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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**Islamic Solidarity Day today**

Islamic Solidarity Day with Bosnia-Herzegovina will be observed today across the world to mobilise global political and human support for the just cause of the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. The day will also be observed to inform the world public opinion about the sufferings and genocide of the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina, reports BSS.

**Indian CP leaders meet Hasina**

Leaders of Communist Party (Marxist) of India and the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) of Nepal yesterday met separately with Awami League President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina. The communist leaders exchanged views on political, economic and social matters of their respective countries, reports UNB.

**DCC polls: BNP interview today**

Interview of candidates who have submitted nomination papers for the post of commissioners and sought BNP support in the forthcoming Dhaka City Corporation election will be held today at 9 am at the central office of the party. General Secretary of Dhaka city BNP, Salahuddin Ahmed MP, has requested all Sangsad members of BNP elected from Dhaka city to remain present at the central office at 9 am, reports BSS.

**Rao meets Sharma**

NEW DELHI, Dec 26: Indian Prime Minister P V Narsimha Rao, today called on the President Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma, which assumes significance in the wake of the resignation of the Finance Minister Dr Manmohan Singh. A Rashtrapati communique said the meeting, which lasted about 45 minutes, was of a routine nature. It was not immediately known if the Prime Minister has taken a final view on the resignation. Political circles indicated that chances of Rao accepting Dr Manmohan Singh's resignation were remote, reports PTI.

## No consensus on steering committee Major parties promise peaceful city polls

Major political parties of the country yesterday pledged to abide by the election code of conduct and to extend all-out cooperation to the Election Commission in holding the forthcoming city corporation polls peacefully.

The political parties, having representation in Parliament, made these commitments to the Chief Election Commissioner at a four-hour meeting with him yesterday.

The parties attending the meeting, however, failed to reach a consensus on the formation of an all-party steering

committee to assist the Election Commission in holding the polls.

The Chief Election Commissioner, Justice Abdur Rauf, came out with the proposal for the steering committee while the representatives of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Workers Party (WP) expressed their reluctance to entertain the idea, sources at the meeting said.

The Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah, while explaining the ruling party stance on the issue told the meeting that there was no need for for-

mulating an all-party committee because the proposed body would have no constitutional powers to exercise during the polls. "What we all need is strengthen the Election Commission by observing the election rules and the code of conduct, formulated by the Commission," Barrister Rafiq added.

In this connection, the minister said the government was committed to help the Election Commission hold the polls freely in a peaceful manner. The BNP leader also told the meeting that his cabinet colleagues

### Hanif AL candidate for DCC mayor

Mohammad Hanif, president of the City Awami League, has been named as the party's Mayor candidate for the election of the Dhaka City Corporation, reports UNB.

Awami League Chief and Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina yesterday formally announced the name of Mohammad Hanif to contest in the January 30 Mayor election.

Earlier, Hanif's name was unanimously proposed by all the thana units of the party's Dhaka city committee. Later, the central working committee approved his candidature.

BSS from Rajshahi adds: seven candidates contesting for the post of mayor of the Rajshahi City Corporation geared up their 'meet the voters' campaign' in different wards of the city today.

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### Professionals may go for non-stop strike

By Masud Hasan Khan

Some 70 thousand professionals of the country, now submitting resignation letters, as part of their ongoing movement may go for a continuous work abstention to realise their demands, sources said.

The schedule of the work abstention would be decided at a meeting of the councillors of the Prokrichi-BCS Central Action Council today (Monday) and finalised at the coming meeting of the Prokrichi district representatives, they said.

Leaders of the Central Action Council, the platform of the professionals, Sunday held a meeting to discuss the possibility of launching the continuous work abstention to press home their 17-point charter of demands.

Doctors, engineers, agricul-

turists and the non-administrative members of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) are waging a campaign for the reform of the present bureaucracy, separation of the judiciary from the administration, removal of service anomalies and formulation of the Rules of Business.

Sources said that Sunday's meeting of the Prokrichi-BCS leaders reviewed the progress of their movement which started on December 11 and the subsequent talks with the government on December 17, which yielded no results.

The Prokrichi leaders at Sunday's meeting also discussed the collection of the resignation letters which began on December 15.

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### Indo-Bangla JEC Officials sort out issues for talks

Bangladesh and India yesterday agreed to discuss redressing bilateral trade imbalance, adverse to Bangladesh, at the upcoming ministerial level meeting of the Joint Economic Commission, reports BSS.

The fourth meeting of the Bangladesh-India Joint Economic Commission (JEC) got underway with the official level talks, held yesterday morning at the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance.

At the two-day ministerial level meeting scheduled to begin here on Tuesday, the Bangladesh side will be led by Foreign Minister Mostafizur Rahman, while the Indian delegation will be headed by Indian Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee.

