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# The Daily Star

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## Share scam cases Three revision petitions sent to HC for quashment

By Court Correspondent

The District and Sessions Judge's Court, Dhaka yesterday sent the three revision petitions, filed by five top executives of three companies accused in the share market scam cases, to the High Court for quashment of the proceedings saying that the charges were brought against the accused improperly.

The revision petitions were filed by Sohail F Rahman and Salman F Rahman, AB Siddique Rahman and DH Khan of Beximco and Shine Fukur Holdings and Shamsuddoha of Doha Securities, all accused in the share market scam cases.

District and Sessions Judge Kazi Golam Rasul forwarded the petitions to the High Court Division with recommendations for quashing the cases filed by Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

The revision petitions were filed after Abdur Rashid Khan, Executive Director of SEC,

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## Barracks for the homeless to be built in coastal areas

A high-level meeting here yesterday decided to construct barracks — like houses for landless and homeless people on khas land in the coastal areas, flood-prone areas and the areas affected by river erosion, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will supervise this programme to be implemented in phases, official sources said.

The LGRO and Cooperatives Ministry and Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries

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## BNP meets today to decide on by-election

By Staff Correspondent

The standing committee of the BNP is scheduled to meet this evening to discuss, among other issues, the June 30 by-election in the Manikganj-3 Jatiya Sangsad constituency, Ahmed Nazir, press secretary to BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia said last night.

The meeting, to be held with Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair at her Minto Road official residence, is expected to decide whether the BNP will contest the by-poll or not.

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## Indian HC calls on Khaleda

Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Dev Mukherjee paid a courtesy call on BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia at her cantonment residence yesterday evening, reports UNB.

They discussed matters relating to mutual interest of the two countries, said a press release.

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan was present on the occasion.

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## Beximco, Islam groups took over Tk 1100 cr thru 'improper means'

# EBL urges all banks not to issue fresh loans to 3 defaulting cos

By Inam Ahmed

Eastern Bank Ltd (EBL) has sent a warning letter to all commercial banks of the country saying that three companies — Beximco, Solitech and Patuakhali Foods Ltd — owe to it more than Tk 100 crore in defaulted loans.

The letter dated April 16 this year also requested all banks to stop giving any loans to these companies without prior clearance of the EBL in accordance with the amended Banking Company Act.

It also attached a list of 33 companies affiliated with these three organisations.

Meanwhile, it has been revealed that the two big conglomerates of the country — Beximco Group and Islam Group — have taken more than Tk 1100 crore from the banks mostly through 'improper

means'. EBL, formerly the Bank of Commerce and Credit International (BCCI), also asked a foreign bank to stop its funding of Beximco and a copy of the letter was forwarded to the Bangladesh Bank.

Beximco is owned by Sohail F Rahman and Salman F Rahman, and Patuakhali Foods is a subsidiary of Beximco. Solitech was also with Beximco Group until they split in 1990. EBL's letter shows Salman Rahman as its director.

When asked, EBL officials said since the issue remains unsettled with EBL, Salman Rahman still has to shoulder the liability of Solitech.

The EBL letter said, "Despite repeated requests, the principal borrowers and the guarantors have failed to pay off the Bank's

dues. Pursuant to the spirit of the Bangladesh Bank Circular Letter and the interest of the Bank and its depositor, we would request and advise you not to accommodate any credit facility whatsoever to the above borrowers and the guarantors and the shareholders, directors and the sister concerns and allied organisations where they have direct and indirect interest, without prior written clearance of the Bank. We have already initiated legal proceedings against all the borrowers and guarantors."

It further said, "Your cooperation and assistance is required more particularly in the interest of Bangladesh economy and to safeguard banking institutions from the default loan culture."

Beximco Group has taken

more than Tk 644 crore in loans from several commercial banks, latest Bangladesh Bank figures revealed. Islam Group has taken over Tk 460 cr from different banks. A large portion of this money was gained through improper practices.

On the other hand, Islam Group also took a large amount of money from IFIC and Uttara banks through improper means. According to Bangladesh Bank figures, Islam Group had taken Tk 232 cr from IFIC against 333 accounts and Tk 53 cr from Uttara Bank, which it finally owned after the central bank unearthed the fictitious accounts.

A top Bangladesh Bank official said, "These two Groups alone have put many financial institutions in dire straits."

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## Sectt employees defy ban, protest new office timings

By Staff Correspondent

Several hundred government employees defied the ban on demonstrations inside the Secretariat, protesting the new office hours which became effective yesterday.

