

More than 1,40,000 people...

we do, whatever it takes to connect you to the world!"



**FedEx Express**  
Bangladesh Express Co. Ltd.  
Licensee of Federal Express Corporation  
Every Package Matters

Philips Steam Iron + Jet Detergent = Dynamic Duo



**EARTHQUAKE DEATHS**  
**China grateful to Bangladesh for mourning**

UNB, Dhaka  
Beijing has expressed profound gratitude to the government and people of Bangladesh for observing national mourning day and hoisting the national flag at half-mast in respect to the victims of China

**Emergency won't be compatible with free polls**  
Says US official

UNB, Dhaka  
The state of emergency during voting would not be compatible with free and fair elections, Erica Barks-Ruggles, US deputy assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labour, yesterday said.  
After meeting election commissioners M Sohel Hussain and Brig Gen (ret) M Sakawat Hussain at the Election Commission Secretariat, Barks-Ruggles reiterated her government's stand that the entire election process should be free, fair, transparent and credible.  
"We don't see having the state of emergency in place at the end of the year during the vote because that won't be compatible with that (free and fair election)," she said

**BDR clarifies Satkhira incidents**

UNB, Dhaka  
Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) has denied physical assault of anyone or acts of damaging shops by its personnel in Satkhira town on Monday as reported in a section of the press.  
In a clarification yesterday, BDR headquarters said a team of BDR during its usual patrol happened to meet ward commissioner Shafiquddowla Sagar in front of Sundarban Hotel on May 19. During conversation, Sagar had an altercation and scuffle with the patrol team as he made objectionable remarks about BDR.  
Following the incident, Sagar along with his men tried to put up barricade on the road. On information, Major Kamrul went to the spot and requested to remove the barricade. When BDR battalion commander and police superintendent reached the spot, supporters of Sagar attacked them with bricks. BDR personnel and the police refrained from retaliation.

**EC FORMULATING RULES**  
**Deployment of armed forces with arrest power in local govt polls**

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission (EC) has moved to formulate rules for deployment of armed forces alongside other regular forces in local government elections with powers to arrest anyone without warrant on grounds of violation of electoral rules.  
Empowered by the caretaker government to formulate rules to conduct elections to city corporations and municipalities, the EC has already drafted rules also seeking authority to cancel candidatures on grounds of gross irregularities in the elections, sources in the EC said.

To enable the EC to make legal provisions for deployment of armed forces in elections to local government bodies, the term 'law enforcement agency' was incorporated in the definition chapter of the recently promulgated ordinances on city corporations and municipalities.  
The LGRD ministry has now drafted ordinances on zila, upazila and union parishads also incorporating the term 'law enforcement agency' in those, sources in the ministry said.  
The term law enforcement agency means police force, Rapid Action Battalion, Bangladesh Rifles, ansar force, battalion ansar,

coast guards and the defence services -- army, navy and air force.  
"Inclusion of the term law enforcement agency in the laws makes the task of preparing a legal framework for deployment of armed forces easier for the EC," a senior official at the EC Secretariat said.  
In the draft rules for elections to city corporations and municipalities, the EC has specified jurisdictions of the armed forces deployed in the polls. And it will send the draft to the law ministry within a week for vetting, and finalise the rules after the ministry sends those back, EC sources said.

**Mother, 2 kids missing in boat capsized**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mother and her two children are feared drowned in the Buriganga at Kholamora in Keraniganj after a sand-laden trawler rammed the boat they were travelling on Tuesday night causing it to capsize.  
The people feared dead are Firoza Begum Lucky, 30, her two-and-a-half-year-old son Firoz and five-and-a-half-year-old daughter Farzana.  
Police said a team of divers from the Fire Brigade and Civil Defence searched for them twice yesterday and on Tuesday night without any success.  
Quoting witnesses, police said the boat, ferrying around 12 people across the river, bent and sunk in mid-river after the trawler hit it around 8:00pm.  
When the boat went down the rest of the passengers including the boatman managed to swim ashore.  
Relatives of the woman and her two kids are still looking for them.  
Police said they could not trace the trawler.



