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# The Daily Star

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VOL. II NO. 119 REGD. NO. DA 784

JAISTTHA 5, 1399 BS,

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 19, 1992

ZILQAD 15, 1412 HIJRI

12 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 4.00

## Inside Today

### Article

#### The Economic Scene in Bangladesh

In a three-part series, AKN Ahmed, a former governor of Bangladesh Bank, discusses the whole range of economic problems  
 Page 4

### International



Benazir urges India, Pakistan to slash defence spending  
 Page 5

### Business

Sustainability of groundwater a major problem

Arabs lost \$450b in Gulf War  
 Page 6,7

### Feature

Health  
 Nightblindness Can be Controlled  
 Page 8

## Metropolitan

### Dhaka Day by Day



How not to develop the reading habit  
 Page 3

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Weekly cabinet meeting held

The regular weekly Cabinet meeting was held at Bangabhaban yesterday with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair. Cabinet Ministers and Ministers of State in charge on different Ministries and divisions attended the meeting. Cabinet Secretary, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and Secretaries concerned were present, reports ISS.

### Hasina leaves for Ctg today

Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina leaves for Chittagong today. She will visit the houses of three Awami League and Chhatra League leaders who were killed in Fatikchhari on May 18, allegedly by armed Jamaat-Shibir activists. Harun Bashar of Fatikchhari Awami League, and Jamiruddin and Abu Taher of Chhatra League died on the spot when armed attackers fired upon a conference of the Chhatra League. The Awami League will also address a public rally at Fatikchhari this afternoon, reports UNB.

### Hartal observed at N'ganj

From Our Correspondent  
 NARAYANGANJ, May 18: A dawn-to-noon hartal was observed peacefully in the district headquarters today at the call of Narayanganj Town Improvement Committee. The hartal was called to press for realisation of the committee's 17-point demand including to stop selling of the abandoned railway lands in the town.

# Cyclone may hit coasts today

The cyclonic storm in the central Bay may hit Tuesday evening or night the coastal areas of Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Noakhali, Feni and Patuakhali with wind velocity rising up to 90-115 km per hour, weather office forecast last night, reports UNB.

Maritime port of Chittagong has been advised to hoist danger signal number 7 and Cox's Bazar danger signal number 6 while Mongla to keep hoisted local warning signal No 4.

Low lying areas of the coastal regions are likely to

be inundated by a moderate storm surge of six to eight feet height above normal astronomical tide, the forecast said.

Meanwhile, a meeting of the National Coordination Committee for Cyclone Preparedness was held here Monday night at the Bangabhaban with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

Begum Zia directed all concerned to further strengthen the precautionary measures in the coastal districts.

She also asked various ministries to be fully pre-

pared for post-cyclone rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures. She also advised all concerned to make use of the experience gained from the last year's cyclone.

Begum Zia appealed to the people of the coastal areas to listen to cyclone advice given through radio, television and local authorities.

The meeting was attended by Ministers, State Ministers, Chairman of the Red Crescent Society, Secretaries and other senior officials.

An emergency meeting of the Implementation Board of

the Cyclone Preparedness Programme was also held yesterday (Monday) at the Relief Ministry to take precautionary measures following the depression over Bay.

Presided over by the Secretary, Ministry of Relief, M A Hakim, the meeting was attended by the high officials of the concerned ministries and agencies.

The meeting had taken some important decisions to face the possible cyclone and tidal surge successfully due to the depression in the Bay of Bengal. The meeting de-

cided to keep ready necessary transports including helicopter and vessels for emergency relief operation, supply of dry food, drinking water, matches etc on emergency basis open relief control rooms which will operate round the clock at Relief Ministry, Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation and in concerned districts and upazila headquarters.

The meeting asked the divisional, district and upazila administrations to arrange cyclone preparedness meetings regularly and be

ready for meeting any calamities on emergency basis.

The meeting also advised national media specially Radio and Television to announce weather bulletin repeatedly.

Another report says, Patuakhali district administration has taken all preparatory measures to face probable eventualities due to cyclonic storm, official sources said.

Trawlers, launches and rescue boats have been sent to islands and coastal areas of See Page 12 Col 8



View of a city road during hartal hours yesterday.

— Star photo

## Formal talks with Tehran Velayeti offers Dhaka to join ECC

Bangladesh and Iran yesterday held 'fruitful' talks for expanding their cooperative bilateral ties, reports BSS.

The talks, lasted for more than an hour at the state guest house Meghna, covered bilateral, regional and international issues with a view to expand the level of cooperation and concerted efforts by the two countries to secure international peace and security, a Foreign Office spokesman said.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman led the Bangladesh side while visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Ali Akbar Velayeti headed his country's delegation.

