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NEWS BRIEFS

Reception to  
mayors May 7

The Bangladesh City and  
Municipal Employees Federation  
will accord reception to  
the four mayors of Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi  
city corporations on May 7 at  
12 noon in front of the Nagar  
Bhaban in the capital. LGRD  
and Cooperatives Minister  
Abdus Salam Talukdar will  
attend the function as the chief  
guest.

Cloth shop gutted

By Staff Correspondent  
A cloth shop in the New  
Market was gutted yesterday.  
Both, fire service and police  
said that the fire originated  
from an electric short circuit  
in the Khan Brothers around  
11 in the morning. Two units  
of fire service from Palash and  
Mohammadpur brought the  
flame under control within half  
an hour. The owner estimated  
the loss at Tk 50,000. No ca-  
sualties were reported.

## Cyclone death toll rises to 165

Star Report

With the recovery of 38  
more bodies from different  
areas in Cox's Bazar and  
Bandarban districts, the death  
toll in Monday night's severe  
cyclone storm rose to 165  
yesterday.

Of these victims, 162 were  
killed in Teknaf, Ukhia, Ramu  
and Sadar thanas under Cox's  
Bazar while three others died  
at Naikkhangechhari in  
Bandarban district. Most of the  
victims were Rohingya refugees  
who were staying in  
Bangladesh. Two crew of a  
Thai trawler were also killed  
in the cyclone near Teknaf.

According to official sources

in Dhaka, 4,48,362 persons  
out of a total population of  
14,72,993 in Cox's Bazar and  
Bandarban districts were af-  
fected by the storm. The  
sources confirmed 115 deaths  
in the two districts until last  
night while, according to  
them, 3126 were injured.

The death toll may rise  
further as reports from some  
remote and inaccessible areas  
were yet to reach the control  
rooms, said officials.

In a despatch last night,  
Monayem Khan, our corre-  
spondent in Cox's Bazar said:  
The death toll in Monday  
night's cyclone reached 165

See Page 12 Col 6

## CHT peace talks resume today

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, May 4: Pre-  
parations are underway to hold  
the seventh round of peace  
talks between the outlawed  
Shantibahini leaders and the  
parliamentary committee headed  
by Communications Minister  
Oli Ahmed, tomorrow.

The talks are scheduled to  
begin at 10 am at the Khagrachari  
Circuit House.

The Shantibahini team in  
the talks will be led by J B  
Larma alias Shanto Larma,  
president of the Parbatty  
Chittagong Jana Sanghati  
Samity (PCJSS), the parent  
organisation of tribal rebels.

Both sides are expected to  
have crucial talks for a political  
solution to the long-standing  
CHT issue.

The Shantibahini team will  
be brought to the meeting  
venue from Dudukchhari border  
village of Panchchhari thana  
by helicopter in the morning.

The cease-fire now in force  
in the CHT districts expires on  
May 15.

India's Tripura State Governor  
Romesh Bhandari and a  
delegation of Chakma refugees,  
led by Upendra Lal Chakma,  
chairman of the Refugee  
Welfare Association separately  
visited the CHT last month to  
see the rehabilitation of 379  
families of Chakma refugees  
repatriated in February this  
year.

India has denied that its Air  
Force fighter planes had violated  
the Bangladesh airspace,  
as reported in the press, says  
UNB.

In a statement made available  
to the press in Dhaka  
yesterday, a spokesman of the  
Indian government said it had  
made enquiries and found that  
Indian Air Force planes did not  
make any sorties over the  
Bangladesh territory.

He said the investigations  
had been carried out in re-  
sponse to a query about some  
press reports in Bangladesh  
alleging that Indian Air Force  
fighter planes had violated the  
Bangladesh airspace.

The investigations reveal  
that Indian Air Force planes  
did not make any sorties in  
the area concerned and there was  
therefore, no question of any  
airspace violations taking place  
from our side, said the state-  
ment issued by the Indian  
High Commission here.

## Opposition rejects PM's speech

From Our Correspondent

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, May  
4: Members of the Bangladesh  
Rifles (BDR) and the Indian  
Border Security Force (BSF)  
exchanged fire across the  
Dilbowa border area under  
Bhola thana here today fol-  
lowing a clash between vil-  
lagers on both sides of the  
border.

However, no casualties were  
reported.

Official sources here said a  
colonel-level flag meeting has  
been convened for tomorrow  
morning between the BDR and  
the BSF at the Sona Masjid  
border outpost to defuse the  
tension.

According to sources, some  
Indian nationals from Poyas-  
mbar of Maldah sneaked into  
Dilbowa village of Bangladesh  
and allegedly took away some  
cows from the villagers at  
about 9 last night. The vil-  
lagers, however, managed to  
apprehend three of the Indian  
intruders.

