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STOCK MARKET

DSE Index 845.65 (+0.29%)
Market capitalisation Tk 40.84 billion
Turnover in volume 31,845
Turnover in value Tk 3.94 million

Women on the Move

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Opposition MPs submit resignation: Letters under Speaker's scrutiny

Solution fizzles out at last moment

The unfolding drama

By Asiuzzaman
It was a day of nerve-racking tension for both the ruling party and Opposition leaders involved in the last-minute bid to avert the mass resignation by the Opposition MPs and its consequent political fallout through a negotiated settlement.
Senior ministers of Begum Khaleda Zia's cabinet started their scheduled meeting at the Prime Minister's Tejgaon office at 10 am when Begum Zia went to Gazipur to attend the convocation of the Bangladesh Institute of Technology.
The PM arrived at her office around 2 pm and was briefed by those of her cabinet colleagues at the centre of

Star Report
Belying all hopes of the nation for an amicable solution to the lingering political crisis Members of Parliament from the three major Opposition parties resigned their seats last night as per their deadline.
Formal and informal negotiations that started several months ago and developed into a high drama in the last few days, eventually failed to bridge the gaps between the two opposing sides, which by all accounts, were extremely minor. Climaxing yesterday, the discussions, mostly over cellular telephones, ultimately did not produce the magic formula, breaking down over the phrasing and wording of the actual agreement.
The end came when BNP leaders Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdus Salam Talukdar and Col (retd) Oli Ahmed rushed to the Sangsad Bhaban from the Prime Minister's Office, met the waiting Opposition leaders at the Speaker's chamber and started the final phase of the negotiation.
This extremely critical episode, however unfortunately, lasted only minutes as the Opposition claimed that the ruling party had introduced some new elements. For its part, the ruling party nego-



Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina handing over the resignation letters of the members of parliament to Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali at the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday. — Star photo

Opposition agreed, then backed out : BNP

By Staff Correspondent
The ruling party Secretary General, Abdus Salam Talukdar, yesterday alleged that the last-minute efforts to avert the mass resignations of the opposition MPs failed because their leaders "First agreed to a proposal verbally but rejected it during actual signing."
"They gave a number of proposals during the past few days but shifted from one to another. Finally they agreed to one of our proposals and asked me to come to Parliament for signing an agreement. But they rejected it when we arrived at

Mahmudul Hasan joins BNP

Former minister and Jatiya Party MP Major Gen (Retd) Mahmudul Hasan revolted against party's decision on resignation from Parliament and joined the BNP last night, reports UNB.
The former Home Minister met with Prime Minister and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia at her office and expressed his solidarity with the ideals and programmes of the ruling party as well as allegiance to its leadership.
Jatiya Party acting chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury last night expressed surprise at the joining of Mahmudul Hasan to the ruling BNP.



Major General (retd) Mahmudul Hasan, MP, from the Jatiya Party met Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office and formally joined the BNP yesterday. — PID photo

WHAT THE CONSTITUTION SAYS ABOUT THE METHOD OF RESIGNING

"A member of Parliament may resign his seat by writing under his hand addressed to the Speaker, and the seat shall become vacant when the writing is received by the Speaker or, if the office of the Speaker is vacant or the Speaker is for any reason unable to perform his functions, by the Deputy Speaker," reads Article 67 (2) of the Constitution.

Last-minute bid went in vain : Opposition

By Staff Correspondent
Leaders of the opposition parties in Parliament at a post-resignation press briefing last night narrated their latest proposal to the government and strongly resented the ruling party leaders' conditions for accepting it.
Addressing the newsmen just after submitting their resignation letters to the Speaker at 9:13 pm Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim said Azizur Rahman of the Awami League, Monirul Haq Chowdhury of the Jatiya Party

More vigorous agitation from today : JP

By Staff Correspondent
Acting Chairman of Jatiya Party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury said yesterday that the government would have no way but to step down from power following the resignation of opposition MPs from Parliament.
He also warned of a more vigorous agitation from today for realising the demand for elections under a caretaker government.
Addressing a public meeting yesterday at the south gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque, Mizan Chowdhury said the government's obstinacy and indifferent attitude towards the people had made Parliament ineffective.
The government did not give any attention to the problems of the people, he said adding the constructive proposals placed by the opposition parliamentarians were also turned down by the ruling

India lift SAARC cricket trophy

Sports Reporter
Skipper Praveen Amre duly produced the goods as favourites India handsomely won the SAARC cricket tournament with a convincing 52-run victory over hosts Bangladesh in a one-sided final at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.
The 26-year-old right-handed middle order Bombay batsman remained unconquered on a beautifully paced 88 off 85 balls as the second national eleven from India rattled 216 for six wickets from 50 overs after being put into bat by the Bangladesh captain Akram Khan.
Bangladesh, who had pulled the rug from under the feet of their fancied opponents with a dramatic one-run victory earlier in a league match of the four-nation regional tourney, were meted out a crushing retribution before a capacity crowd.
Vociferous partisan spectators who thronged at the traditional venue to produce an unprecedented cricket crowd found little to cheer about as the home team buckled under the pressure of a disciplined Indian unit, tipped as the strongest in the meet