Poor people separate pebbles from rice grains on a roadside in Ashulia on the outskirts of the capital yesterday. The few kgs of rice fell on the road while being transported.

**New committee to fix fare of CNG-run buses**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

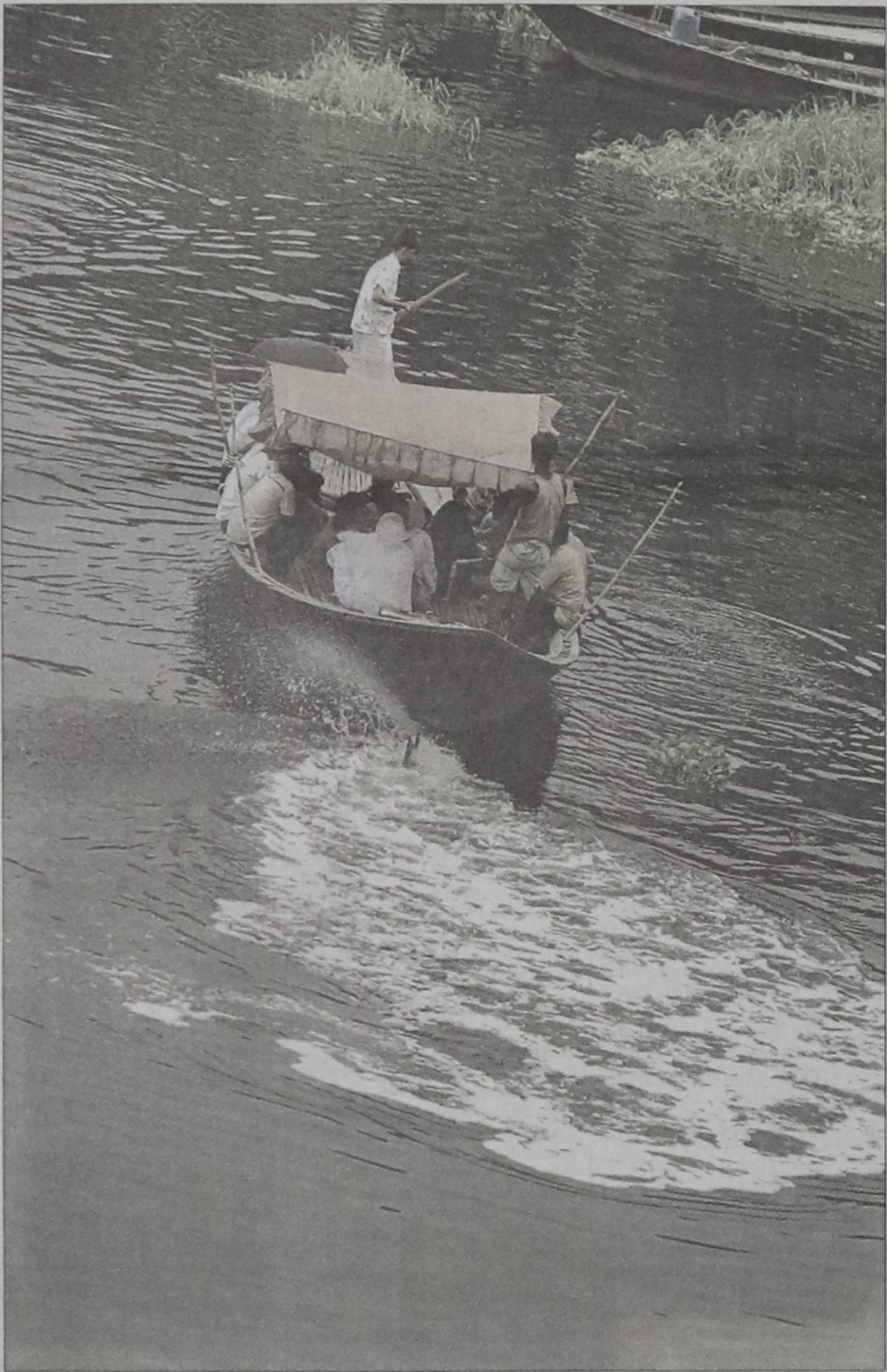
The government yesterday formed a high-powered committee to set the fare of CNG-run passenger buses running in Dhaka and Chittagong as the bus operators refused to accept the fare fixed by a previously formed committee.  
After a series of meetings with different stakeholders, a sub-committee of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) had earlier proposed the fare for one-kilometre journey at Tk 0.98.  
The transport leaders, however, demanded fixing Tk 1.71 per kilometre, almost double the recommended fare.  
Following the discord, a meeting at the communications ministry chaired by Communications Adviser Ghulam Quader yesterday formed a nine-member committee to set the fare in five working days.  
M Shahjahan, Dhaka Transport

