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## Hasina visits cyclone-hit areas, assures all assistance

BHOLA, Sept 28: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today visited cyclone-hit areas of Bhola and Laxmipur districts and assured the affected people of all possible assistance from the government, reports UNB.

More than 50 people were killed and many injured in the cyclonic storm that also extensively damaged property of the coastal people on early Saturday.

The Prime Minister visited Char Lalmohan, Borhanuddin and Mirzakalu in Bhola district and stopped at Laxmipur to see the devastation caused by the cyclone.

She first went to Lalmohan, then to Charbhuta union and addressed a gathering there.

Addressing the gathering, she said, "We have to face natural calamities with courage. For the grace of Almighty Allah and for rapid action and all-out preparation of the government, casualty and damage were also less this time."

The administration has been directed to ascertain the extent of damage, and soon after the government will take steps to repair the damage, she said.

See Page 12 Col 1

## Manzoor murder Charges to be framed Oct 9

By Court Correspondent

Charges against the accused in the Major General Manzoor murder case could not be framed yesterday as all of them, including deceased President General H M Ershad, were not present in the court.

First Additional Sessions Judge Mohammad Sharifuddin fixed the next date for framing of charges against the accused on October 9.

Defence counsels for Ershad again submitted a prayer to permit appearance of their client through his attorneys.

Public Prosecutor Altaf Hossain opposed the petition saying that it was not applicable in his case.

But the judge did not give any order yesterday. It is likely to be given later.

## 8 hurt as AL factions clash in Khulna

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Sept 28: Eight persons were injured, six with bullet and bomb splinters, when two rival factions of Awami League clashed over possession of a club building at Dhar-masara Road in the city this morning, police and witnesses said.

The injured persons included four policemen and two women. They are SI Yusuf Ali, ASI Giasuddin, constables Anjad and Moshahed, Advocate Nikhil Das, Purnima Roy, Dipika Das and Abdul Aziz.

All but the two women were admitted to Khulna Medical College Hospital with bullet and bomb splinter injuries. The clash ensued when party activists belonging to the 'Whip group' took possession of the club, housed in a two storied abandoned building and activists of 'Imam group' tried to oust them.

Activists of both the factions fired shots and exploded bombs during the clash that lasted for

See Page 12 Col 1

## Inside Today

### Article

#### Europe Turning Left: Search for an Alternative

Column: Perspectives by Brig (Rtd) M Abdul Hafiz

Page 4

### Focus

Children demand their rights? Taking the bit between the teeth  
Page 5

### Business

ASEM plans to promote investment, trade despite currency woes

DSE index falls on higher volume  
Pages 6, 7

# Cyclone death toll 51: Hundreds of fishermen still missing



A cyclone affected family in Bhola picking through the rubbles of their house yesterday. — Star photo

By Special Correspondent

Rescuers are still scouring the Meghna estuary and the Bay for the missing fishermen hundreds of whom had failed to return home when authorities sounded alarms ahead of Saturday's devastating storm that claimed 51 lives in the southern coastal districts.

Our Staff Correspondent reported from Barisal last night that about 100 fishermen, part of a flotilla of about 36 fishing boats and trawlers with nearly 300 men, had returned to Bishkhali river near Barguna.

But others remained still unaccounted for. The survivors said they were fishing near the estuary of Bishkhali river when they were caught in the high winds and heavy rains that preceded the storm. They scurried for cover.

But the storm had scattered their flotilla and they could not say what happened to others.

Reports from Patuakhali said nine boats with about 80 fishermen still remained missing. Ten boats from Barguna and two from Bhola also remained missing. There was no report on the fate of some 600 missing fishermen in 40 boats and trawlers from Cox's Bazar.

Worried relations along with rescuers are still searching the southern rivers that criss-cross

See Page 12 Col 2

## BNP workers asked to stand by cyclone-hit people

BNP yesterday instructed its leaders and workers in the cyclone-hit districts and its adjoining areas to strengthen relief and rehabilitation work, reports UNB.

According to a party press release, BNP MPs have begun relief work in their respective areas.

It said BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia gave necessary instructions to her party's central and local leaders and MPs to stand by the affected people to assuage their sufferings.

