

# SAVE DHAKA



This picture, taken in the city's Azimpur area, shows a common sight: Roman workers leaving bricks, sand and stones piled up by the roadside, often blocking footpaths and constricting the roads. Lack of coordination among the various utility agencies as well as inadequate supervision and monitoring are usually the main causes behind such civic inconveniences.

## 41 hurt in N'ganj clashes

**From Our Correspondent**

NARAYANGANJ, May 2: At least 41 persons were injured in three clashes in Fatulla thana and Narayanganj town today.

Two rival groups of youths clashed over purchase of garments' factory wastage in Channari area under Fatulla thana in the morning. At least 30 persons were injured in the clash.

Of the injured 12 including a child and a woman were admitted to different hospitals in Dhaka and Narayanganj.

The sporadic clash began at about 9:30 am and continued for about three hours. Of the two rival groups, one was from Mairapatti area of Fatulla thana and the other from North

## May Day observed

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ments highlighting the significance of the day while Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television put up special programmes.

In the capital, the Directorate of Labour organised a discussion at the Shilpakala Academy premises which stressed the need for increasing productivity and improving the employer-employee relations.

The government has taken initiatives to update the existing labour laws. Labour and Manpower Secretary Dr M Harunur-Rashid said at the discussion meeting. The labour law reform committee has prepared a report with the consensus of all the concerned parties and report has been submitted to the government, he added.

Participants in discussion included ILO Director Paul J Baely, president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) M Anis-ud-Dowla, National Trade Union Federation president Mosharrif Hossain, Labour Director M Habib Ullah and others.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) held a discussion on May Day at the party's central office.

Taking part in the discussion, Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia expressed the firm commitment of the present government to improving the lot of the workers since it believed that its policies of development could not be materialised without betterment of the workers.

Food Minister M A Mannan State Minister for Finance Majibur Rahman and State Minister for Planning Dr Moin Khan also spoke on the occasion.

The May Day was observed through various programmes in the port city of Chittagong.

The Divisional Labour Directorate held a discussion on the "Spirit of May Day and Boosting Productivity" in the port city, which was attended by Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah al Noman.

Jatiya Samik League held a workers rally on the day at the

## Ershad's trials adjourned

**By Staff Correspondent**

The trial of deposed president HM Ershad in the case involving the illegal purchase of TV equipment and thereby causing loss to the exchequer was adjourned yet again yesterday following a defence prayer.

Ershad's counsel prayed for the deferment on the ground that he could not file the application for a criminal revision against the framing of charges against his client for lack of a proper *vokalatnama* (power of attorney) which he said he was yet to receive.

Special Divisional Judge, Dhaka, M Ansaruddin Sikder set June 3 as the next date for the trial.

Earlier, the same court, trying Ershad and a former government official in a separate corruption case, adjourned the hearing till June 3.

Ershad is accused of illegally reinstating one Sultan Ahmed Mullick—the co-accused in the case—in government service nearly ten years after his dismissal on disciplinary grounds. Mullick was the superintendent of the city's Suhrawardy Hospital.

Both the accused sat in the dock, but didn't speak to each other.

**Do You Know?**  
(Health Message)

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New message next day.

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# Khaleda: Strengthen bonds

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forces can be properly integrated with action programmes on poverty alleviation," she said.

"Our goal of reaching *daal-bhat* to every South Asian household is no longer beyond realisation," Begum Zia said.

Underlining the need for finding new areas of regional cooperation, Begum Zia said energy was perhaps an area which could deserve attention.

She said some of the SAARC member states, have big reservoirs of both renewable and non-renewable energy which are yet to be tapped profitably. The Himalayan range is a major source of hydro-electricity, the Prime Minister said and emphasised the need for sharing this resource for the benefit of all the people of this region.

Begum Zia thanked the people of this historic city of Delhi for their warm welcome and the Indian Government for excellent arrangements for the summit.

Welcoming Pakistani President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and Nepalese Prime Minister Man Mohan Adhikari as new entrants to SAARC, Begum Zia said their sagacity would guide the forum.

Congratulating the new chairman of SAARC Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao of India, Begum Zia assured him of every cooperation.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister recalled the outstanding contributions of her predecessor, late Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa as the chairman of SAARC.

She also felicitated the new SAARC Secretary General Y K Siilwa. Begum Zia said that the SAARC would soon complete its ten years of existence and added it was time for fresh

stock-taking of the performances and achievements as well as its failures.