**Women behind bars hope for new life**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 30 women are training to be beauticians at present.  
Shushila, a 35-year-old woman serving a life term for murder, never thought she could do anything useful for anyone again.  
Instead today, she is training to be a beautician and also looking forward to someday begin a new life out of the jail.  
Her positive attitude towards life started with her participation in a beauticians' course offered by the authorities in Dhaka Central Jail, where she is serving time for killing her husband's second wife.  
Shafiqul Islam, jailer of Dhaka Central Jail, said the opportunity to train as a beautician was provided to female inmates as part of a new programme to engage prisoners in occupations to earn money.  
The training will also help towards the rehabilitation of these women in the society once they are out from the jail.

Shafiq told The Daily Star that the response to the training has been very good.  
A room at the jail's day care centre has been turned into the training room for the two month long course. Beautician Papiya Zaman of Hiya Beauty Parlour in Old Dhaka is training the women four days a week.  
"I am very delighted to be teaching these women confined indoors for such a long time," Papiya told The Daily Star, "they are very keen learners."  
Papiya is teaching the prisoners essentials to get a job at a beauty parlour. These include haircuts, hair sets, eyebrow plucks, facials and make-up application, which are some of the very basic services offered at parlours.  
Papiya says she is herself



A boat plies the polluted Narai canal at Trimohoni in the capital as nearby industries continue to dump toxic effluent into it.

**Islamic leaders seek Nizami's punishment for war crimes**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Representatives of the Islamic community of the country yesterday demanded punishment of Jamaat Ameer Matiur Rahman Nizami for war crimes he committed during the Liberation War.  
The demand came at a meeting between a delegation of Islamic leaders and the Sector Commanders Forum (SCF) at the SCF office in Banani.  
The delegation, led by former director of Bangladesh Islamic Foundation Maulana Farid Uddin Masud, said war crimes are more heinous than corruption and for that the government should try the war criminals by a special tribunal.  
At the meeting they said the rule of law that the government is telling about could be ensured if they try the war criminals.  
The religious leaders said that there can be no peace in the

**Pakistan signs peace deal with militants**  
Troops will be withdrawn from Swat

AFP, Peshawar

Pakistani authorities yesterday signed a peace deal with pro-Taliban militants in the northwestern Swat Valley to end months of unrest in the region, a provincial minister said.  
Under the 15-point agreement, troops will withdraw from Swat and Islamic Sharia law will be imposed in the valley, a scenic former tourist area, North West Frontier Province minister Bashir Bilour said.  
In return, the rebels will close training camps and halt suicide attacks on government installations and security forces. Dozens of people have been killed in bombings in Swat in the past year.  
The announcement comes a day after Washington said it was concerned by the new Pakistani government's decision to negoti-

ate with militants in the North West Frontier Province and separate tribal areas bordering Afghanistan.  
The army launched a major offensive in October to clear Swat of militants loyal to Maulana Fazlullah, a radical pro-Taliban cleric who led an uprising to enforce Islamic Sharia law in the valley.  
"The agreement was signed today between the government committee and representatives of local Taliban. We are very positive that this agreement will end violence and ensure lasting peace in the region," committee member Wajid Ali Khan told AFP.  
"We have agreed on a gradual withdrawal of the troops as the situation improves. The Taliban will close down all training centres for suicide bombers and militant