As a sequel to this, the  
Indian villagers, reportedly in  
cooperation with the BSF,  
again entered into Bangladesh  
and kidnapped two citizens and  
their cows at about 8:30  
this morning.

At this stage, the BDR per-  
sonnel fired blank shots to  
chase the Indians away. The  
BSF members also fired 30 to  
40 times.

Tension was prevailing at  
the Dilbowa border area till fil-  
ing of this report at 10:15  
tonight.

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Last entry date for Quiz 3 has been extended up to 7 May.

# PLO, Israel sign pact, finally

CAIRO, May 4: Israeli Prime  
Minister Yitzhak Rabin and  
PLO leader Yasser Arafat over-  
came a last-minute dispute and  
signed a historic accord  
Wednesday giving Palestinians  
their first taste of self-rule, re-  
ports AP.

The agreement came after  
more than six months of negotia-  
tions and nearly 27 years of  
occupation by Israeli soldiers  
in the Gaza Strip and Jericho,  
the areas to be turned over to  
Palestinian control.

A smiling Arafat was the  
first to begin signing the 200-  
page document in three thick  
black books and a stack of files.  
But then he briefly walked out  
of the hall in a dispute over the  
documents.

He returned minutes later  
and signed documents he ap-  
parently refused to endorse  
earlier, writing notations on a  
disputed part of the papers.  
Rabin then signed one docu-  
ment after an aide translated  
Arafat's Arabic writing.

The dispute produced an  
extraordinary scene as  
Egyptian President Hosni  
Mubarak, US Secretary of State  
Warren Christopher and other  
officials watched from the side.

Dignitaries appeared to be ne-  
gotiating on stage as speeches  
continued.

Egypt's Middle East News  
Agency said that the confusion  
was apparently over a map of  
Jericho, whose exact size is  
still being negotiated. Arafat  
apparently did not sign the  
map, and then Rabin also re-  
fused to sign it.

CAIRO, May 4: Israeli Prime  
Minister Yitzhak Rabin said to-  
day PLO leader Yasser Arafat had  
asked for up to a three-week  
delay in implementing the han-  
dover of authority to Palestinians  
in the Gaza Strip and Jericho because  
they were not ready, re-  
ports Reuter.

The agreement came after  
more than six months of negotia-  
tions and nearly 27 years of  
occupation by Israeli soldiers  
in the Gaza Strip and Jericho,  
the areas to be turned over to  
Palestinian control.

Mubarak, however, who  
presided at the signing cere-  
mony, said the agreement  
meant a 'revolutionary change'  
in relations between Israel and  
the Palestinians.

"We are living today one of  
those historic moments when  
we witness the signing of the  
... agreement on establishing the  
Palestinian authority in the  
Gaza Strip and Jericho as the  
first stage of Palestinian-Israeli  
peace," Mubarak said.

Christopher said the  
agreement would not end con-  
tention in the Middle East but  
was changing the shape of con-  
tention.

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(From L to R): Foreign Ministers Shimon Peres of Israel, Russian Alexander Kozyrev, Egypt's Amr Moussa, Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak entreating PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat after he refused to sign a document of the Gaza-Jericho autonomy deal in Cairo yesterday.

— AFP photo

8 die in Bhaluka  
bus accident

From Our Correspondent

BHALUKA (Mymensingh),  
May 4: At least eight passen-  
gers of a minibus were killed  
and another 40 injured, five of  
them critically, when the vehi-  
cle collided head-on with a  
truck at Hajirbazar here on the  
Dhaka-Mymensingh highway this  
morning.

Four of the dead were iden-  
tified. They are: Bulbul Ahmed,  
35, a diploma engineer of Asia  
and Company of Motijheel  
Commercial Area, Dhaka who  
hails from Dhanikholi village  
of Trishal thana under Mymen-  
singh district, Dulal, 30, a  
constable of the Uttara Police  
Battalion, Dhaka, Mamta Ali  
Mridha, 35, of Natore and  
Hasan Haider, 30, of Kishore-  
ganj. The identities of the  
remaining four could not be  
known immediately.

Of the injured, 21 were  
admitted to the Mymensingh  
Medical College Hospital  
(MMCH) where the conditions  
of five persons were stated to  
be critical.

According to police and  
eye-witnesses, the accident  
happened at about 7:00 am  
when the Dhaka-bound truck  
suddenly hit the overloaded  
minibus coming from the op-  
posite direction.

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PM inaugurates  
Bateexpo today

By Staff Correspondent

A three-day Bangladesh  
Apparel and Textile Exposition  
(BATEXPO) begins today at the  
Sonargaon Hotel to promote  
the export of domestic prod-  
ucts.

The BATEXPO, organised by  
the Bangladesh Garment  
Manufacturers and Exporters  
Association (BGMEA), will be  
inaugurated by Prime Minister

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