Referring to the successes of the SAARC the Prime Minister said that the regional forum had addressed the problems of women, the children, the disabled and the disadvantaged, the aged, the poor and the hungry.

The SAARC, she said, had initiated people-to-people contacts in the region and set up some linkages with other international bodies.

Emphasising the need for broadening the capabilities of the SAARC Secretariat, Begum Zia said all member countries should make it more effective and stronger. "We must invest it with greater capacity to respond to the increasing demands put upon it," she added.

On the collective efforts of the member states at all international fora, the Prime Minister said "Our nations are now formulating collective positions in every major international conference."

Begum Zia had recently articulated the position of SAARC on poverty alleviation at the World Social Summit in Copenhagen.

The SAARC member states, she said, must harmonise their individual positions as much as possible at the forthcoming conference on the condition of women to be held in Beijing in September.

The Prime Minister also proposed the holding of a SAARC ministerial meeting on the problems of women in the South Asian region in Dhaka before the Beijing conference.

On education, the Prime Minister said new programmes must be devised in South Asia to attract the children to schools "We must have an educated population," she added.

Referring to her government's programmes on education like the "Food for Educa-



Indian Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao (L) greeting Pakistan President Farooq Ahmed Leghari at the Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi for the inaugural session of the eighth South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit yesterday.

## Manzur murder trial

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called to order at 12:05 pm, with only Gen Latif in the dock, the defence lawyers of Col Shams and Maj Emdad protested the absence of their clients inside the courtroom.

Only Gen Latif agreed to take the dock while his two co-accused declined to make their court appearances, preferring to remain in the safety and seclusion of court lock-up. Gen Latif used the opportunity to move for retraction of his confessional statement, made before a magistrate earlier in Dhaka.

"I want to withdraw the statement which I was forced to give under mental coercion and pressure," a glum-faced Latif, attired in a striped full-sleeve shirt told the court. He later signed his retraction petition, which was put on record.

The court witnessed a noisy scene when the defence counsels, unconvinced when the AC (Prosecution) told the court that the other two accused preferred not to appear in person, demanded that a magistrate be sent to the court lock-up to ascertain their clients' intentions.

Accordingly, the CMM sent magistrate Shamsul Kibria Chowdhury to find out. Chowdhury corroborated the AC (Prosecution)'s version and the lawyers were pacified. However, the CMM reprimanded advocate Shah Alam, appearing for Col. Shams for his indecorous behaviour and barred him from appearing in his court in future in connection with this particular case. Alam had reportedly cast aspersions on the integrity of the

## Star photographer stabbed

**By Staff Correspondent**

Some unidentified miscreants stabbed a photographer of The Daily Star when he tried to resist them from stealing his motorbike in Faridabad area under Sutrapur thana in the city Monday night.

Photographer Amran Hossain had parked his motor cycle in front of his residence at about 8:30 pm at IG Gate of Bangladesh Bank Colony in Faridabad area. Four or five youths immediately came to the spot, broke the lock of the motorbike and tried to take it away.

Amran could not first notice this since the area was blanketed by darkness due to power load shedding at that time. Suddenly he saw that the gang was trying to get away with his motorbike and he challenged them.

The elements instantly attacked Amran with knives and stabbed him in his left arm and back and fled away, leaving behind the motor cycle.

Amran was taken to the Mitford Hospital and treated there.

A case has been filed with the Sutrapur thana in this connection.

## Two idols recovered

**KHULNA, May 2:** Two idols of Radha and Krishna made of touchstone, which are believed to be about a thousand-year-old, were recovered by Khulna Customs here today.

# The Midnight File

## EU ignores US trade embargo against Iran

**BRUSSELS, May 2:** The European Union will not join in the United States trade and investment embargo on Iran, a spokesman for the EU's executive agency, the Commission, said today.

The position of the union is to maintain a critical dialogue with Iran and leave it to our businessmen to make their decisions on the basis of business or commercial considerations," reports AFP.

## US will grant asylum to Cuban refugees

**WASHINGTON, May 2:** In an abrupt about face, the Clinton administration will allow thousands of Cuban refugees held at the Guantanamo bay to migrate to the United States — something the White House once insisted would never happen. Officials said the new policy would be announced today as part of an agreement with Cuba, reports AP.

# Accord on SAPTA

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nuclear-capable country in the region.