Innovate modern tech for development: PM

GAZIPUR, Dec 28: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today stressed the importance of a democratic society, the rule of law, development-based politics and production-oriented economy to ensure national progress and prosperity, reports UNB.
"We have to reach our cherished goal through development and optimum utilisation of human and natural resources along with modern technology," she said while addressing the 1st Convocation of Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT), here in the morning.
She said her government

Bus mishap kills 50 in Venezuela

CARACAS, Dec 28: A Venezuelan bus crashed into a fuel pipe today, setting off an explosion that killed at least 50 people and injured 30, authorities said, reports Reuter.
The bus hit the oil pipe at 5 am after hitting another bus on a road near the city of Maturin, in the eastern state of Monagas, about 325 miles east of Caracas, police and civil defence officials said.
"Both vehicles were totally destroyed. They are pulling out the bodies now," said Marcos Dietrich, of the state oil company Corpoven.
"One of the buses hit the other and pushed it into the gasoline pipe," he said.

Now BNP has to quit : Jamaat

By Staff Correspondent
Jamaat-e-Islami leaders yesterday said that since the ruling BNP had not accepted the demand for a caretaker government for holding general elections, it would now have to give up power in an "undignified manner."
"What is the objection of BNP in accepting the demand for a caretaker government?" asked Jamaat Ameer Golam Azam at a rally near the Baitul Mukarram mosque yesterday.
Election under a caretaker government would create equal opportunities for all parties, he said, adding, perhaps the BNP did not accept the demand because it would lose

Li rejects reports of using Myanmar bases

YANGON, Dec 28: Chinese Premier Li Peng today dismissed as "sheer fabrication" reports that China is using bases in Myanmar to establish a military foothold in the Indian Ocean, reports AP.
At a news conference before his afternoon departure, Li also dismissed Western concern over human rights in Myanmar as interference in this country's domestic affairs.
Li arrived Monday at the head of the most important official delegation to visit Myanmar since a military junta seized power in 1988. He is only the fourth head of government to come here since the takeover.
A joint communique released today said Chinese and Myanmar leaders had "an in-depth and extensive exchange of views on bilateral relations, regional and international issues and other matters of mutual interest."
It has been widely reported that China's navy has been granted use of Myanmar bases in the Indian Ocean in exchange for its assistance.
But in response to reporters' questions, Li said, "allegations about China's military expansion in the Indian Ocean are sheer fabrication."
He said China was devoted to an independent policy of peace and does not seek any military influence abroad.
"We have not stationed a single soldier abroad," he said. "There are no military personnel in our delegation and we have not had any discussions on military matters (with Myanmar leaders)."
A Beijing report says, China

Hasina says she had offered new formula

By Staff Correspondent
Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina announced a new formula for an interim government to conduct future general elections 146 hours before she along with 146 other Opposition MPs submitted resignation letters to Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali at 9:13 last night.
The formula, announced at a huge rally in front of the Sangsad Bhaban at about 5 pm, said the incumbent Prime Minister should resign following the announcement of the election schedule and the President would dissolve Parliament. The President would then form an interim government with either a serving or a retired judge of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court or a non-partisan personality as the interim prime minister and an advisory council for the interim prime minister would be constituted, comprising nominees of the ruling party and the Opposition.
The interim, non-party, caretaker government would only perform the routine duties and its sole objective

Countrywide half-day hartal today

By Staff Correspondent
Three major opposition parties — the Awami League, Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami — have called a countrywide half-day hartal today in support of their demand of holding elections under a caretaker government.
The eight-hour hartal will begin at 6 am and end at 2 pm.
The opposition parties have also called eight-hour (6-2 pm) hartals in the capital only on January 2, 3 and 4.

Fahd in Egypt for surprise mini-summit

ALEXANDRIA (Egypt), Dec 28: King Fahd of Saudi Arabia arrived in Alexandria today to join the presidents of Egypt and Syria for a surprise Arab mini-summit, officials said, reports Reuter.
They said Fahd, accompanied by his Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal and other senior officials, was met on arrival by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.
Egyptian Information Minister Safwat Sherif said Mubarak, Fahd and Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad were due to hold a previously unannounced three-way summit meeting aimed at "resolving Arab differences and coordinating efforts towards solidarity on Arab, regional and international levels."

NEWS BRIEFS

DU, NU exams postponed

By DU Correspondent
The Degree examinations (Pass and Subsidiary) under the National University (NU) scheduled for today have been suspended due to unavoidable circumstances. The new schedule of the suspended examinations will be announced later on. The Dhaka University authorities have also suspended all examinations scheduled to be held today. The examination of the post graduate diploma course of Library and Information Science of the Library Training Institute and Library Association of Bangladesh (LAB) scheduled for today has been shifted to January 5. A press release of the LAB said, the examination scheduled for January 4 has also been postponed because of unavoidable circumstances.

Sarbahara leader arrested

BARISAL, Dec 28: Police arrested a leader of the outlawed Sarbahara Party from Nazirpur Thana of the district. Police on Tuesday night raided the residence of Alam Pike, a local leader of Zia group of the outlawed Sarbahara, and arrested him. Alam is also wanted in several cases including murder, dacoity and highway robbery, reports UNB.

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