The officials of the two countries at their pre-ministerial

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Action from yesterday's Sixth SAF Games football final between Nepal and India at the Mirpur Stadium. Nepal won the match 4-3 in tiebreaker. The scheduled time of the match ended in a two-all draw. — Star photo

### Sixth SAF Games close today Nepalese booters spoil Indian celebrations

Sports Reporter

The sixth version of the biennial SAF Games awaits its formal closure today. A kermess of blithe spirits, a communion of hearts and a contest of the comparative sporting excellence of seven South Asian countries — India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh — will be held suspended animation for another two years.

A spectacular display including fire works will mark the putting out of the flame, the eternal symbol of Olympics, that has been burning atop the northern gate of the Dhaka Stadium since December 20.

India, the traditional superpower of the Games, once again finished as the champion team with a haul 139 medals including 61 golds, 47 silvers and 31 bronzes.

Their neighbours Pakistan, who underwent a sea change of fortunes on the last day or two of the competition, got the second position with 66 medals. Besides 23 golds they got 22



**MEDALS TABLE**

The medals table after the final day's competitions in the Sixth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games: (Tabulate under gold, silver, bronze and total)

	G	S	B	Total
India	61	47	31	139
Pakistan	23	22	21	66
Sri Lanka	21	23	39	83
Bangladesh	11	19	34	64
Nepal	1	6	15	22
Bhutan	0	0	0	0
Maldives	0	0	0	0

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### Daewoo chairman keen to invest in Bangladesh

Kim Woo Chong, chairman of the Daewoo Corporation, a leading investment and trading company of South Korea yesterday called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her secretariat and appreciated the investment climate in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Chong discussed the possible fields of investment in Bangladesh. Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, MP and Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister KM Rabbani were also present.

Another report adds: Kim Woo Chong met Finance Minister M Saffur Rahman at his office yesterday.

During the discussion Kim said, his side is very keen to invest in Bangladesh. After returning to Korea they will evaluate the outcome of their visit and will again come to Bangladesh in February 1994 for a final assessment on the possible investment in Bangladesh, the Korean entrepreneur said.

Kim has billions of dollar investments worldwide.

The Finance Minister assured the Korean delegation of all possible help from the government.

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### Economy has improved: PM

NAGARKANDA (Faridpur), Dec 26: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today reminded all that the people of this land were repressed during the Liberation War by the occupation forces and again by the post-liberation regime, reports UNB.

Addressing a big public meeting at the MN Academy High School ground here this afternoon, she also blamed the past autocratic regime for destroying all institutions and producing the policy of imports to get commissions which ruined national economy and thus made the country aid-dependent.

"But the economy of the country has now improved and per capita income and purchasing capacity of common man increased," Begum Zia said.

"We do not want that the child of a farmer becomes a farmer and the son of a rickshawpuller be a puller. This should not go anymore. One day the children of rickshawpullers will be doctors, lawyers, teachers and leaders."

Without naming she said a particular political party was

out to subvert the development efforts and destroy democracy. "Are they friends of the people? Are they patriots? Do they want development and alleviation of poverty?"

Begum Zia said the people had fought for democracy and economic emancipation, but their dreams could not come true as the post-liberation government was busy aggrandising its own interest ignoring people's welfare.

Local leaders put forward various demands and problems

### National book policy soon

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here yesterday that a national book policy would be announced soon for the promotion of education including library service to the people and the development of libraries and librarianship in the country, reports BSS.

Begum Zia emphasised the need for building up nationwide library movement to help

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of the Nagarkanda thana and urged Begum Zia to resolve those rapidly.

Begum Zia assured the people of Nagarkanda of looking into their problems. Kancha roads will be metalled and new ones and bridges will also be constructed. Educational institutions will be provided additional financial support and be nationalised as per government policy.

Presided over by Thana BNP president Abul Hossain Mta, the meeting was also addressed by LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, Post and Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam, Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, State Minister for Land Kabir Hossain, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum.

Earlier on arrival, the Prime Minister visited the Gangagdia Adarsha Gram Prokalia in the thana. There are 50 families living in the model village.

Begum Zia talked to the inhabitants and enquired about their livelihood.

### Afghan warring factions agree to cease-fire

KABUL, Dec 26: After nearly two months of ferocious fighting rival Afghan factions agreed Sunday to a cease-fire, although few people expected it to last, reports AP.

Even as the truce was announced, rockets rained down on the capital for a second day, killing at least two people and wounding several.

Troops loyal to Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar have been fighting President Burhanuddin Rabbani's forces for control of a 60-mile (100-kilometer) swath of territory north and east of the capital Kabul.

Hekmatyar's spokesman, Qazi Ameen Waqad, said the cease-fire agreement was reached at Sunday's Cabinet meeting, on the outskirts of the city.