Bangladesh manpower in Iran, cooperation in the air and shipping sectors, expansion of economic relations and other form of cooperation were the highlights of discussions on bilateral matters.

Dr. Velayeti during talks, requested Bangladesh to join the Economic Cooperation Council (ECC) of which Iran, Turkey and Pakistan are full

members along with some central Asian countries that emerged following the break up of the Soviet Union.

Mostafizur Rahman informed him that Dhaka takes a keen interest in the activities of the ECC.

Bangladesh raised the issue of an estimated 10,000 illegal Bangladesh workers in Iran with a view to legalise these people by Iranian government.

Dr. Velayeti assured that the matter would be seen with utmost sympathy.

He praised the contribution of Bangladesh doctors to the medical sector of Iran while Mostafizur Rahman drew his attention to technical people like engineers and architects for recruitment in Iran like doctors.

Dr. Velayeti said his country would continue to recruit doctors from here on a regular basis and would also look into recruitment for others.

Bangladesh requested Iran to exempt national airlines See Page 12 Col 8

## Stray clashes mark hartal

By Staff Correspondent

Stray clashes between rival groups marked an eight-hour hartal leaving at least 100 injured and paralysing normal life in the capital Monday.

Crickers were blasted, shotguns and bricks used between the supporters of "Gandadalat" (people's court) and its opponents, mostly Shibir activists during the hartal hours. The injured included three newsmen.

The National Coordinating Committee for Realisation of the Kirs and Collaborators during the Liberation War, the organisers of the public trial against Jamaat chief Golem Azam, filed the half-day hartal mainly press for execution of the people's court verdict on Golem Azam.

Major opposition parties including Awami League, five-party alliance and the Patriotic Democratic Front supported the hartal.

A phed battle was fought between the supporters and the opponents of the hartal in the Bal Mukarram area of the city.

The pro-hartal activists used bricks on the road between the Dainik Bangla Crossroad and the Purana Paltan area where the activists of the Islah Chhatra Shibir, the student wing of the Jamaat,

and the newly-formed Jatiya Juba Command allegedly hurled crude bombs and fired from roadside buildings and the narrow lanes.

Police lobbed at least 15 teargas shells and used batons to disperse the clashing groups. They also arrested at least 10 people from different parts of the city.

All vehicles stayed off city streets as the hartal went into force at 6 am. However, a few rickshaws came out later in the morning in some parts of the city.

Office-goers were seen walking down to their places of work while ministers and high government officials went to their Secretariat offices under police escort.

No classes were held in the educational institutions including the Dhaka University in the capital during the hartal hours. Shops and markets remained shuttered.

Attendance in the private and government offices was thin.

Banks and other business houses remained inactive during the hartal.

Long-route buses from the three main stations at Gaba, Mohakhali and Sayedabad did not leave the stations. Train arrivals and departures at the central railway station at Kamalapur were few.

At the Sadarghat terminal, some steamers and motor launches operated during the hartal hours.

The government tried to operate some BRTC buses in the city under police escort but later withdrew them following attacks by picketers positioned near Farmgate, Shahbag and Press Club areas.

Witnesses said that the clash in the lane opposite the Bangladesh Sports Council in Baitul Mukarram area was the fiercest and continued for about one-hour.

Some Shibir supporters, witnesses said, took up positions in the compound of Dewan Manjil adjoining the city office of Jamaat and threw cocktails on the picketers in the lane.

The hartal supporters who outnumbered the Shibir activists, reached to the boundary wall of the house after stoning it for an hour and chased their opponents out of the compound.

But suddenly police took up positions inside Dewan Manjil and lobbed several teargas shells on the pro-hartal activists, witnesses said.

They alleged that police deployed in front of Baitul Mukarram remained silent on lookers until a senior official See Page 12 Col 7

## Countrywide hartal June 21 Nation ready to rout enemies of Liberation: Jahanara Imam

By Staff Correspondent

The National Coordination Committee for Realisation of the Spirit of the Liberation War and Resistance to the Killers and Collaborators of 1971 yesterday announced a countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal June 21 to press the government to execute the 'Gano Adalat' verdict on controversial Jamaat chief Golem Azam.

The Coordination Committee Convenor Jahanara Imam announced the June 21 hartal during a post-hartal public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city.

Announcing the committee's next course of action Imam called upon the committee units all over the country to strengthen the organisation and take up mass contact programmes in order to make the June 21 hartal a total success.

She called upon the Coordination Committee branches to hold public rallies in those upazilas and districts where what she said fascist Jamaat-Shibir circle was attacking the pro-liberation forces.

She also directed the people See Page 12 Col 3

## Obhi, 16 others hauled up

By Staff Correspondent

Golem Faruq Obhi and general secretary of Mohsin Hall Students Union Sayedur Rahman Sohrab were arrested along with 15 other activists of Chhatra League (M-I) from the Dhaka University campus on Monday.