BNP MP Major (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed along with local leaders and workers continued relief operation in their area.

BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, also the convener of its central relief and rehabilitation committee, in a statement yesterday asked all leaders and workers in the cyclone-affected areas and its adjoining districts to launch a massive relief and rehabilitation work.

He urged the BNP leaders.

See Page 12 Col 2

## Thousands picking thru' rubbles in Bhola

From Morshed Ali Khan

BHOLA, Sept 28: Thousands of cyclone affected people were picking through the rubbles of their houses while the district administration admitted today it was yet to establish any communication with three of the seven thanas.

None from the district administration visited Char Fason, Monpara and Char Fajmuddin or had any contact with those areas. District officials feared that casualties could be 'heavy' in those areas.

Mesbahuddin Ahmed, district relief officer, said they did not know anything about those areas. "The number of deaths, until today, is 30 and 2,250 are injured, but the figures are sure to rise," Ahmed said. He said the roads were strewn with fallen trees and the sea was too rough and "that is why officials could not go for helping the affected people in those remote places."

The cyclone ripped through these coastal areas with a devastating wind force of up to 150 kilometers per hour early Saturday. The mighty winds up-

rooted thousands of trees, destroyed houses, and swept away scores of fishing boats. Some were pushed miles onto the shore and grounded.

Local people said, casualty was low because the Meghna was in low tide when the cyclone hit. The wind was so strong that even in low tide the river rose up to five feet and struck the shore.

District officials said that for every affected thana, they allotted two tons of rice as relief but they could not confirm whether the ration reached the people. Some officials were even asking journalists, who were visiting the affected areas, about the extent of damage.

The district officials became busy when the Prime Minister came here, some local people alleged. None of the four rescue boats, owned by the DC's office, could be used for rescue or other purposes because, "two are out of order, another is used by WAPDA and other is for personal use of the DC," a top official said.

See Page 12 Col 3

## DCC requested to take BNP's views on meeting venues

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of various political parties have urged the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) to take the major opposition BNP's views on selection of public meeting venues in the city.

Leaders of Left Democratic Front (LDF) and Gano Forum (GF) made the request while having a three-hour meeting with DCC Mayor Mohammad Hanif yesterday, the second day of a two-day meeting programme initiated by him.

On the first day Saturday, leaders of eight political parties had a similar meeting with the Mayor. BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami

See Page 12 Col 4

## Rape in DC's office room!

From Our Correspondent

PABNA, Sept 28: The deputy commissioner of Pabna has transferred the Nazir of the Collectorate Department and another employee for allegedly violating a girl in the office room of the DC.

When contacted today, the deputy commissioner Mahabub Rahman confirmed the incident.

The victim had applied for the job of a clerk-typist in the Collectorate office. The Nazir, Shafiuddin, had asked her to come on September 13 to collect the appointment letter. September 13 was Saturday, a weekly holiday.

When the girl came, Shafiuddin and another employee, Shamsul, a driver, called her to the office room of the DC and violated her, it was learnt.

The DC came to know of the incident several days later and passed an order for transfer and stand release of the two employees.

## Pakistan HK Sixes champs

HONG KONG, Sept 28: A rejuvenated Wasim Akram led Pakistan to victory over England in the final of the Hong Kong Sixes cricket today, report agencies.

Akram failed with the ball in the final but hit 30 runs to help overhaul England's moderate total of 70 for five at the end of the two-day tournament.

Sri Lanka scored a massive 101 runs in their allotted five overs to beat the West Indies to the consolation plate final.

Earlier, Bangladesh suffered

See Page 12 Col 7

# IFC to provide \$235m for pvt sector Privatisation process to be completed in 2 yrs: Kibria

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria said yesterday that the current privatisation process in the country would be completed in the next two years, report agencies.

'Financial sector reform process will take a definite shape within the current fiscal year,' said the finance minister while addressing a press conference at the Secretariat in the city.

However, he said, the reform of administrative sector was a complex issue and it would take some time.

The finance minister said he was not happy with the present pace of implementation of reforms programme. 'The pace should be more faster,' the minister said.

