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### DSE MARKET

DSE price index	822.49 (+0.81%)
Market capital Tk	5583.15 cr
Transactions in volume	185473
Transactions in value	Tk 3.89 cr

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### Talbott greets Habibur Rahman

Acting US Secretary of State Strobe Talbott has greeted Muhammad Habibur Rahman on his appointment as the Chief Adviser of the caretaker government. In a message to the Chief Adviser, Talbott hoped that his appointment is the first step in smooth transition towards an elected government which will work for the development and prosperity of the country. reports UNB.

### SC goes on vacation today

By SC Correspondent  
Both the Divisions of the Supreme Court are going on vacation today and will report on May 5. During the vacation, the Chamber of the Appellate Division and vacation benches of the High Court Division will function.

### Jamaat rally in city today

Jamaat-e-Islami will hold a public meeting this afternoon at Manik Mia Avenue. Party chief Prof Golam Azam will address the rally. reports BSS.

### 500 BNP men resign in Pabna

PABNA, Apr 18: Some 500 BNP leaders and workers in Faridpur thana of the district resigned today protesting what they said the undemocratic practice within the party. M N Yusuf, the BNP thana unit secretary, at a press conference said that they quit the party for giving shelter to the armed terrorists and lack of democracy within the party. reports UNB.

## 21-point draft election manifesto AL for 'war' against corruption, independence of judiciary



Awami League leaders observed one minute's silence in remembrance of those killed during the recent movement at the beginning of the party's extended meeting at the Engineers' Institution in the city yesterday. — Star photo

By Staff Correspondent

The Awami League will launch a 'war' against corruption, introduce agricultural subsidy and go for independence of the judiciary and 'depoliticisation' of the administration.

This was contained in a 21-point draft election manifesto of the party.  
AL chief Sheikh Hasina presented the draft manifesto before over 1,500 party delegates from across the country at an extended meeting of the party at the auditorium of Engineers' Institution in the city yesterday. The manifesto covered various issues of national and political importance ranging from law and order to agricultural development, from independence of the judiciary to transparency of the administration and from foreign policy to industrial development.

In her 75-minute inaugural speech, the AL president also touched on issues like updating voters' list, proving allegations of corruption against those in the immediate past government and expediting the illegal arms recovery drive.

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## 94 killed as Israel shells refugee camp in Lebanon

TYRE (Lebanon), Apr 18: At least 94 people were killed by the Israeli shelling of a UN refugee compound today in South Lebanon, hospital officials said.

"We have admitted 36 bodies," doctor Ali Khazem at Najem hospital told AFP.

Doctor Mohammad Basma, at Jabal Aamel Hospital, said that another 58 bodies had been transported to his facility. The two hospitals also took in 69 injured from the refugee compound, located at a UN peacekeeping base in the village of CANA, 10 kilometers south of Tyre.

AP adds: "It's a massacre," Goksel, spokesman for the 4,500-strong UN Interim Force in Lebanon, told The Associated Press. "The numbers are frightening."

It was not clear whether any of the 70 Fijian peacekeepers at the base were among the casualties. But officers in the base told Robert Fisk, correspondent of London's Independent newspaper, that at least 40 civilian refugees who fled an 8-day-old Israeli air and artillery blitz against Hezbollah guerrillas were dead.

"Dozens of refugees lay on the ground in pools of blood," said Fisk, who arrived at the base shortly after the shelling. "Bits of human bodies are everywhere."

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### 60 killed in Indian train accident

NEW DELHI, Apr 18: Sixty people were killed and more than 100 injured when a passenger train collided with a stationary goods train in northern India today, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said. reports Reuter.

The accident took place near the town of Gorakhpur.

### Next poll is crucial for party, says Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina has asked her party's grassroots level leaders to keep in mind that the coming election is very important for the party and cautioned that if the party loses its existence would be at stake.

The AL president warned of "drastic and immediate action" against anyone violating party discipline. She asked party members to remain vigilant against what she said, "conspiracies against party interests."

"Conspiracies are being hatched not always from outside the party but sometimes from inside the party. So, keep yourselves vigilant," Hasina told party leaders at the concluding session of the extended meeting of the party last night at the auditorium of the Engineers' Institution.