Sayed, a JCD leader, was arrested from Mohsin Hall in a sudden raid by the detective branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police in the small hours of yesterday while Obhi and 15 others were arrested from Jagannath Hall yesterday at noon.

Police also recovered an automatic pistol, a cut-rifle and ten bullets from Obhi and one of his associates, according to police sources.

Acting on a tip off a group of armed police of the detective branch launched a sudden raid on the guest room of the North Block of Jagannath Hall, where Obhi and his 15 associates were staying.

The Deputy Commissioner of detective branch Md Abdul Quayyum along with three assistant commissioners stormed into the hall premises in a jeep and asked Obhi and others to surrender.

But, according to the police sources, two shots were fired from the guest room during the time. Police also fired two rounds of gunshots. In the air and warned them that unless they surrender police would shoot.

A large contingent of armed police, in the meantime, surrounded the hall and managed to compel Obhi and his associates to surrender.

Police recovered an automatic pistol along with five bullets from Obhi and a cut-rifle from another associate. See Page 12 Col 7

## Detained JCD leader released

Police Monday released a leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) after detaining him for nearly 12 hours, reports UNB.

Syed Sohrab, General Secretary of Mohsin Hall Students' Union and an M A final-year student of Philosophy Department, was picked up by police from the gate of Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University early Monday.

He was released later in the noon.

## Dozens killed, hundreds held Thai troops open fire on demonstrators

BANGKOK, May 18: Thai troops opened fire on anti-government demonstrators in central Bangkok to night, killing, wounding dozens, witnesses said, reports Reuters.

Troops fired several volleys from machine-guns and automatics at thousands of anti-government protesters gathered at a main intersection, witnesses said.

Thronged three people who were killed and at least 100 wounded.

Hundreds of people dropped the ground when the first shot was fired, they said. Fire-ports said the troops

had fired at the demonstrators and when the shooting stopped troops began moving in on the crowd from both sides, the reports said.

Soldiers had broken up a mass demonstration earlier in the day by advancing on the crowd, firing assault rifles in the air, but in a pre-dawn incident they fired on anti-government demonstrators, killing an estimated 13 and wounding hundreds.

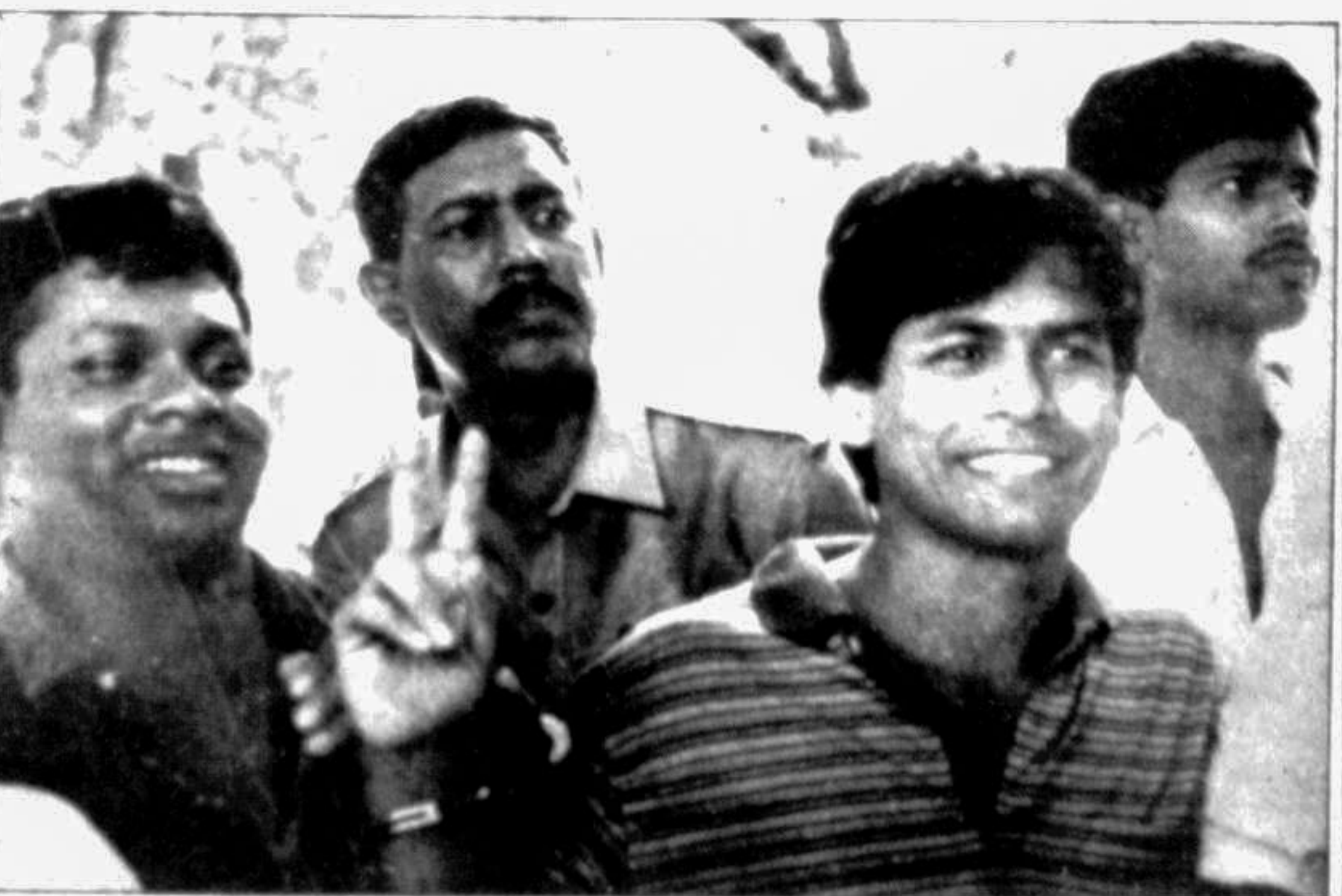
AP adds: Troops charged into the streets Monday and arrested hundreds of die-hard protesters, including seven main leaders, after a night of