A large number of employees, including junior officers, deserted their offices in the late afternoon.

Those who stayed were seen either discussing the day's events or enjoying a cat nap. The employees who belong to the personal staff of ministers

## 10 more buses for Sectt staff

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the concerned authorities to provide 10 more buses for transportation of the employees of the Bangladesh Secretariat, official sources said, reports BSS.

The additional buses will be pressed into service within the next two days, the sources said.

or top official were staying after 2:30 pm.

At least half of the employees left after a noisy demonstration following a rally where their leaders vowed that they would continue to defy the new timing and follow the old one, according to sources monitoring the situation.

Employees' leaders also threatened to shut the gates of the Secretariat if the authorities failed to announce the pay commission report for public servants and implement it by June. "We should get the new salary scale with our pay packet on July 1," Shah Alam, a leader of the employees, told cheering supporters at the rally as police looked on.

The employees' leaders also demanded withdrawal of restrictions on gatherings and demonstrations which, they vowed, would take place everyday until their demands were met. Presided over by Habibur

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## Two-day holiday given to handicap nation: Khaleda

Opposition leader Begum Khaleda Zia has accused Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government of making the nation handicapped by announcing two-day weekly holiday, reports UNB.

"As part of evil designs by local and foreign powers, the government has announced two days' holiday instead of one day's", she alleged.

The BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament was addressing a function of destitute-feeding in the city's Islampur area that turned into a public meeting yesterday.

Islampur textile trade association arranged the feeding of the destitute in observance of the 17th death anniversary of President Ziaur Rahman.

"There is no such arrangement even in the neighbouring countries," Begum Zia said of the two-day weekly holiday that became effective from Saturday.

She noted that there was no demand or demonstration by government or non-government officials and employees for such office timing.

The BNP leader blamed the

See Page 12 Col 5

## 3 trade bodies for holiday on Sunday

Three trade bodies urged the government yesterday to review its decision of two-day holiday and declare Sunday as the weekly holiday, reports UNB.

The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) urged the government to declare Sunday as weekly holiday.

In a statement, the MCCI President Samson H Chowdhury said Sunday should be weekly holiday and Saturday as half day and on Friday there must be a break of 90 minutes for Juma prayer.

"The government's abrupt decision on weekly holiday without any discussion with the business community has come as a disappointment to us," he said reacting to the declaration of two-day weekly holiday.

Samson said weekly holi-

See Page 12 Col 4

## Jessore jail revolt: 43 chargesheeted

Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, June 1: Chargesheets against fortyfour out of 47 prisoners were submitted today for mutinying in the Jessore central jail in December last year, according to official sources.

The mutiny was eventually crushed by security forces in a combing operation in which eleven prisoners lost their lives.

The chargesheets against three other prisoners — Jahir Anam alias Bacchu, Rawshan Ali Polash and Nasir alias Nasoa — were dropped as they died from injuries received during police action.

## ZIA's VIP lounge

Privilege of retd secys suspended

Special Correspondent

The government has suspended the privilege of retired secretaries the use of VIP lounge at Zia International Airport (ZIA).

A circular of the Cabinet Division on May 26 said the earlier circular issued by it on April 8 providing the retired secretaries the privilege of using ZIA's VIP lounge has been suspended.

The retired secretaries were put on the 18th category of users to the VIP lounge.

No reason for the new order was given.

## Zafar, Moazzem absent from JP presidium meet

By Staff Correspondent

Five out of the 33 presidium members of the Jatiya Party were not present in the presidium meeting held on Saturday in the city, according to party sources.

Those absent from the meeting were: Kazi Zafar Ahmed, Shah Moazzem Hossain, Begum Roushan Ershad, Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury and Fazle Rabbi.

Begum Roushan Ershad and Fazle Rabbi could not be present as they were out of the country, said a party press release adding Mahmudul Islam could also not attend the meeting because of his daughter's marriage.

The press release, however, did not mention as to why the two senior leaders, Kazi Zafar and Shah Moazzem did not attend.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, who has expressed his confidence in H M Ershad attended the meeting.

## Bank fraud, share manipulation Crime detection unit under home ministry suggested

A high-profile conference on the capital market yesterday suggested a series of recommendations, including a deadline for bourse automation, to revamp the market and overhaul its watchdog body, reports UNB.