She also directed the party's grassroots level leaders to start a door-to-door vote soliciting campaign in their respective areas.

"Don't waste your time pursuing..."

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## Bank loan defaulters: EC for fresh ordn

By Staff Correspondent

The Election Commission (EC) is likely to seek fresh promulgation of the ordinance debarbing bank loan defaulters from participating in the general elections tomorrow, officials here said.

EC officials said that they have finalised the proposal seeking fresh promulgation of the ordinance. After approval by the head of the caretaker government, it would then be forwarded to the President.

The ordinance debarbing bank loan defaulters from participating in the elections was first promulgated just before the February 15 parliamentary elections but it became ineffective as the short-lived sixth Parliament could not pass it as an Act.

Major changes in the original ordinance is unlikely during the fresh promulgation.

"We did not make any major changes in the proposal," a top EC official said adding that anyone barred under the ordinance to participate in the last parliamentary elections would be again identified as defaulters under the fresh proposal.

"We had a month's time expiring on Saturday to seek the promulgation of the ordinance," he said.

The EC also plans to seek re-promulgation of the ordinance regarding voters' identity (ID) cards soon. The ordinance regarding voters' ID cards became ineffective as it was not passed by the sixth parliament.

### Nurullah withdraws resignation

President Abdur Rahman Biswas accepted the letter of withdrawal of resignation of Attorney General Mohammad Nurullah on Wednesday. reports UNB.

Earlier, Nurullah withdrew his letter of resignation from the office of the Attorney General and prayed to the President for its acceptance. An official announcement said yesterday.

## 22 more govt officials transferred

The Government yesterday transferred and posted 13 officials as deputy secretaries, one as cultural adviser and eight as directors in different ministries and divisions. reports BSS.

The government has transferred Dhaka District Deputy Commissioner A H M Abul Kashem to the Economic Relations Division, Kishoreganj Deputy Commissioner Md. Fazlul Huq to the Ministry of Industries, Faridpur Deputy Commissioner A F M Abdul Huq Chowdhury to the finance division, Rajbari Deputy Commissioner A F M Matiar Rahman to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Chittagong Deputy Commissioner Md. Katebur Rahman to the Ministry of Industries, Cox's Bazar Deputy Commissioner Sheikh Mahabbat Ullah to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Sylhet Deputy Commissioner Md. Afzal Hossain to the Establishment Ministry, Sirajganj Deputy Commissioner Syed Abdul Malek to the Ministry of Commerce, Nilphamari Deputy Commissioner Faiz Ahmed to the local government division, Nawabganj Deputy Commissioner Md. Golam Mawla Mazumder to the Ministry of Establishment, Rajshahi District Deputy Commissioner Md. Abdul Malek to the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, Deputy Secretary of the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry Nasiruddin to the Ministry of Establishment, Chandpur Deputy Commissioner Md. Golam Kibria as Deputy Secretary in the Cabinet Division and Jhenidah Deputy Secretary in the

See Page 12 col 8

## ESCAP survey suggests measures to stabilise macroeconomy

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh needs to enhance its competitiveness, increase the level of investment and its efficiency, improve human resources, and address its poverty problem to maintain a favourable macroeconomic environment, says the Economic and Social Survey on Asia and Pacific, 1996.

The stabilisation programme implemented in the early 1990s has yielded positive results and these measures are necessary to achieve sustained economic development, the survey published by ESCAP observed.

About the need to enhance the competitiveness, ESCAP said, "A more concerted effort to deregulate and liberalise domestic markets and international trade is expected to expose local producers to greater competition and thereby improve efficiency and competitiveness."

investment should be to control and improve management of expenditure programmes, enhance revenue through fiscal and tax reforms and reduce the drain on public resources through privatisation of state-owned enterprises.

For private investment, ESCAP said, the aims should be to provide transparent

policies, improve legal and institutional framework, and provide regulatory, administrative and legal support services as required.

About the role of the government in helping private investment, the survey said the government should be actively involved in imparting skills and training, infrastructure development, information dissemination, technology transfer and research.

