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STOCK MARKET

DSE Index	639.82 (+0.27%)
Market capitalisation Tk	40.55 billion
Turnover in volume	56,610
Turnover in value Tk	13.82 million

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NEWS BRIEFS

City BNP meets tomorrow

An emergency meeting of the BNP will be held tomorrow at 4:30 pm at the party central office. Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar will preside. The president and general secretary of the city BNP and the presidents and the general secretaries of the front organisations have been requested to attend the meeting, reports BSS.

Devotee drowns in Turag

A young devotee, who went to attend the Biswa Ijtima, drowned in the river Turag near the Ijtima venue yesterday. Police and witnesses said Selim, 28, slipped and drowned in the river at about 4:30 pm. Fire Brigade personnel recovered the body two hours after the incident, reports UNB.

Three killed in road mishap

From Our Correspondent
 KHULNA, Jan 8: Three persons were killed and two severely injured when a passenger bus (Khulna Metro-Ja 04-0065) of the Hina Paribahan bound for Faridpur collided head-on with a jeep (Khulna-Ka-731) of the local office of Road & Highways Department (RHD) at about 7 am at Boxra today. The dead include driver of the jeep Anwar Hossain, a bakery owner Budjuzaman and an unidentified old man.

DSE for night trading during hartals

By Sohel Manzur

The Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) authorities are examining the possibility of trading at night during the political programmes like hartals and sieges, according to market operators.

Although the bourse was in a very firm position last year with all the indicators remaining at an all-time high level, the losses caused by the hartal and siege programmes were not negligible, the dealers said, adding the DSE had to remain closed for over 20 days in 1994 because of those, with 277 days remaining for transactions.

Chairman of the DSE Khurshid Alam, talking to The Daily Star, said the DSE au-

thorities have been discussing the matter seriously and if the plan seems practical, the matter would be placed before the Board for approval.

The main problem as regards trading at night is that the banks and clearing houses then remain closed, he said. "We are discussing with them the possibility of making alternative arrangements for the DSE. We can proceed with our plan only if they agree to this," he added.

Dealers are specially concerned over the country's political situation, because they apprehend "more aggressive" political programmes in the coming months following the

resignation of the opposition members from Parliament.

DSE Vice Chairman Imtiaz Hussain said, "We will have to look for alternative arrangements for overcoming the losses due to hartals since it seems unlikely that the 'disease' will not be there in the near future."

The DSE, which had a 'bull-run' almost throughout the last year, experienced little impact of the political uncertainties on its indexes during the first week of the new year, the dealers said. But they apprehended that if the bourse continued to face such unscheduled closures, the impact might be disastrous in the long run.

The DSE is now firm enough with a good number of scrips in the market and also in the pipeline, the dealers said. What is needed now is to back it up with protective measures, they asserted.

The market capitalisation of the companies listed with the DSE hit the one billion dollar mark for the first time in 1994, double the figure of 1993.

The price index turnover of shares and other indicators also recorded marked rise in 1994 compared with those in 1993. The trend visible in the bourse in the first week of this year was also encouraging, DSE sources said.

Resignation of MPs Speaker to give decision within a day or two

By Staff Correspondent

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali yesterday said that he would give his decision on the resignation of the Opposition MPs within a day or two.

Talking to a group of newsmen at his official residence, Razzak Ali said that he had already started scrutinising the resignation letters and the signatures were being verified.

He admitted that some of the MPs had disowned their resignation letters and informed him accordingly. He declined to disclose the names or the number of those MPs.

The Speaker talked to the press yesterday for the first

time after his recovery from a minor heart ailment. He underwent treatment at the Suhrawardy Hospital.

Razzak Ali said resignation is a matter of political will for an MP and nothing can bar an MP from resigning.

One hundred and forty-seven MPs of the major opposition parties submitted their resignation letters on December 28.

Immediately after the submission of the resignations, the Speaker told newsmen present that he would give his decision in this regard after proper scrutiny of those.

See Page 12 Col 5

PM tells public meet at Raozan Opposition programmes destroying country

RAOZAN (Chittagong), Jan 8: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia today accused the Opposition of disrupting development activities and leading the country towards destruction by launching negative programmes, reports UNB.

Addressing a huge public meeting at the Raozan College ground in the afternoon, she said the Opposition's negative programmes like hartals, strike and siege are leading

the country towards destruction.

"They (Opposition) want to push the country backwards from the path of progress, because they had failed to take the nation towards development during their rule," the Prime Minister said.

She was of the view that if the opposition political parties had extended their support to the development programmes being carried out by the government, poverty could be eliminated and the country become self-reliant.

