

**Rab retrieves hand grenade from Savar**  
*Says it is similar to the ones blasted at AL rally, Sylhet shrine; arrests 1*  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Elite crime-busters Rab yesterday retrieved an anti-personnel hand grenade from a village in Savar on the outskirts of the capital. Manufactured in 2001, the grenade is of Argos group, similar to those exploded at the Awami League rally on Bangabandhu Avenue in Dhaka and Hazrat Shahjalal Shrine in Sylhet last year and others retrieved from Kuril Badda in 2003. They held Amjad Hossain alias Anju, an associate of listed criminal

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**Moudud plays down Thomas remarks**  
 UNB, Dhaka

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday said he does not give much importance to what outgoing US Ambassador Harry K Thomas had commented about Bangladesh. "We don't give much importance to it... he has not said anything new. At best, it was an expression of his anxiety about the welfare of the people in the perspective of Bangladesh's political culture," he told reporters at his ministry.

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**Mobile courts in action**

*21 unscrupulous fruit traders punished*  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two mobile courts yesterday in a drive against adulteration of food fined and jailed 21 unscrupulous traders in Dhaka on charge of spraying toxic chemicals on fruits. A mobile court headed by Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Rokon-ud-Dowla

**Govt critical of planned London HR meet**  
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A conference takes place in London today to discuss persecution of and discrimination against religious minorities, ethnic groups, journalists and political opponents in Bangladesh, eliciting criticism and protest from the government. Bangladesh Conference 2005

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MONEY WHITENING, TAX ON SIM  
**Top trade bodies blast budgetary measures**

**They laud pro-rural steps, but criticise anti-industry provisions**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
 Leading chambers and associations yesterday came down heavily on extending the provision of whitening black money and imposition of tax on mobile phone connection. They also said a number of steps including increasing corporate tax

rate for non-listed companies and little reduction in customs duty on items essential to generate growth are ill-advised. In a joint statement, the business leaders said the money whitening provision will continue to encourage elements who have amassed ill-gotten wealth and, at the same time,

cause frustration to the honest taxpayers. "This budgetary proposal should be dropped altogether to improve the image of the country, which regrettably is being rated for the last few years as one of the most corrupt countries in the world," they added. Mahbub Jamil, president of the

Foreign Investors' Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Mahbubur Rahman, president of the International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh; Syed Manzur Elahi, chairman of the Bangladesh Association of Banks; Kutubuddin Ahmed, president of

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**DEATH TRAP:** The cover of a box sewerage line remained open on the western part of Panthapath in Dhaka for the last three months, putting pedestrians and vehicles at risk of accidents.

**Ex-Bac staffs' expenses don't match income**

**50pc may fail in screening test to join ACC**

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK  
 More than half the staff of now defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac) may be disqualified from joining the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) mainly for inconsistency in their income and expenditure. Seven months into formation of

the anti-corruption watchdog, ACC is likely to complete screening of the Bac staff this month, and include the eligible ones in the ACC, said a well-placed source. While studying the staff's lifestyles, the commissioners found wide discrepancies between many an officer's income and expenditure.

Some of the officers have deposited more than half of their salary in the provident fund, and lead extravagant life. "For example, one who gets Tk 8,000 as monthly salary, deposits Tk 5,000 in the provident fund. One has to marvel at how they manage to bear the house rents and everyday expenses," said a source.

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**Foreign envoys to do all for fair polls**

**Thomas tells Hasina**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
 Outgoing US Ambassador in Bangladesh Harry K Thomas yesterday said the foreign diplomats in Dhaka, including those of the US, will do everything for holding a free, fair and transparent parliamentary election in Bangladesh. Thomas yesterday made farewell call on the Leader of the Opposition and Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh

Hasina at Sudha Sadan in Dhanmondi. After holding the hour-long meeting with the opposition leader, the US envoy told reporters that they talked about the next general election, Kibria killing and US-Bangladesh relationship. "Foreign diplomats in Dhaka are considering holding a seminar in coming November to find out ways

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**Bidisha bailed but arrested again**

**Judge Rafiqul Islam of the Court of District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka granted the bail set at Tk 50,000 with two guarantors until the hearing of the case on June 23.**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT  
 HM Ershad's estranged wife Bidisha was granted ad-interim bail yesterday in the case in which she was charged with cheating on the former military dictator but was not released from the prison, as she was shown arrested in a money laundering case. This is the second time Bidisha secured bail only to be kept in the confines of Dhaka Central Jail, the first being on June 13.

Bidisha's counsels went to the jail with the court order at about 2:30pm, but were told by the jailer that she had been shown arrested on charges of money laundering pressed with Gulshan Police Station yesterday. Officer-in-Charge of Gulshan

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**Eating dangerously**  
**Watchdogs' role mostly missing**  
**Consumers suffer as agencies lack manpower, sincerity**

PINAKI ROY  
 Lack of sincerity, coupled with crippling manpower shortages in inspection agencies, has resulted in a breakdown of the government's food regulatory system, allowing culprits to flourish while the public is slowly poisoned by adulterated food, an investigation by The Daily Star concludes. It is the constitutional mandate of the government, as outlined in section 18 (1), to ensure quality food for the public. Fulfilling that mandate means adopting effective measures to prevent harmful foods from the reaching the market. This series of articles, which

ends today, has found widespread and alarming flaws in the government's dispensation of duty. The regulatory system, far from being a united and vigilant custodian of public health, appears more as a mosaic of faltering agencies, each lacking adequate monitoring staffs, together suffering from poor inter-communication, and all allowing safety to slip through the cracks. The Health ministry is the key authority in regulating adulterated readymade food. But, as with many other regulatory bodies, the ministry is short of hands, with only 400 members to ensure food safety for a population of more

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