ESCAP saw labour-intensive activities as the major intervention to employment generation. Export expansion and labour market reforms will also contribute to that end, the survey said.

It said health care for the rural population, enhancing support for population control and family planning, safe drinking water and sanitation and providing universal primary education are needed for human resource development.

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### Unesco office in Dhaka

By Staff Correspondent

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) has opened an office in Bangladesh.

Ansar Ali Khan, the Unesco Representative in Dhaka, has been appointed Director of the office, which became operational recently.

A Unesco release said that

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### Eight projects involving Tk 541cr approved

The executive committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) yesterday approved eight projects involving Taka 541 crore, including project assistance of Taka 249 crore, reports BSS.

Chief Adviser Muhammad Habibur Rahman presided over the meeting held at the cabinet room.

Advisers in-charge of different ministries Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, Professor Muhammad Yunus, Professor M Shamsul Huq, Shegusta Bakht Chowdhury, A Z M Nasiruddin, Dr Wahiduddin Mahmood, Syed Mansur Elahi and Dr Jamilur Reza Chowdhury were present at the meeting.

Official sources said Taka 26 crore and 80 lakh have been allocated for post flood primary education rehabilitation and Taka 131 crore and 19 lakh for construction and rehabilitation of school buildings.

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### Rewards for tips on illegal arms

The government will reward the people who will give correct tips for recovering the illegal arms and ammunition to make the current countrywide illegal arms hunt a success, reports UNB.

According to an official announcement yesterday, the people who will give secret information will get financial rewards at the rates given below: Tk 15,000 for each LMG (foreign); Tk 10,000 for each SMG (foreign); Tk 6,000 for each rifle (foreign); Tk 5,000 for each revolver/pistol (foreign); Tk 3,000 for each gun/shot gun (foreign); Tk 200 for each pigeon gun and local made firearms; Tk five for each live bullet and Tk 100 for each large sized powerful bomb.

### Taka devalued again

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) yesterday devalued the Taka by another 25 paise against the US dollar, effective from Saturday next.

With the new downward adjustment of the Taka, the central bank buying rate now stands at Taka 41.65 instead of the previous Taka 41.40. The bank's selling rate to the authorised banks is now at Taka 41.90.

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### Caretaker govt biased: Salam Talukdar

The BNP charged the caretaker government with carrying out 'biased activities' that were destabilising the whole situation and undermining its objective, reports UNB.

The blame came from the extended meeting of the BNP national executive committee at the Institute of Engineers on Wednesday.

Briefing newsmen on the decisions of the meeting at the party central office yesterday evening, party Secretary General Abdul Salam Talukdar said the caretaker government had breached its avowed neutrality in its deeds.

To underpin his observation, he listed some activities including mass transfer of officials and employees, "harassment" of BNP leaders and workers in the name of arms recovery, government's silence in apprehending armed terrorists and transfer of the officials who participated in the political programmes during the so-called noncooperation movement to their places of choice.

Probably, all this is being done to appease a particular party," he observed.

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### Body of Tejgaon Polytech JCD leader found

By Staff Correspondent

Police yesterday recovered the decomposed body of a student of Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute from a house in South Begun Bari under Tejgaon thana.

The victim was identified as Mizanur Rahman Mizan 24, a third year student in the electronics department of Tejgaon Polytechnic Institute and convener of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra

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### Season's first shower

By Staff Correspondent

The city experienced the season's first shower yesterday evening.

The welcome shower, preceded by a brief storm, came as a relief to the city dwellers after weeks of searing heat.

Met office had earlier forecast a dry weather until 6 pm yesterday, but did not mention any storm.

Traffic on the city streets became thin as the rains started at about 6 pm and continued intermittently for about an hour.

### SA-India final at Sharjah today

Sports Reporter

South Africans take on India in the final of the Pepsi Cup cricket tournament at the desert venue of Sharjah today.

The 50-overs match begins at 10:30 am BST. Star Sports will telecast the match live.

South African reached the final by winning twice each against Pakistan and India in their first appearance at Sharjah. India edged out Pakistan on a better run-rate after winning once and losing the other against their subcontinental rivals.

South Africa will be led by Hanse Cronje while India will be skippered by Mohammad Azharuddin.