bloody clashes with tens of thousands demanding the prime minister's ouster.

Faced with the largest and bloodiest anti-establishment protest since 1976, the government declared a state of emergency just after midnight and sent riot police and soldiers to stop the demonstrations.

At least eight people were killed and 250 injured overnight, when security forces opened fire, authorities and hospitals said.

On national television, Prime Minister Suchinda Kraprasit See Page 12 Col 7



Obhi, was arrested along with some of his accomplices from Jagannath Hall of Dhaka University yesterday.

— Star photo

## 3 more youths drowned in Buriganga

By DMCH Correspondent

A youngman and two young girls were drowned in a boat capsized in the river Buriganga near Nawabganj Bazar in the city Monday afternoon.

The victims were identified as Jahangir (22), Perdausi Begum Rina (14) and Maya Begum (13).

Several others who were also crossing the river from Nawabganj to Kamrangirchar by the ferry boat managed to escape by swimming ashore.

Witnesses said, the small ferry boat overturned in the river by a sudden wind at about 3 pm yesterday.

Local people recovered the bodies and handed over to the Lalbag police station. Later police sent them to the Dhaka Medical College hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy.

## NAM to play positive role in changed world: Mostafiz

Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman said yesterday that the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) would continue to play a positive role under the changed unipolar world.

Talking to BSS in Dhaka early morning on return from the three-day ministerial meeting of NAM at Bali, the minister said it was an important forum for reappraisal of the international situation.

He described the Bali meeting as very important as it focused on the latest developments in the Middle East, South Africa and human rights question. He said, the forum deliberated on development and trade, South-South cooperation and environmental and sustainable development.

The minister said the NAM meeting also reviewed the far See Page 12 Col 3

## Lunthin forces kill 3 Rohingya fishermen

COX'S BAZAR, May 18: Myanmar border guards shot dead three Rohingya fishermen at Tombru Bazar in Arakan on Saturday as the security forces there continued persecution of the Muslim minorities, refugees who arrived today said, reports UNB.

The victims included a father and his sons who were shot when Lunthin forces, the Myanmar border guards raided their shrimp farm.

The newly arrived refugees said Myanmar troops still continued atrocities on the Rohingyas compelling them flee their homes in Arakan.

Meanwhile, as efforts are underway to start the repatriation of nearly 2.6 lakh refugees sheltered in Bangladesh, the influx of Muslims from across the border continued though the rate of the arrivals declined during the last few days.

A report from Huiadi-apalong refugee camp said that at least 15 people were wounded in a clash last night between two groups of the camp inmates.

Officials today said the situation at the camp was under control.

## C & F Association postpones strike at Ctg Port

CHITTAGONG, May 18: Strike at Chittagong Port that paralysed external trade was suspended today and normal function of the port resumed at 8 pm, reports UNB.

The Clearing & Forwarding Association tonight said their strike was suspended till June 23 following assurance by the Port Authorities to resolve their problems.

The assurance came following a high level meeting today that set up two inquiry committees, both headed by the Chairman of the Chittagong Port Authorities.

One of the committees will deal with security of the port and surrounding areas while the other identify the problems faced by clearing and forwarding agents and suggest their remedies, officials said.

Representatives from all quarters concerned will be on the inquiry committees.