Listing her government's efforts to develop the country, Begum Zia said Bangladesh could emerge as an economic power in the region if the current developmental activities were allowed to continue unhindered.

"Already the per capita income has marked a rise, foreign exchange reserve increased and 38 per cent of the ADP (annual development programme) is being financed from domestic resources," she said.

"The BNP government will continue the development efforts despite all odds," she said.

The Prime Minister mentioned that BNP government, during its three and half years rule, had spent Tk 6,333 crore for the development of Chittagong. No previous government had done this.

Second gas well at Feni goes into operation

FENI, Jan 8: Extraction of gas from the second well in the Feni gas field at Balua Choumohani began today, enhancing supply of the mineral fuel in the area, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the extraction of gas at a simple ceremony in the morning. A total of 15 million cubic feet of gas will be lifted from the well with Japanese assistance.

Inaugurating the project, Begum Zia said besides the foreign-funded project, her government had decided to dig at least one gas exploration well every year with domestic resources.

The first gas well at Feni See Page 12 Col 6



Although the Text Book Board is yet to supply all the schools across the country with books for the new academic year, this roadside bookseller at the city's Bangla Bazar area has managed a fair stock of the hard-to-get supply. —Star photo

City to have 4 new hospitals soon

By Reaz Ahmad

Four new hospitals will be set up and the number of beds at different district hospitals and thana health complexes (THCs) will be increased soon to enhance medicare facilities in the country.

The government decision in this regard came against the backdrop of the World Bank and the World Health Organisation's (WHO) suggestions to privatise the THCs, said Health Directorate sources.

The four new hospitals will be set up in the capital. These are a mental hospital, a kidney hospital, a 250-bed China-Bangla friendship hospital and a 100-bed general hospital at Mirpur.

Besides, the number of beds at Suhrawardy and PG hospitals will also be increased. At present, there is no kidney hospital in the country and there is only one mental hospital at Pabna.

When contacted, Deputy Minister for Health Sirajul Haq, however, told The Daily Star the government has not yet taken any decision regarding handing over the management of the THCs to non-government organisations (NGOs), as suggested by the donor agencies last year.

The deputy minister said, "We are, however, contemplating privatising two or three THCs just as an experiment. A

high-level committee is already working on it. But, as you know, it will be difficult for any private operator to properly run health complexes in the remote areas."

"In keeping with its goal of attaining health for all by the year 2000" the government is now setting up 600 new health sub-centres at union level at an estimated cost of Tk 1,000 crore.

See Page 12 Col 5

AL mass contact tour begins January 14

The central leaders of the Awami League will begin a two-day mass contact tour from January 14 as part of their campaign for the resignation of government and general elections under a neutral caretaker government, reports UNB.

The Awami League formed separate groups with central leaders who will address public rallies at district headquarters during the tour.

The party will observe January 10 as the home coming day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

A public meeting will be held at Bangabandhu Avenue on the day. Awami League President Sheikh Hasina will address the meeting.

Dumping of hazardous wastes 'Final warning' to 1500 units

By Masud Hasan Khan

The authorities have issued 'final warning' to 1500 industrial units in the country to install waste treatment facilities.

These units were earlier identified as 'environment pollutants' but still continued to dump wastes.

The warning contained in letters issued by the Department of Environment (DOE) recently asked the owners of these industrial units to inform within 15 days what measures they have so far taken to stop disposal of hazardous wastes, official sources said.

The DOE letters said untreated industrial wastes have been discharged by 1500 mills and factories into rivers and canals which has been posing serious threats to ecology and marine life.

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) had sent legal notices to the

ministries concerned as well to the DOE in May last year demanding justice and immediate action against the polluting industrial units.

The 'warning letters' pointed out that the industrial units polluting environment had not responded to an earlier DOE notice which instructed the units to install treatment facilities within 20 days.

If no response is received from these industries this time, the DOE would go for legal action under the Environment Pollution Control Act of 1977, officials said.

The erstwhile Department of Environment Pollution Control, which was under the Industries Ministry, back in 1986 identified 903 mills and factories across the country for dumping untreated wastes and advised those to set up treatment facilities.

The government in a gazette notification on June 5, 1986, published a list of these industries after an extensive survey by the Pollution Control Department.

The listed polluting mills and factories included tanneries, paper and pulp mills, sugar mills, distilleries, iron and steel foundries, textile mills, fertilizer factories, pesticide and insecticide factories, cement factories, rubber and plastic factories and pharmaceutical laboratories.

A time-frame of three years was given to these units to set up treatment facilities but no response was achieved from those. The time-frame had expired on June 4, 1989.

