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Four constables suspended for stripping off woman's clothe

By Staff Correspondent

Three police personnel of Riot Control Division (RCD) and a lady constable posted at the police headquarters were suspended yesterday in connection with the stripping of a female BNP activist during opposition called hartal on May 11.

The suspended police personnel are Nayak Helal, constables Fazlul Huq, Mizanur Rahman and Shahinur Begum.

The action was taken following a Home Ministry direction in this regard yesterday.

Sources said the inquiry committee yesterday submitted its preliminary report recommending immediate measures to check recurrence of such incident.

More police officials may be suspended after the final report," AYBI Siddiqui, Inspector General of Police, told UNB last night.

BNP pays the toll

By Staff Correspondent

BNP yesterday paid Tk 1,33,900 as toll for 314 vehicles that crossed the Bangabandhu Bridge carrying road marchers of the party Sunday.

The vehicles included those of the Opposition leader and MPs of the party.

The payment was made after a senior party leader called Khaleda Zia to point out the importance of the issue, sources said.

Former Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman said he was "embarrassed" by the delay in paying the toll because he had negotiated the deal with government leaders Tofail Ahmed and Mohammad Nasim and promised to pay the toll.

The former finance minister called The Daily Star last night. See Page 12 Col 8

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Prayer Timings

May 18

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:15	4:20
Zohr	12:45	1:30
Asr	4:45	4:55
Magrib	6:40	6:43
Esha	7:55	8:10

Source: Islamic Foundation

Sonia quits as Cong president

NEW DELHI, May 17: Sonia Gandhi has resigned as president of India's Congress party, Star Television reported today.

The resignation of the Italian-born widow of assassinated former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi was reported as the party's elite Congress Working Committee (CWC) held an emergency meeting to consider a demand from three senior leaders who said she must not join a prime ministerial race because of her foreign roots.

Star Television said there were still some doubts on whether Sonia could take back her resignation, but added that she had definitely offered a letter. "We have it from sources that she has put it in writing before the working committee," a reporter for the satellite channel said.

Former defense minister

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Sonia Gandhi

Prepare for UZ polls, Hasina asks partymen

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has urged leaders and workers of Awami League to strengthen party activities and earn people's confidence through rendering services, reported BSS.

Hasina also asked them to prepare for the forthcoming upazila elections and called for working with dedication to serve the vast rural population.

She was addressing leaders and workers of Awami League and its front organisations, who came to Ganobhaban yesterday to greet the Prime Minister on the occasion of her returning home after ending a six-year exile.

Sheikh Hasina, who was compelled to stay abroad after the assassination of father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members, returned home to a tumultuous reception this day 18 years back.

Party general secretary and LGDR and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman presented her a bouquet on behalf of the party while city Awami League general secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya MP, Juba League chairman Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim MP, Sramik League president Abdus

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The New Zealanders are jubilant after sending back Bangladesh opener Mehrab Hossain yesterday.

—AFP photo

Get ready for march towards Dhaka, Khaleda tells rallies

From Rezaul Karim

DINAJPUR, May 17: On the second leg of her three-day road march, BNP chief Khaleda Zia today travelled 161 kilometres from Bogra to reach this northern town, touching 10 points on the way where she asked thousands of people to prepare for a march towards Dhaka.

"Get prepared for marching towards Dhaka and besiege the autocrat," was the call she made while speaking at huge public rallies at the 10 places. "The Dhaka march programme would be announced soon."

According to her, the ruling Awami League was not going for the Sangsads election now.

fearing a "sure defeat".

"Quit power and let elections be held to test your popularity. I can challenge that you will suffer a defeat."

She also repeated her statements about the government's "failures" in protecting people's lives and property, interests of all social forces. She accused the government of harassing political opponents, resorting to large-scale corruption and terrorism, politicising the administration, ruining the na-

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Test elite New Zealanders by six wickets in a one-sided match, which saw their top and middle order collapse to a penetrating Kiwi seam attack.

Bangladesh were 116 for all out in 37.4 overs. New Zealand cruised to victory in 33 overs scoring 117 for four.

On a windy late morning, with threatening clouds looming overhead that could have overruled curtailed to bring in the likes of Duckworth and Lewis, New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming put Bangladesh in after winning the toss.

Bangladesh could not have

nightmarred of a more inauspicious start to the World Cup when they lost Shahriar Hossain for naught in the very third ball of the game, a nasty one from left-arm Geoff Allott that had the opener trapped leg before.

The next couple had not fended off the venomous Kiwi attack for long before the other opener, Mehrab Hossain, was also given out leg-before to another piercer that Allott unleashed after his 30-yard run-up.

Bangladesh found themselves in an incubator, struggling for breath, as well as prestige, with only seven runs on the rudimentary Essex County scoreboard.

Akram Khan, tipped always to lift lost buckets from the bottom of the well, did raise hopes with the first boundary of the Bangladesh innings in the second over, a meteor through mid wicket off Dion Nash. But, sadly for the thousands of Bengalees, who thronged the small

CHELMSFORD, Essex, May 17: There was sunshine at Chelmsford yesterday and it was cloudy too. The 4000-strong Bangladeshi crowd was a right cheerful lot, but the cricketers were a damp, disappointing lot.

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Not a cheerful debut

From Nizamuddin Ahmed

an easy-paced wicket.

Aminul, sooner than Akram's second boundary also of Nash, emulated his predecessor and pulled the most expensive

See Page 12 Col 1

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A view from the Gully

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

It was big chaos at Bristol on Sunday. West Indies had long monopolised inconsistency and unpredictability until Pakistan appeared on the scene. The Caribbeans have now has a cousin who can beat them in their own trade. Pakistanis, frustrated by the lack of warm-up matches because of rains, had cold feet and butter fingers. Acclimatisation in English weather is a prerequisite for any overseas cricketer before he takes his stance or starts his run-up. This process of getting used to the atmosphere can not be over-emphasised and it is not only true for the Pakistanis but all the participating team that includes England too.

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