The two factions have broken at least three cease-fire agreements in the past two months. Much of the fighting has been centered in Tagab, 60 kilometers (36 miles) north of Kabul, and in Sarobi, about 50 kilometers (30 miles) to the east.

Whichever force holds Tagab controls a critical supply route to the capital. Sarobi houses a big hydroelectric dam that supplies power to Kabul.

Waqad told reporters that both sides have agreed to let the Interior Ministry disarm their forces.

### Highway robbery in Chakoria

COX'S BAZAR, Dec 26: A gang of dacoits halted six vehicles and looted valuables of the passengers worth about Tk 10 lakh on the Cox's Bazar-Chittagong highway near Kochhappia police box in Chakoria thana today (Sunday), reports UNB.

Witnesses said about 15 dacoits wearing masks blocked the road and swooped on the vehicles, including a chair coach, one pajoer jeep and three minibuses at about 7:30 am.

They robbed the passengers at gunpoint injuring at least 12 people, including the coach driver Bakhtar Uddin, 45. Bakhtar was admitted to the Dulhazra Health Complex in Chakoria thana.

### Cabinet okays changes in Shilpakala Academy Act

Star Report

The Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Act, 1989 will be amended to facilitate removal of any member from its Council whenever required.

A proposal in this regard from the Cultural Affairs Ministry has already been approved by the Cabinet and now will be placed as a bill before Parliament during its next session, said an official source.

The 25-member Council, headed by the Minister of Cultural Affairs, looks after the management and administration of the academy, established about 20 years ago.

The Council is constituted by the government for a three-year term with representatives from different ministries and relevant institutions, prominent personalities of the cultural arena and three members of Parliament.

According to the existing Act, a member, once nominated to the Council, can continue for a full three-year term. He or she

cannot be removed or replaced. The only change can be through voluntary resignation.

"This hampers smooth functioning of the academy," said an official concerned, explaining that a member, who is not available for a long time for some reason, cannot be replaced under the present law.

The academy was established in 1974 under an Act which was repealed and replaced by another in 1989 by the Ershad government.

That act permits the academy to maintain only six departments — for fine arts, drama, music and dance, production, photography and administration. Previously, under the Act of 1974, the academy had two other departments — research and publication, and training.

Observers, however, feel there is a need for these two departments for proper development of the academy.

### WHO project to turn Ctg into 'healthy city'

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, Dec 26: A pilot-project is expected to be launched here soon in an effort to turn the Chittagong metropolitan city into a 'healthy city'.

"The Chittagong Healthy City Project" to be funded by the World Health Organisation (WHO) is aimed at creating a healthy environment for human living, according to officials concerned.

The project, to be implemented in phases in 26 years from 1994, will involve an expenditure of about Taka four thousand crore.

The project to be implemented in cooperation with the Chittagong City Corporation will be the first of its kind in South East Asia and similar to the 35 other healthy city projects undertaken by the WHO in European countries.

Under the healthy city project, 41 wards of the Chittagong port city have been divided into

seven zones. Meanwhile, a steering committee has been formed to make "the healthy city project" a success. The heads and representatives of all organisations concerned have been made members of the steering committee.

The organisations include the Chittagong WASA, the Chittagong Development Authority, Chittagong Port, ADAB, the Directorate General of Health Services, the Department of Environment, Roads & Highways, the Social Welfare Dept., Public Health Engineering, Power Development Board, the Housing & Settlement Directorate, District Education Office, relevant multilateral organisations like WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, the Youth Development Directorate, the Department of Sociology of Chittagong University, and the Chittagong Medical College.

### Zahiruddin meets sugar workers' fed leaders

Minister for Industries A M Zahiruddin Khan yesterday met the leaders of Bangladesh Sugar Mills Workers' Federation in the conference room of the Ministry of Industries, reports BSS.

The minister gave a patient hearing to the federation leaders' views and various proposals. He reiterated that the present democratic government was committed to safeguard the genuine interests of the workers and employees. He called upon the workers to increase production and raise productivity of the sugar mills.

The federation leaders assured the Industries Minister that they would put in their all efforts to make the sugar industries viable.

Later, the Industries Minister met the leaders of different enterprises under Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSTE) and gave a patient hearing to their proposals.

The leaders informed the minister that they had no relation with the programme announced earlier about the sit-in strike on December 29.

### China opposes sanctions on N. Korea

BEIJING, Dec 26: China opposes using sanctions to force North Korea to accept nuclear inspections, Premier Li Peng told UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on Sunday, reports AP.

Li said China hopes for speedy denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, but that this should be achieved through dialogue, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

Boutros-Ghali said he appreciated China's position. Xinhua added.

The secretary-general arrived in Beijing Sunday after a three-day visit to North Korea. The exclusive Communist government rejected his offer of help in resolving its high-tension dispute with the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency over inspections of its nuclear sites.