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## Share scam 4 more cases transferred to Dist Judge's court

**By Court Correspondent**  
The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka, yesterday transferred to the District and Sessions Judge's Court four out of 15 cases lodged against listed company directors and stock brokers, including the Chairman of Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE), accused of fraud in tailoring share prices during the bull run last year.  
He also directed 13 accused, including DSE Chairman Imtiyaz Hossain, Aziz Mohammad Bhai of Olympic Industries and Ms Runa Alam of SES Company, to surrender to the judges court and obtain bail from there within seven days.  
They later went to the judge's court and were granted bail till June 1.  
Advocate Serajul Huq and  
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## Rafiqul Haque granted bail in criminal case

**By SC Correspondent**  
Former Attorney General Barrister Rafique-ul Haque was granted direct bail by the High Court in a criminal case yesterday.  
Earlier on May 7 the Court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka upon a complaint case issued warrant of arrest against Barrister Rafique-ul Haque.  
The division bench of the HC comprising Justice M A Karim and Justice Ali Asgar Khan passed the bail order. The government could not oppose the bail as the petition had been moved before the office of the Attorney General received the notice from the Solicitor's office.  
Barrister Rafique-ul Haque was sitting in the front bench of the Court room while senior Advocate Mahmudul Islam moved for him.  
It was stated in the petition that one Dolan of Purana Zura, Demra, Dhaka on May 7 filed complaint Case No -1445/97 under Section 419/ See Page 12 Col 7

## Govt to form HR commission to ensure rule of law: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government would take immediate steps to make sure that the people get justice speedily and protection of law as guaranteed by the Constitution, reports UNB.  
She said it would appoint 'Ombudsman' and constitute a National Human Rights Commission to ensure the rule of law in the country.  
"We want to establish the rule of law and ensure protection of law for the people at See Page 12 Col 4

## Businessman stabbed in city

**By Staff Correspondent**  
Muggers stabbed a businessman when he was returning to his house at Dhania road in the city around midnight Wednesday.  
Kamrul Ahsan, 32, was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital with serious injuries in his hands and legs.  
Later, some local people caught one of the muggers.  
Following the attack on Kamrul, police arrested two persons and recovered some wrist watches from them early yesterday.

## Inside Today

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## Mild tremor shakes country 30 injured, buildings damaged in Sylhet

**By Staff Correspondent**  
A mild tremor shook the capital and other parts of the country yesterday morning. There was no report of any major damage or casualty. However, 30 people were injured in Sylhet.  
The quake lasted 34 seconds, beginning at 08:53:57 hrs and ending at 08:54:31 hrs.  
The Met Office said that the tremor rocked Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Sylhet, Moulvibazar and Barisal districts.  
The distance of the epicentre, the Met Office said, was 326 kilometre from Chittagong. The Met Office, however, could not locate the direction and area as, it said, "It's not possible to locate it with a single geophysical observatory at Ambagan in Chittagong."  
It said that it could not measure the exact intensity of the tremor as the Richter scale at the Ambagan Observatory had been out of order.  
People in the affected districts, particularly inmates of pucca buildings, turned panicky during the tremor which shook furniture and other household items. People in some areas also came out of their homes.  
Our Staff Correspondent in Sylhet says, at least 30 people were injured in the tremor in the district. Most of the injured stumbled on the stairs when they tried to get out of their houses. Two persons who jumped from a two storied building in Sylhet town and sustained injuries had been admitted into the Osmani Medical College Hospital.  
Cracks developed in many buildings in Sylhet town and Kanaighat, Jakiganj, Beani-bazar, Golapganj, Biswanath and Balaganj thanas.  
Our Staff Correspondent from Chittagong says, the earthquake lasted 34 seconds from 8:53:57 seconds.

## JS standing bodies won't be increased

**By Nurul Kabir**  
The ruling Awami League yesterday staged a further departure from the commitment it had made earlier regarding the parliamentary standing committee on various ministries by refusing to increase the numbers from 10 to 12.  
The party had officially agreed to increase the number of committees to 12, a few months back.  
In protest against the fresh AL move the BNP gave a note of dissent at the meeting of the Committee on Jatiya Sangsad Rules of Procedure yesterday.  
This is the second departure of the AL on the composition of standing committees on ministries. Earlier in October last, the AL members at a meeting of the Standing body on the JS Rules of Procedure decided that the membership of the standing bodies on ministries would be distributed among the parliamentary parties and groups in proportion to their respective parliamentary strength. But after a few days they refused to honour the decision.  
However, yesterday's departure of the ruling party was evident when its members at a meeting of the Standing Committee on JS Rules of Procedure decided that the size of the 10-member standing bodies would remain unchanged.  
Since the formation of the AL government in June last year, senior leaders of the party have repeatedly been telling people that the number of committee members would be increased from 10 to 12. The three-member sub-committee on JS Rules of Procedure suggested a few months back that with the increase of parliament members from 300 to 330, the members of standing bodies on ministries should also be raised proportionately.  
The sub-committee comprising two AL members including the Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister, and  
See Page 12 Col 1



