The armed terrorists are moving freely under the "very nose of police" while the head of the government is publicly calling upon the police to nab the terrorists, she said.



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PHILIPS



Jatiya Party leaders Khaledur Rahman Tito and Sirajul Hossain Khan presenting a bouquet to BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia at the Engineers Institution yesterday on their joining the BNP. —Star photo

## Huda urges losers in polls to resign from BNP standing body

BNP leader Barrister Nazmul Huda MP yesterday urged the party's Standing Committee members who lost the June 12 parliamentary elections to resign from the Committee, reports UNB.

In a statement, Huda, one of the Vice-Chairman of BNP, said those who were unable to earn people's confidence should not cling to the membership of the party's highest decision-making body.

BNP Standing Committee members Dr RA Gani, Abdus Salam Talukdar, Chowdhury Tanvir Ahmed Siddiqui, Rafiqul Islam Mia and Abdul Matin Chowdhury lost the elections.

Four new leaders were also inducted into the 15-member Standing Committee. They are: Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan MP, Moudud Ahmed, KM Obaidur Rahman MP and Khandaker Mahbub Uddin Ahmed.

Nazmul Huda said the people want to see their elected representatives in the BNP standing committee and establish democracy and rule of law through a mass movement under the leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia.

The culture of voluntary resignation as an acceptance of one's failure is yet to be built up in this country, he said, adding this is a "shameless" culture of clinging to party posts and has been hindering the process of establishing an accountable system in the country.

## Gas export

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three "high-potential" coal mines in Bangladesh and the hydrocarbon is being extracted from the Barapukuria coal mine project in Dinajpur where the reserve is 300 million tons.

The next priority will be given to mining out coal from the Khalashpur mine having a reserve of 450 million tons and from the Jamalganj field where the reserve is estimated at one billion tons, he informed the meeting.

The minister sought financial and technical support from the donors in the coal mine projects. He also sought assistance for laying more gas pipelines after the completion of the A-B Pipeline.

Referring to some on-going projects in the power sector which could not be completed on time, he requested the donors to extend the schedule so that those can be finished.

Representatives of the World Bank and ADB also spoke on the occasion.

The donors will meet the officials of the Energy Ministry and the Petrobangla and hold parleys among themselves, review the performances of the on-going projects and frame a strategy for future lending.

Today, there will be a presentation by the private-sector oil and gas companies while the donors will hold internal meeting tomorrow and meet the senior officials of the government on Thursday.

BSS adds: Donors said that Bangladesh would need to efficiently handle tariff collection and successfully accomplish establishment and maintenance of planned infrastructure in energy sector to smoothly carry out the actions, undertaken by the present government for the development of the sector.

The donors told the ministry that the country in the future should find out ways to utilise hydro-power instead of over depending on natural gas for power generation.

## 3 killed in city road mishaps

By DMC Correspondent

Three persons, including a police constable, were killed in road accidents in different parts of the city during the last two days.

Besides, a police man sustained serious injuries as he was hit by a running train at the Khikhet level crossing Saturday afternoon.

Police said Akram Ali, 45, a constable of Badda police outpost, was killed as a speeding minibus hit him near the Rampura bridge early Sunday.

A 70-year-old man identified as Sunamuddin was knocked down by a truck when he was crossing the Mirpur road near Sangsad Bhavan Sunday morning, sources at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) said.

Delwar Hossain, 40, was killed when a microbus ran over his motor bike at Bijoy Sarani yesterday afternoon.

Meanwhile, traffic constable Azibur Rahman of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police was seriously injured as he was hit by a running train at the Progoti Sarani level crossing at Khikhet under Cantonment area Saturday afternoon.

## BNP reception postponed

The reception to four BNP leaders scheduled for today in the city has been postponed due to the cyclonic storm that hit the country's coastal districts yesterday, a party press release said, reports UNB.

## N'ganj gunfire

From Page 1

over the area was the main cause of the clash, according to local people.

The local people said police mercilessly beat Abdus Sattar when they went to arrest his son, Abul Kashem, who allegedly participated in the gun fight.

When contacted, the acting police super of Narayanganj declined to comment in this regard.

Police later arrested Abul Kashem 38, and Fazlu 20 from the area.

Mohammad Ali was buried after autopsy at the Narayanganj Sadar Hospital.

His son filed a case accusing 10 persons.

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Dividend and Bonus Share

Dividend Warrants and Bonus Shares of the company for the FY 1996 are ready for distribution from the Company's Registered Office. Shareholders are requested to collect either personally or through their duly authorised representative on working days from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday through Wednesday and from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday commencing from May 24, 1997.

Only the uncollected Dividend Warrants will be despatched by special courier after reasonable time at the risk of the shareholders.

B.C. Kim  
Company Secretary

Editor: Mahfuz Anam

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