Kibria informed that the International Finance Corporation has arranged funds totaling 235 million US dollars which will lead to investment of 800 million dollars in private sector.

He disclosed that an IMF team would be visiting Bangladesh in mid-November to negotiate an ESAF loan while negotiations for a 500 million-dollar education-sector loan, where World Bank will give 200 million dollar, are at the final stage.

The finance minister who returned home Friday after at-

tending the annual meeting of IMF and WB, said the Bank's affiliate which lends to the private sector had so far given 40.5 million dollars this year.

Another amount of 195.5 million US dollars is in the pipeline and will be disbursed as soon as the negotiations are completed, he said, adding that the investment from the IFC is growing very fast in the country.

The 800 million dollar to be generated by the IFC loans will be invested shortly in units like

## 'Govt yet to bring success story to public notice'

Finance Minister S A M S Kibria yesterday confessed to the party workers that they have failed to bring the government's success in financial sector to public notice, reports UNB.

'Perhaps, we did not bring the success story to public or have failed to do so,' he told the Awami League workers at the party office during a session as part of their meeting with ministers.

The finance minister, accompanied by the Awami League leaders, briefed news-

See Page 12 Col 6

cement, hospital, mobile phone, power plant, jute mills and denim, Kibria said.

He said the IFC would beef up its office in Dhaka with more expertise to help the private sector.

About the enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF) loan, the minister said he had talks with IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus in Hong Kong during the September 23-25 period.

A mission from IMF will visit Bangladesh for final negotiations for the ESAF loan in mid-November, he said.

Bangladesh sought a 600 million-dollar loan under the ESAF programme. But the country can get a maximum 435 million US dollars as per its quota in the international monetary watchdog.

In this context, Kibria said the IMF annual meeting agreed to augment its total quota by 45 per cent which will benefit the member-countries, including Bangladesh, through large-scale operations.

Finance Secretary Dr Akbar Ali Khan, a member of the Bangladesh team in the Hong Kong meeting, who was also present at the press conference, said the increase in the quotas would take some time, at least two years.

See Page 12 Col 1

## Khaleda warns of agitations BNP to reject 'secret deal' on CHT

By Staff Correspondent

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has warned that her party would make the government inoperative through vigorous agitations if army camps were withdrawn from the CHT.

"If troops are withdrawn from the CHT, Bangladesh will lose its sovereignty over the area," she said referring to press reports on a government plan to sign an accord for resolving the CHT problem next month, providing for withdrawal of army from there.

Addressing a function of the Zia Sangkritik Sangathan (ZISAS), a pro-BNP cultural organisation, at the BCIC auditorium in the city yesterday evening, Begum Zia also alleged that the government was moving towards a secret accord on the CHT issues jeopardising the national independence.

"Like all other national issues, this government is dealing

with the CHT issue bypassing parliament and keeping the people in dark...We were not allowed to know anything about the outcome of the on-going negotiation," she said adding, her party would not accept any solution beyond constitutional provisions and against national interests.

The former prime minister strongly demanded that all the army camps remain in the CHT to retain control over the "insurgency-prone area."

The Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad also accused the government of conspiring against the country's integrity as regards CHT and Sylhet and called for building a united movement against the "evil design."

The Opposition leader criticised the government for banning public rallies on the city streets on the plea of easing

See Page 12 Col 3

## BNP stages demonstrations at thana level

Main opposition BNP yesterday staged demonstrations at thana level across the country to protest the government's 'anti-people' activities, reports UNB.

BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia announced a series of street programmes, including demonstrations at thana level yesterday and nationwide rail and road blockade on October 5, from a public meeting on September 15.

As part of the programmes, leaders and workers of the BNP brought out processions at Sutrapur, Ramna, Motijheel, Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Mirpur Pallabi, Lalbagh, Gulshan and Kotwali thanas in the city yesterday afternoon.

A press release of the BNP said police without any provocation halted a procession brought out by Ramna thana unit in front of Foreign Ministry office and again at Matshaya Bhaban when it was proceeding towards Kakrail.