**Oil prices cross \$132**

AP, New York

Oil prices bolted to a new record above \$132 a barrel Wednesday after the government reported that supplies of crude oil and gasoline fell unexpectedly last week. And crude's rise in the futures market again pressured consumers by pulling prices at the pump higher -- a gallon of regular gas rose overnight to a new record above \$3.80 a gallon.  
In its weekly inventory report, the Energy Department's Energy Information Administration said crude oil inventories fell by more than 5 million barrels. Analysts had expected a modest increase. Gasoline inventories also fell and took the market by surprise.  
Light, sweet crude for July delivery was up more about \$3, rising as high as \$132.08 a barrel in late morning trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.  
At the pump, the average national price of a gallon of regular gas rose 0.7 cent overnight to a

**LAUNCH CAPSIZE**  
Probe finds untrained master responsible

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

The probe committee looking into the tragic launch capsizing in Ghoratra river in Kishoreganj, yesterday cited the main reason behind the tragic accident to its running by an untrained master.  
The probe by senior Deputy Director (DD) of BIWTA Mohammad Hossein and magistrate Tabibur Rahman of the Shipping Department also advised legal action against the boat's owner.  
The MV Chandpur launch capsized on May 12 off Ghoradigha village in Nikli causing 47 deaths, while others still remain missing.  
The probe report, citing four causes in its report, stated that the launch was carrying a large quantity of goods in defiance of rules, and passengers beyond capacity while the weather was another

**Prayer Timing**  
May 22

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-05	4-40
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-40	6-45
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

**TEJGAON INDUSTRIAL AREA**  
**Environment polluters still unpunished**

ERSHAD KAMOL

Although the Environment Cell of Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa) in 2003 detected 36 industrial plants in Tejgaon Industrial Area of the capital as the main polluters of the Balu river and linked canals, no action has yet been taken against them.  
The list comprises 30 washing and dyeing factories, 4 soap factories, and 2 ink producing factories.  
A high official of Wasa on condition of anonymity told the Daily Star, "In April 2007 the Ministry of Industries, and the Ministry of

Environment and Forest jointly told representatives of business communities that unless they install effluent treatment plants (ETP) in their factories before October 31 of the same year, supply of electricity, gas and water would be disconnected."  
"However, no such action has yet been taken against the violators of government rules, although most of the 150 industrial plants in Tejgaon Industrial Area are operating without having any ETP," he added.  
Everyday 3,500 cubic metres of wastewater containing waste load

of 1,850 kilogram (kg) with high level of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) gets drained into the low lying lands of eastern Dhaka from the industrial zone, which subsequently gets into the Balu river via Begunbari and Norai canals, causing serious damage to the adjacent paddy fields of the area, states the 'Study on Alternative Location of the Intake of Saidabad Water Treatment Plant', commissioned by Wasa in May 2006.  
"Pitch black effluents from Tejgaon Industrial Area containing



Members of the Campaign for Heritage Conservation and Urban Study Group demonstrate in front of Boro Bari on BK Das Road in Old Dhaka yesterday protesting a plan for demolishing the architectural heritage of the city.

**Obama wins Oregon, Hillary takes Kentucky**

AP, Louisville, Kentucky

Barack Obama advanced to the brink of victory in the Democratic presidential race, defeating Hillary Rodham Clinton in the Oregon primary and moving within 70 delegates of the total he needs to claim their hard-fought nomination contest.  
Hillary countered with a lopsided win earlier Tuesday in Kentucky, a victory with scant political value in a race moving inexorably in Obama's direction.  
Obama, who is seeking to become the first black US president, said the night's contests gave him a majority of the delegates elected in all 56 primaries and caucuses combined. They are