## Sonia joins Congress

**NEW DELHI, May 8:** Sonia Gandhi, widow of slain prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, has enrolled herself as the primary member of the Congress Party, report agencies.  
Announcing her entry into politics at a crowded press conference here today, Congress spokesman V N Gadgil said Sonia had become the primary member of the party on March 21.  
Gadgil said Sonia Gandhi's participation in the party would "enthuse, galvanise and See Page 12 Col 6

## IMF official suggests speedy privatisation 'Structural rigidity hindering Dhaka's economic growth'

**By Staff Correspondent**  
Continued privatisation, financial sector reform and further liberalisation of international trade regulations in Bangladesh may attract greater financial assistance under the IMF's Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) programme.  
IMF Asia-Pacific senior advisor Margaret R Kelly said this at a press briefing at the Bangladesh Bank premises yesterday.  
She said structural rigidity was hindering the country's economic growth and poverty alleviation initiatives.  
Kelly, along with her eight-member team, discussed the issues with government officials between April 26 and May 8.  
IMF resident representative Jan Bove, and Asia-Pacific Department advisor Kanitta Meesook were also present at the press briefing.  
Kelly said public sector jute and textile mills were suffering huge losses. "Someone has to pay for the losses," she said. Emphasising the ongoing privatisation of flourishing state-owned enterprises, she said the IMF would not suggest closure of these. She also stressed the need for domestic resource mobilisation to increase investment.  
"Closing the enterprises concerned is simply not viable," she said, adding that effective management was needed to run them profitably.  
Pointing out Bangladesh's good agricultural harvest this year, Kelly said: "You now need to sustain this growth." She also hailed the country's macro-economic stability, reflected in low inflation, adequate international reserves and the competitive devaluation of local currency.  
Criticising the government's funding of banks and other losing concerns, she said that this money would have been better spent on development and poverty reduction.  
Referring to the IMF's annual discussion among its 190-member countries, Kelly said the discussions focused on continued efforts to maintain macro-economic stability through such things as adequate foreign exchange reserves, balancing the budget and low inflation.  
She said Bangladesh's foreign exchange reserves now stood between 1.8 and 2 billion US dollars and were only sufficient to pay three months' import bills. The IMF official said the value of Taka against dollar was fairly appropriate although  
See Page 12 Col 7



Margaret R Kelly

## British trade official says Investment climate in Bangladesh positive

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The United Kingdom is coming forward with largescale investments in the country's power, infrastructure and telecommunication sectors, a senior UK Trade Development official said in the city yesterday.  
"In fact, some of the incentives offered by the Bangladesh government are very lucrative for investment and are unique," said Director for Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia at the UK Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) Nick McInnes at a press conference.  
The investment environment in Bangladesh has become very positive," he added.  
Nick McInnes is now on a two-day visit to Dhaka. "My visit also reinforces the commitment of the British government in intensifying trade and investment relationship between the two countries," he said.  
He pointed out that the visits of former Prime Minister John

## Gold smuggling CAAB employee on 3-day remand

**By Staff Correspondent**  
An employee of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), arrested with gold bars worth about Tk 57 lakh in his possession on Wednesday, has been placed on remand for three days.  
Mofazzal Hossain Nannu, a first-aid crew of the fire service wing of CAAB, was produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court yesterday afternoon. The court granted three days' remand for further interrogation, police said.  
The customs surveillance team at Zia International Airport (ZIA) held the CAAB employee when he arrived in Dhaka by a Dubai-Chittagong-Dhaka flight at about 12:30 pm Wednesday. On suspicion, the customs officials searched Mofazzal's body and found 118 gold bars, each weighing 10 tolas in a specially-designed belt.  
Mofazzal, who was coming from Chittagong, told the customs officials that he had taken the gold bars from an overseas passenger travelling in the  
See Page 12 Col 4

## Banks asked not to open LCs without TIN certificate

**Special Correspondent**  
Bangladesh Bank (BB) has asked all scheduled banks not to open any letter of credit (LC) unless the importers furnish their Tax Import Number (TIN) certificate.  
In a circular issued recently, the BB said all scheduled banks must have the up-to-date TIN certificate before opening LC by importers. This must be strictly adhered to, the circular added.  
Tax officials said the move was taken to tighten tax evasion tactics used by certain importers, who often import goods showing a different address while providing another address during the opening of LC.  
Such practices makes it difficult to trace the importers after they import goods, and collect taxes, they said.