See Page 12 Col 6

## A visit to DMCH emergency unit Tickets first or the patients?

By Naimul Haq

"Move away," shouted two boys carrying a middle-aged man who suffered severe injuries due to electric shock and fall from the rooftop of a two storied building.

Unfamiliar with the happenings at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) emergency unit, the boys called for the attending doctors without obtaining the 'ticket'. After waiting for about four valuable minutes the boys were told by the ill-tempered ward boy to get emergency fee ticket.

"Oh I see this patient is not important to you but the ticket," one of the boys said.

Unable to have change for his hundred taka notes to pay for the ticket, the boy came back hurriedly from the nearby counter and tried to persuade the ward boy to arrange immediate treatment of the patient. "I will pay, but in the meantime you must call in the doctor," he appealed.

Twelve more minutes passed but the doctor concerned failed to turn up to provide primary treatment to Sabur Khan.

brought from Keraniganj on the other side of the river Buriganga.

"Doctor, will you please come and see the patient?" Firoz, one of the boys, begged at room number 3, while dying Khan screamed in pain.

"Where am I?" asked half-conscious Khan. "Please give me something to relieve me of pain. I cannot tolerate it any longer," Khan moans.

"This is the reality here," said Shorab Sikdar, one of the DMCH emergency unit security guards.

Shorab, serving for over 15 years at the DMCH, continued, "I have seen so many patients dying right here. No one seem to have sympathy for the patients. We have turned into machines. Doctors' behaviour may appear strange but it is the usual."

The attending doctors at the emergency room, one of them smoking, seemed to be relaxing when this correspondent tried to draw their attention saying, "Can you please see this patient?" One of the tired looking doctors said as usual, "Show me

the 'ticket'."

Doctors refuse to attend patients at the emergency unit until they are shown the 'ticket', no matter how serious the condition of the patient is. "Is this why doctors are here for? To see the ticket first or the patient?" the frustrated father of a patient asked.

During a visit to the DMCH emergency unit on Wednesday between 11:40 am and 3 pm, this correspondent witnessed arrival of 46 patients injured in road accidents, suffering burns, bone fractures, food poisoning, stab injuries, etc.

Most of the attendants of patients expressed their utter disappointment at the emergency service. Doctors' negligence, space shortage, shabby-looking floor, dirty toilet and basins, absence of proper guidance and poor medicare were some of the common allegations of the guardians.

A five-year-old boy, severely bleeding from his nose, was screaming. Despite repeated requests for help, the emergency

See Page 12 Col 7

## Polluting automobiles should be phased out

Experts tell seminar in city

Experts came up with a pack of suggestions, including phasing out of polluting automobiles, for cleaning the city atmosphere that is rated one of the worst in the world, reports UNB.

The recommendations came from a two-day seminar that ended in the city yesterday, stressing adequate measures for creating public awareness about different pollution problems of Dhaka city and motivating them to take measures for their mitigation.

The concluding session of the seminar titled "Pollution Problems of Dhaka City and Mitigation Measures" also emphasised environmental education in different tiers of formal and non-formal education.

The speakers said academics, professionals, policy planners, Dhaka WASA and municipal corporations, DOE, NGO Bureau, BRTA and other departments concerned should work in close cooperation for solving the pollution problems. They called for launching coordinated research to identify sources and degrees of pollution, impact on human and ecosystem and develop appropriate measure to control the pollution.

Creation of database on environment and resources from different donor agencies should be tapped for R&D activities.

"Studies should be undertaken to identify plant species that can be grown in different pollution zones and massive afforestation programme should be undertaken to bring marginal and vacant land in addition to pollution zones."

Species should be identified as bio-indicator of specific pollution, the speakers said, adding that nutrient and biochemical analysis should be made to harness benefit from such plants.

The seminar suggested that research and development should be strengthened to utilise tanneries' solid waste

and slaughterhouse by product. Export-oriented leather industry has a great potential of further expansion which is not possible in the small area of Hazaribagh. So future expansion should be planned outside Dhaka city as a separate industrial estate, they said.