The conference on "Revitalising the Capital Market" suggested formation of a special Economic Crime Detection Unit under the Home Ministry to stop stock market manipulation, and commercial and bank frauds.

The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) and the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham) jointly organised the day-long conference at a city hotel.

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria inaugurated the discussion, supporting the idea of

forming an Economic Crime Detection Unit which is in place in many countries like the USA, UK and Thailand.

Former finance ministers Saifur Rahman and Abdul Mal Abdul Muhith, Bombay Stock Exchange President MG Damani, Stock Exchange of Thailand vice-president Krattas Sirikanchan, chiefs of Dhaka and Chittagong bourses, economists, brokers and sponsors of the listing companies took part in the conference.

Briefing newsmen, FBCCI President Yusuf Abdullah Harun said the participants elaborately discussed the experiences of the Bombay and Thailand stock exchanges which had similar violent ups and downs like that of Bangladesh.

At the conference, the partic-

ipants discussed the regulatory aspects of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), operations of the stock exchanges and fiscal policies of the government, and came up with a 16-point recommendation to streamline the stock exchanges and the SEC.

Harun said the recommendations would be sent to the Prime Minister or the Finance Minister for necessary action.

The conference unanimously suggested that the SEC, being the regulatory body, should be independent and its staff given salaries in line with the private sector. It should also accommodate professionals like lawyers and accountants.

In pricing the initial public offerings (IPOs), the present system of SEC setting the prices

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## Govt asked to show cause

# Eviction of Kandupatti inmates illegal: HC

By SC Correspondent

The High Court yesterday issued a rule nisi on the government to show cause within seven days as to why it should not be directed to restore the possession of the buildings and houses at Kandupatti to several hundred sex workers who were evicted on May 11 and 12 in the manner not authorised by law.

The division bench of the HC comprising Justice Md Mozammel Haque and Md Hassan Amin upon a writ petition filed by Sultana Nahar, an advocate of the Supreme Court and a human-rights worker, issued the rule nisi on the secretaries of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Social Welfare and Women and Children's Affairs, Inspector General of Police, Police Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Divisional Commissioner of Dhaka and Officer-in-Charge of Kotwali Police Station, Dhaka.

The court also directed the respondents to show cause as to why they should not be directed to set the law into motion against the persons who took law into their own hands in evicting the inmates of Kandupatti.

The HC further directed the respondents to show cause as to why they should not be directed

to provide to the sex workers full security at Kandupatti so that they may enjoy their fundamental rights as guaranteed under Articles 31 and 40 of the Constitution.

The Court fixed June 11 for hearing of the rule nisi.

It was stated in the writ petition that about six hundred sex workers were evicted by an unruly mob led by the local Word Commissioner Hossain Mollah under the very nose of the law enforcing agencies.

That they were asked under threat by the local goons on

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## Hawkers allowed on footpaths during holidays

The Dhaka City Corporation yesterday allowed the hawkers to run their business on the footpaths and open space of some areas in the city during two-day weekly holidays on humanitarian grounds, a DCC press release said, reports BSS.

The areas are: Motijheel, New Market, Balaka Cinema Hall and the green belt area from the High Court gate to Doel Crossing, it added.

## Malnutrition

# Bangladesh to incur \$23b production loss in 10 yrs

Bangladesh will incur a colossal loss of 22.9 billion US dollars in next ten years due to production shortages caused by large-scale malnutrition, reports UNB.

Of the total, 11.4 billion dollars loss will be due to lost production from protein-energy malnutrition, 6.8 billion due to lost agricultural production from iron-deficiency, and 4.7 billion from iodine-deficiency.

This was disclosed in a UNICEF report which was presented to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at a meeting of the National Nutrition Council yesterday.

The report said Bangladesh would receive close to 7 dollars' benefit in future production for every one dollar in investment in nutrition programme.

It said too many children of Bangladesh are malnourished. The 1992 survey on Child Nutrition found that 92 per cent of all pre-school children had low weight for their age and 90 per cent were stunted by age due to protein-energy malnutrition.

Currently in Bangladesh, about 72 million people nationwide are affected to some degree by iodine-deficiency.

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## Nat'l Food & Nutrition Policy approved Plan for 2279 Kcal per head energy intake by 2000

A National Food and Nutrition Policy was approved yesterday aiming to improve nutritional status of people for good health and boosting productivity of individuals, reports UNB.