## 3000 expelled on first day of HSC exams

Some 3,000 examinees were expelled for adopting unfair means on the first day as the Higher Secondary Certificate examinations began across the country yesterday amidst tight security, reports UNB.  
The expulsions include Dhaka Board 1,082, Rajshahi Board 979, Comilla Board 420, Jessore Board 317 and Chittagong Board 134.  
A total of 7,22,215 candidates were scheduled to appear at this year's HSC examinations in 945 centres under five education boards, including five abroad.  
Alim, Fazil and Kamil examinations under the Madrasah Education Board also began simultaneously with the combined Higher Secondary Certificate exams under the five general education boards of the country.  
During the first paper English examination yesterday, clashes between police and unruly people took place in different places, including Barisal, Sirajganj and Feni.  
At least 20 people, including 12 police personnel and Feni College principal Kazi Lutful Haq, were injured in a clash that occurred at the college centre at about 11 am.  
This year, for the second time, the HSC examination is being held with common sets of question papers under the education boards of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Jessore, Comilla and Chittagong.  
Available districtwise break-up of number of expelled examinees: Dhaka-8, Gazipur-114, Manikganj-49, Tangail-211, Mymensingh-54, Jamalpur-138, Kishoreganj-109, Netrakona-228, Faridpur-66, Rajbari-19, Shariatpur-16, Narsingdi-32, Sherpur-40, Jessore-48, Narail-12, Magura-18, Jhenidah-11, Kushtia-88, Chuadanga-1, Meherpur-10, Khulna-17, Barisal-6, Bhola-9, Pirojpur-2, Jhalakati-3, Barisal-6.  
See Page 12 Col 3



An HSC examinee at a city centre fainted after getting question paper on the first day of the examination yesterday. — Star photo

## Loadshedding was 423 mw yesterday

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The country suffered a loadshedding of 423 mw yesterday, according to official sources.  
During the day, the loadshedding recorded in the Dhaka zone was 112 mw, followed by 79 mw in Khulna zone, 75 mw in Rajshahi zone, 43 mw in Comilla zone, 29 mw in Mymensingh zone and 26 mw in Sylhet zone.  
Following the explosion of a transformer of a gas turbine at the Ashuganj Power Station last Saturday, the country has been facing increasing amount  
See Page 12 Col 6

## CEC must resign, says Mannan Bhuiyan

**By Staff Correspondent**  
BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, has alleged that after coming to power through a rigged election the present government is now trying to indicate the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in the hope of rigging all future elections.  
"Except the ruling Awami League, all other parties had complained of rigging in the last general election and the See Page 12 Col 4

## Another 2 die in N'ganj 7 killed in Khulna road accident

**By Staff Correspondent**  
At least nine people died and 33 others injured in two road accidents in Khulna and Narayanganj on Wednesday night and yesterday.  
Our Khulna Correspondent says, at least seven people were killed and 30 others injured when a truck with some forty people on board skidded off the road at Kolya under Batiaghata thana Wednesday night.  
Police said five died on the spot. They were yet to be identified. Two others succumbed to injuries at the KMCH at noon yesterday. They are: Noor Mohammad, 28, and Kawsar, 25.  
According to eye witnesses and police, the truck bound for Dumuria overturned after it hit against an under-construction culvert at Kolya.  
The driver is among the dead.  
The injured were admitted to the Khulna Medical College Hospital.  
Hospital sources said, the conditions of 16 out of the 30 injured are critical as no operation was possible due to loadshedding.  
Our Correspondent from Narayanganj adds: At least two persons, including a senior assistant judge, were killed and three others injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Munshiganj road near Narayanganj town yesterday afternoon.  
Nurul Alam, 40, senior assistant judge of Munshiganj District Court, and an unidentified male aged around 30 died on the spot, sources at See Page 12 Col 3

## FM leaves for Maldives

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad left Dhaka yesterday for Maldives to attend the meeting of the foreign ministers of the seven South Asian countries prior to the summit of their leaders.  
Talking to BSS before departure, he said that the foreign ministers under the banner of SAARC Council of Ministers will discuss issues in preparations for the summit meeting.  
The meeting of the council of ministers will be held on May 9 and 10.