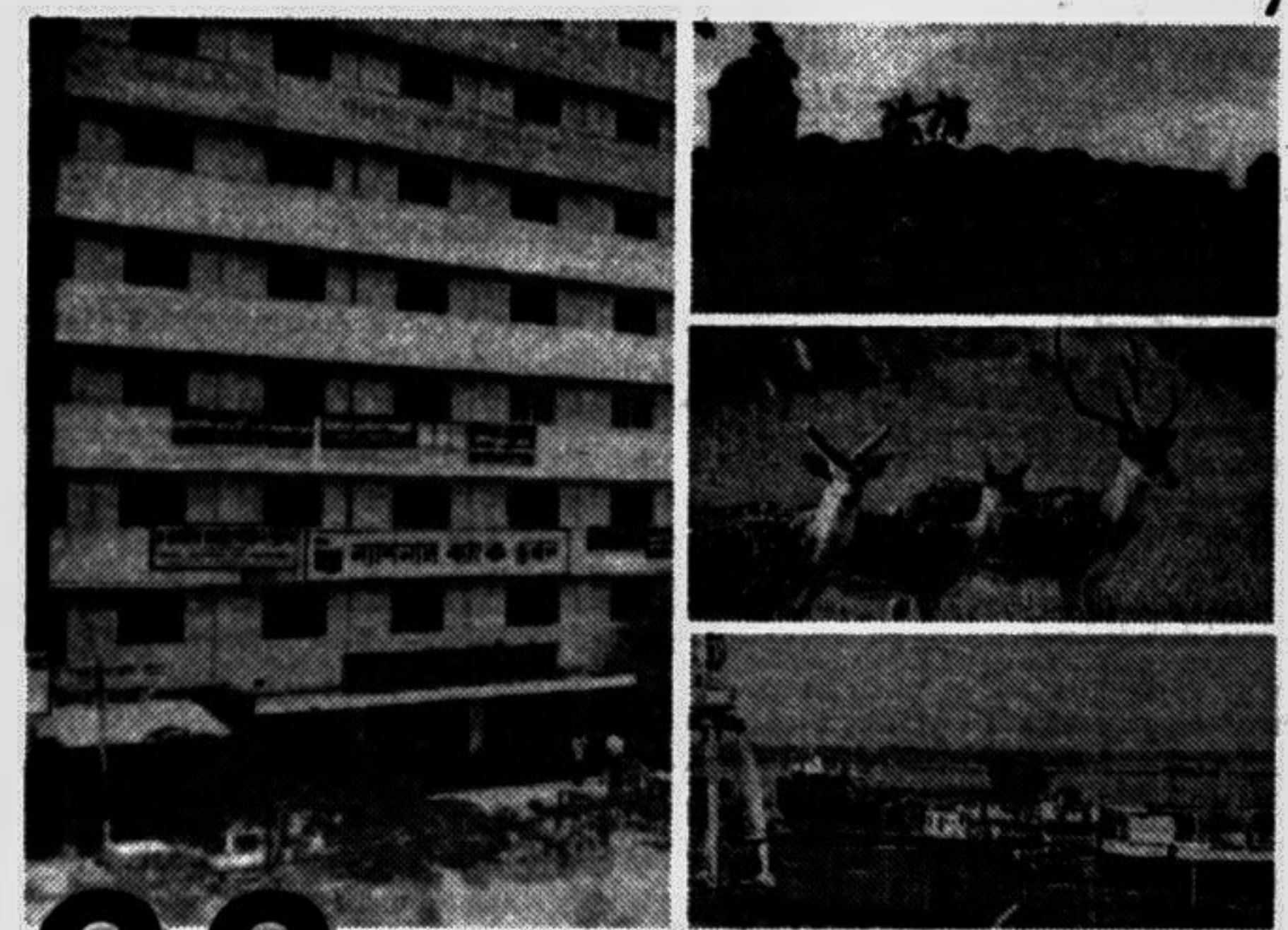
The speakers viewed that efforts should be made to reduce the water utilisation in tanning process.

"Air quality of Dhaka city is one of the worst in the world. Comprehensive research protocol should be initiated to study the air quality and suggest remedial measures."

Suggested the participants: solid waste including polyethylene should be recycled and seg-

See Page 12 Col 8

## Another NBL Branch at Khulna city



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