The policy is coupled with a National Plan of Action for Nutrition targeted to increasing the per-head energy intake of 2279 Kcal by the year 2000 from the current 1950 Kcal (Kilo calorie).

Bangladesh National Nutrition Council approved the policy and action plan in a meeting yesterday at Cabinet Division of the Secretariat with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Main purpose of the food and nutrition policy is an attempt to significantly improve the nutritional status of the people, said the policy report.

Malnutrition is a serious problem for the nation, said the meeting observing that "malnutrition is endemic in the country, with high infant, under-five and maternal morbidity and mortality".

About 94 per cent of the children are malnourished and 30,000 are becoming blind from Vitamin A deficiency every year. Almost the whole nation suffers from micro-nutrient de-

fiency such as iodine, iron, zinc, vitamin A and riboflavin.

Nutrition is a critical factor in any individual's growth and capacity of function in a society, the policy report said, adding food, nutrition and health produce an economically productive and socially active nation.

The report identified diarrhoea, acute respiratory infection, measles, inadequate food intake, low pulse and legume

intake and low intake of micro-nutrients as immediate causes of malnutrition.

Malnutrition caused by deficiency of protein and energy-giving food manifests in stunting — failure to achieve normal height, wasting — low weight for age and reduced capacity and productivity as an adults.

The malnutrition also results in a dulling of the country's intellectual potential, the policy report said.

The council meeting also decided to observe 'nutrition week' from April 23 for raising public awareness about nutrition.

Addressing the meeting the Prime Minister said formulation of policy alone cannot ensure its implementation. "We have to play an effective role for implementing these programmes."

"The nutritional problem in Bangladesh is vital one and women and children are mainly suffering from malnutrition," she said asking all concerned to take special measures in this regard.

To meet the deficit of nutrition, she said, a pre-condition to public health has been incorporated in the action plan. The role of nutrition education and

See Page 12 Col 4

## Police deployed at DU halls



A policeman checking identity card of a student at the gate of a Dhaka University hall yesterday. —Star photo

Police were deployed at the gates of dormitories of Dhaka University yesterday to check terrorist activities on the campus, reports BSS.

The Provost Standing Committee of the university at a meeting on Saturday, with Vice-Chancellor Prof. A K Azad Chowdhury in the chair, decided to post police at the residential halls to maintain peaceful atmosphere.

The meeting also decided to issue laminated identity cards to the resident students within next 15 days to prevent entry of the outsiders and terrorists into the halls.

As per the decision of the Provost Standing Committee, police have started checking the identity cards of the students at the hall gates in presence of the provost or house tutors.

However, police were not seen at the Salimullah Hall, according to UNB.

Meanwhile, some students of

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## D-8 to be launched in Istanbul summit June 14-15

Trade, industry and investment will be main areas of co-operation of the new economic bloc, comprising 8 major OIC countries, to be launched in Istanbul in mid-June, reports UNB.

The D-8 (Development-8) trade bloc groups Bangladesh, Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria and Egypt.

The planned cooperation among them also encompasses banking, rural development, health, agriculture and development of human resources.

Declaration of the inter-continental rim, initiated by Turkey, will be made in a summit of the eight countries June 14-15.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will lead the Bangladesh delegation to the conference.

## Ammonia poisoning killed fish in Shitalakhya

By Morshed Ali Khan

The recent death of thousands of fish in the Shitalakhya river was largely due to 'ammonia poisoning', according to a Department of Environment scientist.

On May 7, different species of fish were found floating dead in their thousands over a four kilometre stretch of the Shitalakhya near Narayanganj town.

A team of DOE scientists found that the ammonia level in the river water immediately after May 7 was between 0.2 and 0.8 milligrams per litre. A DOE report said this was between eight and 32 times the acceptable level. The safe level of ammonia in any water body is 0.025 milligrams per litre.

"We collected the water samples three days after the deaths and still found the count was too high for fish to survive," a DOE source said.

The source said the numerous dye factories along the river could have been a factor contributing to the river's pollution, but added their wastes contained no ammonia. While he didn't reveal exactly who was responsible, the DOE report said the deadly chemical was released into the river upstream.

The DOE scientist said police should be stationed along the river at this time of the year to prevent recurrence of this and apprehend those responsible.

A letter from the Ghorashal Fertiliser Factory to the DOE said the factory routinely discharged their wastes into the river about 10 kilometres upstream around the same time each year. The letter stated, "As a standard practice, we retain our waste in a pond on the factory premises between

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