Leghari also called for using the SAARC to help resolve problems among member states, even though discussion of bilateral issues goes against the charter of the 10-year-old organisation.

That, too, appeared directed at India which has rejected outside involvement in the India-Pakistan dispute over the territory of Kashmir.

Our association has not taken off, said Leghari. Economies cannot grow without peace, he said. We cannot wish our troubles away by simply turning a blind eye to our disputes.

Opening the summit, Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao of India avoided contentious issues and called on the seven countries to join the global trend of regional trade systems. "South Asia cannot afford to fall back," he said, adding that the new trade regime should be operational by the end of this year.

In Bangladesh today, 200 demonstrators in Dhaka burned an effigy of Rao in a protest over a longtime dispute over sharing the waters of the Ganges river. It is just one of the dozens of bilateral problems that have prevented closer regional coordination.

Imbalance among the region's economies is another obstacle to the free-trade area. India's economy is so much larger and more prosperous than those of its smaller neighbours that some of them have long resisted opening their markets to Indian exports.

But during yesterday's meeting, India offered its market as a lure and led the way in offering tariff reductions.

India offered 106 items for duty concessions, three times more than offered by Pakistan. The Times said political

animosity, rather than a lack of any economic potential, was holding South Asian intra-regional trade to 3.0 billion US dollars.

Smaller states are worried by India's imposing presence. India is 50 times the size of Sri Lanka, 1,000 times richer than Bhutan and has 4,000 times as many people as the Maldives.

Diplomats said progress on the trading arrangements would depend on Pakistan's attitude to it.

The agreement, which aims to increase South Asia's annual trade, must be ratified by the nations' parliaments before it can be implemented.

## Rohingyas

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who had fled to Bangladesh from Myanmar in 1991 and 1992, were registered with the authorities here. The refugees, who had crossed into Bangladesh territory to escape persecution by the Burmese military, were sheltered in 20 makeshift camps in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts.

With the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), repatriation of the refugees began in September 1992 and until Sunday's head count, 190713 returned home.

Earlier, it was reported that several thousand refugees, who were unwilling to go back to Myanmar, had left the camps and mingled with the local people. Such reports prompted the authorities to go for the head count to ascertain the actual number of remaining refugees.

## Companies profits

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omended that it be placed before the cabinet, according to the source.

As Parliament is not in session, the President is expected to promulgate an ordinance to this effect after the Cabinet approves it.

## DU Senate polls

**By Staff Correspondent**

The second phase of the 25 registered graduates' election to the Dhaka University Senate will be held on the campus this morning.

The elections will be held at the Teachers'-Students Centre (TSC) from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

The first phase of the polls was held in 12 centres outside Dhaka Sunday last.

As many as 6336 registered graduates from across the country will elect their representatives to the DU Senate, the highest decision making body of the university.

## CEC firm

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turned to his old job. The new CEC took oath on April 27.

The appointment of Justice Sadeque came under criticism from the Opposition. Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina rejected his appointment.

When his attention was drawn to this the new CEC said, "I have no comment. It is a political matter. I should remain neutral."

He, however, said that he had no hand in his own appointment. There is no constitutional compulsion to consult the Opposition in appointing CEC," he added.

**ন্যাশনাল লাইফ-এর ১০ বছর পূর্তি**

**দেশের বেসরকারী বীমা জগতে**  
**ন্যাশনাল লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স**  
**কোম্পানী লিঃ এখন একটি**  
**বলিষ্ঠ নাম**

- ন্যাশনাল লাইফ অর্থনৈতিক ক্ষেত্রে ও জনসেবায় এখিল-১৫-এ দশ বছরে পদার্পন করেছে
- ইতোমধ্যে আমাদের লাইফ ফান্ড ১২ কোটি টাকা ছাড়িয়ে গেছে
- আমাদের জীবন বীমা তহবিল (লাইফ ফান্ড) আপনার আর্থিক নিরাপত্তার নিরন্তরযোগ্য নিশ্চিত আস্থার মানদণ্ড
- একটি পলিসি নিয়ে আমাদের অব্যাহত অক্ষয়তায় আপনিও শরিক হোন

**১০ বছর পূর্তি উপলক্ষে সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ সকলকে জানাই শুভেচ্ছা**

**ন্যাশনাল লাইফ ইনস্যুরেন্স কোম্পানী লিঃ**  
৭৯, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা।