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GOOD SIGN AT DSE

Price-earnings ratio hits a five-year low

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NCL BEGINS TODAY

The country's lone first-class cricket competition gets underway

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BERLUSCONI'S DECADENCE SELLS

Inspired by the Italian leader's "bunga bunga" parties a line-up of accessories is set to be churned out

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PADMA PROJECT

Govt moves to resolve crisis

Sending 2 letters to WB with proposals for solution; no details obtained

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will send two letters to the World Bank with proposals to resolve the issue of corruption allegations swirling around the Padma bridge project.

The letters would clarify the government position on the issue, Finance Minister AMA Muhith told reporters at his secretariat office after a meeting with Communications

Minister Syed Abul Hossain.

"I talked to the communications minister on the Padma bridge issue. We have almost arrived at a decision on the matter," said Muhith.

He, however, did not elaborate.

The finance minister said the project's Integrity Adviser Mashiur Rahman, also economic affairs adviser to the prime **SEE PAGE 19 COL 5**

Stock Exchange building at Motijheel in the capital last night demanding return of normality in the capital market within three days. The photo was taken at 9:45pm.

Investors stage a hunger

strike in front of Dhaka

AMRAN HOSSAIN

Transit fees to be fixed before March

Govt to allow India to use Ctg, Mongla ports

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will finalise the structures of transit fees to be charged from India before March next year, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said yesterday.

"Our target is to finalise the fees before March as the existing transit agreement will expire then," the finance minister told journalists after a meeting with outgoing Indian High Commissioner Rajeet Mitter at his secretariat office.

He also said the steering committee on transit headed by him will sit next month. Transit fees will be finalised on the basis of consensus between the two countries.

Fixing the fees in the next few months will be most important, Muhith said without explaining.

The minister said a consensus now prevails in the country on maintaining good relations with India and providing transit facility to the big neighbour and countries in the region.

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Army to be deployed

Decides EC for N'ganj city polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday asked the Armed Forces Division to deploy the army for five days in Narayanganj to thwart any disruption in law and order during the city corporation polls

The election is scheduled for October 30.

The commission wants the government to deploy the army from the morning of October 28 to 11:00pm of November 1 as strike and mobile forces, according to the commission's letter sent to the

AFD yesterday afternoon. The commission

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SHIP-BREAKING YARD

4 die from toxic gas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Four labourers died and two others fell sick after inhaling toxic gas while dismantling a ship at a ship-breaking yard in Baro Aulia of Sitakunda in Chittagong yesterday. Three days ago, two workers died and two others fell ill

owing to inhalation of poisonous gas trapped inside a tank of a scrap vessel at another ship-breaking yard in Sitakunda. After yesterday's incident at Baro Aulia, six injured

workers were taken to Chittagong Medical College Hospital around 8:00pm. Doctors declared four of them dead, said on-duty police officer Yusuf at the hospital police box. Deceased Yunus Ali, 25, of Bogra, Gias Uddin, 25, and

Nesar Uddin, 24, of Banshkhali and Mir Kashem, 22, of Moheshkhali were workers of Jiri Subedar Ship-Breaking Yard.

Injured Golap Hossain, 27, and Nozir Hossain, 35, are now undergoing treatment at the CMCH.

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STOCK PRICES CONTINUE TO SLIDE

Investors begin fast-unto-death

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY and **GAZI TOWHID AHMED**

Angry investors began a fast-unto-death programme before the country's premier bourse yesterday to protest a continuous fall in share prices.

The demonstration started at 11:00am and continued to expand in the evening with many more investors from across the city gathering in the Motijheel business hub to join the protesters.

Some political leaders made it a point to express their solidarity with the investors.

The protest intensified at noon as stocks suffered a massive fall, with the benchmark

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