

PM reaches
Doha
*South-South Summit
starts today*
UNB, Doha

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was accorded a warm reception when she arrived at Doha International Airport yesterday.
A VVIP flight of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, carrying the prime minister and her entourage, landed at the airport in the afternoon.
The prime minister drove in a ceremonial motorcade to Hotel Four Seasons, where she will stay during her trip to attend the two-day second South-South summit in Doha beginning today.
Khaleda will address the summit titled "Development Challenges Facing the South" today highlighting the crucial issues of zero tariff
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ELEVATED EXPRESSWAY

Talks stuck on interest rate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first official level negotiation between Dhaka and Bangkok on constructing a 20-kilometre elevated expressway in Dhaka ended inconclusively yesterday mainly due to differences on the interest rate of the loan to be provided by a Thai bank, meeting sources said.
The Thai delegation proposed to construct, as the first phase of the

project, an expressway approximately 13 kilometres long, from Gulistan to the existing flyover at Mohakhali, at an estimated cost of Tk 1,218 crore with the money from Export Import Bank of Thailand.
While the Thai side wanted the loan to be provided as a commercial loan, the rate of interest for which is 6-7 per cent, the Bangladesh side wanted the money as a soft loan, at an interest rate of less than 2 per-

cent.
Besides, Thailand wanted to implement the project with their contractors but Bangladesh wanted to engage contractors of both the countries.
As the meeting preferred top level political discussions between the two governments for reaching a consensus on the rate of the interest for the invested money, technical
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Rain respite sets belated monsoon in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Heavy rains in the capital and light to moderate showers at many other parts of the country yesterday made the people breathe easy after days of sultry weather, with weathermen saying it is a precursor to the rather belated monsoon.
Residents in the capital heaved a sigh of relief as an afternoon shower fed by a westerly low helped cool down the persisting heat because of the delayed monsoon. Dhaka experienced 50 mm of rainfall, according to the Met office.
Tangail also experienced 27 mm of rain, Sri Mongol 7 mm, Comilla 5 mm and Khulna 2 mm, according to an incomplete evening report of the Dhaka met office.
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PHOTO: STAR

Two women waded through water in the capital's Rajarbagh area after a heavy rain come as a relief to the city dwellers yesterday afternoon.



PHOTO: PID

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia before leaving for Qatar talks to ministers, diplomats and high officials as they see her off at Zia International Airport yesterday.

Niko gifts minister luxurious car

STAR REPORT

Niko Resources, a Canadian oil company widely blamed for Tengratla gasfield disaster, has presented the State Minister for Energy AKM Mosharraf Hossain with a car worth about Tk 1 crore.
Niko, which is engaged in gas and oil exploration in Bangladesh, has given the state minister a Toyota Land Cruiser Cygnus 2005 model car through Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company (Bapex), a sister firm of state-run Petrobangla, said sources.
Niko President Brian J Adolph on May 16 sent an official letter to the managing director of the Bapex mentioning that Niko had already sent the car to the state minister's

office. The luxurious car was formally received at Mosharraf's residence on May 23.
The letter reads, "With reference to the above mentioned subject and your letter dated 09/05/05 Ref No 114.65.15.126, please be advised that we have already handed over the said vehicle to the offices of the Hon'ble State Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Division along with the original documents."
While receiving the car in written on behalf of the state minister, a Bapex official mentioned in the Niko file, "We have received the car and mentioned things in presence of the honourable state minister at his residence." Besides the car, the other things received were a temporary
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SEX ABUSE TRIAL
Pop superstar
Jackson found
not guilty
REUTERS, Santa Maria

Michael Jackson walked out of court a free man on Monday, cleared of all charges in a dramatic sex abuse trial that threatened to destroy his career and send him to prison for nearly two decades.
Jackson gripped the hand of his lead attorney, Tom Mesereau, and dabbed at his face with a tissue as the verdicts were read to a courtroom packed with reporters and about three dozen fans of the 46-year-old entertainer, many of whom broke into prayers or sobs.
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5 killed in road crash

UNB, Comilla

Five people, three of a family, died and seven others were injured in a road accident on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Dharmapur in Choudhagram upazila yesterday afternoon.
Locals said the accident occurred at about 3:30pm when a Noakhali-bound microbus from Dhaka collided head-on with a truck coming from opposite direction, killing five passengers of the microbus on the spot and injuring seven others.
The dead are Salauddin, owner of Agricultural and Food Product Company of Dhaka, his two children,
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PREMIER BANK FAKE ACCOUNTS

BB board rejects sacked MD's plea

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bangladesh Bank (BB) board has rejected an appeal of removed managing director (MD) of Premier Bank Kazi Abdul Mazid and upheld the central bank's decision to remove him on charges of his involvement in opening of fake bank accounts.
The BB yesterday notified Mazid about the board decision, saying that a board meeting on Sunday

rejected the appeal on examination of the BB investigation report on opening of fake accounts by the Premier Bank and recommendations of the central bank's standing committee.
The standing committee in its report said there was circumstantial evidence that the high officials of the Premier Bank including its MD pressured the managers into opening fake accounts at different
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Some Rab men engaged in crimes

Admits Babar

BDNEWS, Dhaka

State Minister for Home Affairs Lutfozzaman Babar yesterday admitted that some of the members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were themselves engaged in criminal activities for their own personal interests.
Replying to a question tabled in the House from Mohammad Golam Habib (Kurigram-4), the state minister said: "Well, some Rab members were themselves engaged in some criminal activities for their own
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PHOTO: STAR

Jatiya Party (JP) adherents crowd around party chairman HM Ershad sitting in an SUV along with his son Eric on return from Saudi Arabia yesterday.

BSF kills 1 in Benapole

UNB, Benapole

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) gunned down a Bangladeshi national while he was taking bath in the Ichhamati River in Daulatpur frontier area on Monday.
The victim was identified as Mizan, 25, of Ramchandrapur village in Sharsha upazila of Jessore district. Locals said Mizan came to his relative's house at the village.
The Indian border guards took away Mizan's body and handed it over to Bongaon police, according to information from across the border.

30 killed in Iraq bomb attacks

AGENCIES, Baghdad

At least 30 people were killed and 60 wounded yesterday in bombing attacks in northern Iraq, as the autonomous Kurdish region was set to install its first president.
A blast ripped through waiting civil servants outside a bank in the northern Iraqi oil hub of Kirkuk, killing at least 20 people and wounding 53 others, police said.
A suicide bomber blew himself up amidst public workers standing

outside the Al-Rafidain bank in the city centre, Kirkuk police chief Major General Turhan Yusuf said.
According to Colonel Shirzad Abdullah, chief of the Rahimao police station: "Most of the casualties were civil servants lining up outside the bank to receive their monthly pay."
The blast came shortly before Kurdish leader Massoud Barzani was to be sworn in as president of three provinces in northern Iraq, an
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Prayer Timing		
June 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-50	6-55
Esha	8-15	8-45
Source: Islamic Foundation		