## ALCWC body likely to be announced next week

**Star Report**  
The composition of a full-fledged Awami League Central Working Committee (ALCWC) is likely to be announced after the return of Prime Minister and party President Sheikh Hasina from the Maldives next week, party sources said.  
Sheikh Hasina is scheduled to leave Dhaka for Male on Sunday to attend the three-day SAARC summit beginning on May 12.  
Of the 67-member ALCWC for 1997-2000, the names of three — Sheikh Hasina (President), Zillur Rahman (General Secretary) and Mohammad Nasim (Organising Secretary) — were announced on Wednesday, the concluding day of the party's 15th national council.  
As per provisions of party constitution, a full-fledged See Page 12 Col 1

## Meeting to resolve stalemate at Chittagong port tomorrow

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The ministry of port and shipping is scheduled to hold an emergency meeting with the Chittagong Port advisory committee, the Port Users' Forum and the CBA leaders tomorrow to resolve the stalemate over the use of private equipment inside the port.  
The meeting is being organised against the backdrop of an announcement by the Port Users' Forum of starting a phase-wise boycott programme from May 11.  
Shipping Minister A S M Abdur Rab will preside over the meeting to be held at the ministry in the morning.  
Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, the minister said that he was hopeful that the boycott programme would be withdrawn shortly.

## Clash at CU One police official transferred, 2 suspended

**From Staff Correspondent**  
CHITTAGONG, May 8: One police official has been transferred while one sub-inspector and a constable have been suspended in connection with the May 5 incidents at Chittagong University, official sources said.  
The additional superintendent of police (Chittagong-north) has been posted as the additional SP of south zone of Chittagong. He has been replaced by the additional SP of south zone.  
On May 5, a clash between the supporters of BCL and Shibir took place on the campus, later leading to a pitched battle between police and students.  
Meanwhile, the BCL today relaxed the programme of barricade on the campus because of the admission test.

## 36 Manipuris deny involvement in insurgency

**From Staff Correspondent**  
SYLHET, May 8: All 38 persons, 36 of them Indian nationals, have denied their involvement with any of the insurgent groups in India during interrogation by police here.  
However, a police official said, they might be involved with the People's Liberation Army of Manipur except one Bangladeshi national whom he described as innocent.  
Thirty-eight Manipuris including 36 Indians were arrested by the BDR from the Balaghat border of Gowainghat on April 20. The Indians were arrested for entering Bangladesh illegally while the two Bangladeshi Manipuris were caught on a charge of helping the Indians.

## BMA polls held: Counting of votes continues

**By Staff Correspondent**  
The biennial elections of the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) were held peacefully yesterday.  
Some 14,000 doctors cast their votes at the 66 centres across the country, including one in the capital, from 9 am to 5 pm.  
The counting of some 4400 votes cast in the city centre at the BMA headquarters started at about 11 pm.  
The chief of the five-member election commission, Dr Abdur Rab Bhuiyan told The Daily Star that he did not receive any complaint of irregularities or reports of disturbance from anywhere. The final result is not likely before noon today, said another member of the commission.

## Mysterious death of fish in Shitalakhya

**By Morshed Ali Khan and Ehsanul Haque**  
A large number of fish died and were floating over a four-kilometre stretch of the river Shitalakhya between Nabiganj and Sonakanda, near Narayanganj town.  
The Fisheries Department attributed this to a number of possible causes including industrial pollution.  
All day Wednesday local people gathered along the river, collecting thousands of dead or dying fish.  
Fisheries Department, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) and district administration officials said there were several possible causes for the deaths.  
But Department of Environment (DOE) officials in Dhaka only said that they would soon send a team to test the water of the polluted river.  
The Fisheries Department officials said it was possible that there had been an accumulation of toxic wastes which had been dumped into the river over the course of several years by dye factories. The waste was slowly killing aquatic weeds reducing oxygen levels in the water and eventually suffocating the fish, they added.  
Alternatively, they said factory workers may have dumped a large quantity of these poisons early Wednesday morning. The low tide at the time quickly spread the lethal waste downstream killing all marine life in its path.  
The Shitalakhya meets the rivers Buriganga and Meghna just a few kilometres downstream.  
Local fishermen, boatmen and residents along the river said they believed the pollution was caused by industrial waste from the Ghorashal Fertilizer Factory, about ten kilometres upstream. When contacted, a top official of the factory said it was now closed for maintenance.  
When asked if the factory had dumped any waste into the river recently, he replied, "We have not done so recently but it is a standard practice when the factory is operating."  
District Fisheries Officer Saiduddin Sarkar said the main species killed by the spillage were bottom feeders such as eels, shrimps, bullheads, moles, kachki, cheua, and jhatka. He said it was now breeding season for these fish and feared that the pollution might have wiped out the fry altogether.  
"If you go upstream you will find hundreds of dye factories, and other industries which currently have no option but to dump their industrial wastes into the river," Sarkar said. The dye factories are estimated to number around 200 — are clustered along the river banks over an area of about four kilometres.  
See Page 12 Col 8