The Industries Ministry also advised the Board of Investment not to approve any

See Page 12 Col 8

Zahir murder 1 more witness examined

By Court Correspondent

One more witness to the murder of businessman Humayun Zahir was examined in the court of the Second Additional District and Sessions Judge Dhaka yesterday.

In his deposition, Abul Hossain, a guard at the Dhanmordi residence of Zahir said that he had opened the main entrance for his master on April 8, 1993 just before he was murdered within his house premises.

A young man, who later killed Zahir, was waiting outside, saying that he was carrying an important letter for Zahir. Hossain told the court, "I told my master about the man. I was asked to let him enter. The young man, handed over an envelope, which was later found containing nothing but a blank white paper to Zahir," Hossain said. He also

See Page 12 Col 3

UN resolutions on Kashmir outdated, says Hurd

By Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD, Jan 8: British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said today that UN resolutions on Kashmir were outdated and no longer provided a realistic way to solve the long-standing dispute involving India and Pakistan, reports Reuter.

Asked why Britain was not urging implementation of the UN resolutions, he told reporters at Islamabad Airport: "Because they are 40 years old and I think it is not real to suppose that they will form the basis of a settlement."

India and Pakistan have fought two of their three wars since independence over the Himalayan former principlality of Kashmir.

Kashmiri Muslim militants began a revolt against Indian rule in January 1990 which has cost an estimated 17,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the mil-

itants Pakistan says it gives them only moral and diplomatic support.

Islamabad wants the dispute to be resolved through the UN resolutions which call for a plebiscite to allow Kashmiris to decide whether the territory should join India or Pakistan.

Earlier Pakistan had rejected proposals by Hurd for resolving the long-standing Kashmir dispute.

At the start of a two-day visit to Pakistan, Hurd had told reporters in Lahore: "In Britain's view three things are necessary to find an answer to the problem in Kashmir: One is direct discussion between Pakistan and India. The second is a political process in Kashmir which is credible."

The third is an end to the encouragement of violence from outside. These three things go together. They re-

See Page 12 Col 5

Noorjahan murder: HC issues rule, calls for records

By Staff Correspondent

A High Court division bench yesterday issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to show cause why the lower court judgement of acquittal of the accused persons in the sensational Noorjahan murder case should not be set, aside and fresh investigation directed.

Passing the order the division bench comprising Justice D M Anwaruddin Ahmed and Justice Tafazzal Islam also called for the records of the case from the learned district and sessions judge, Faridpur.

The sessions judge, by a judgement delivered on June 23, 1994 acquitted all the ac-

Akheri Munajat today

From Our Correspondent

GAZIPUR, Jan 8: The Akheri Munajat (last prayer) of the 30th Biswa Ijtima at Tongi will be offered at noon tomorrow.

Ameer of the World Tablig Jamaat Maulana Enamul Hasan (Hajrat) from Delhi will conduct the prayer. Lakhs of devotees will seek divine blessings at the Munajat.

Meanwhile, on the second day of the three-day Ijtima today, thousands of Muslims continued pouring into the Ijtima venue. The Dhaka-Mymensingh highway was crammed with hundreds of motor vehicles all day long. There was a traffic jam from Azampur, Uttara to the Tongi Mill Gate from 4:00 pm till 5:00 pm.

At the Ijtima, a number of eminent religious leaders delivered sermons to lakhs of people converged at the six-square kilometre venue of the Ijtima, the second largest Muslim congregation after the Hajj.

Ameer of the Bangladesh Tablig Jamaat Maulana Abdul Aziz, Maulana Ashraf Ali and Maulana Enamul Hasan (Hajrat) delivered sermons after the prayer.

PM may visit Sri Lanka this month

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to undertake four trips abroad in the first quarter of the current year, officials said yesterday, reports UNB.

The Prime Minister is likely to visit Sri Lanka in the last week of January.

She is expected to visit India and Pakistan before the next SAARC summit scheduled to be held in New Delhi April 15-17.

Begum Zia is also expected to attend the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen March 11-12.

Fog disrupts ferry services

SRAJGANJ, Jan 8: Ferry and launch services between Bhanupur and Straganj, and at Jhainathaganj ghat were disrupted for nearly six hours early today due to dense fog, reports UNB.

Official sources said a large number of passengers of the northern districts travelling through the routes in buses and trains were stranded at the ghats till the fog cleared at 10 am.



Indian Jain ascetic Sahajmuni Maharaj, 62, who has been fasting for world peace in a suburb north of Bombay for the past 201 days, is carried aloft yesterday to a public reception in his honour, which was attended by several hundred thousand devotees. —AFP photo

Legacy