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Changes in global economic scenario unveil opportunities in S Asia, says Sri Lankan President

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STOCK MARKET

DSE Index	788.51 (+0.44%)
Market capitalisation Tk	43.55 billion
Turnover in volume	7205
Turnover in value Tk	18.70 million

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NEWS BRIEFS

PM makes farewell call on Chandrika

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia last night made a farewell call on Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga who leaves for Colombo early this morning ending her three-day state visit to Bangladesh. President Kumaratunga thanked Begum Zia for the warm hospitality extended to her and her entourage, reports UNB.

PM to open Nat'l Science Week

The central exhibition and competition of the 18th National Science and Technology Week begins in Dhaka on April 1. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the week as the chief guest at the National Science and Technology Museum premises at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city, reports BSS.

Alleged dacoit beaten to death

CHITTAGONG, Mar 29: An alleged dacoit was killed in a mass beating at Satkania Bazar early today, police said. The victim was identified as Abdul Hakim, locally known as 'Baido daktar'. Witnesses said the alleged dacoit came to the bazar shortly after midnight for shopping. But he tried to leave a shop without paying the bill. The shopkeeper picked up a microphone and raised an alarm. On hearing the alarm neighbouring people rushed to the shop and beat up Hakim mercilessly. He died on the spot, reports UNB.

Dispute over piling design may delay JMB project

By S Y Bakht

The Jamuna bridge project may get delayed due to an ongoing dispute between the project consultants and the contractor for the main bridge over meeting design specifications, according to official sources.

Earlier last month, the project consultants informed the Hyundai Engineering and Construction J/V, contractor for the main bridge and the viaducts, that the piling design adopted by the company was not in compliance with the

specifications and rejected it. The piling design of the bridge was asked to be changed, the sources said.

The South Korean company, on the other hand, disagreed outright and insisted that it was acting in accordance with the contract. The company also noted that a change at this stage would require additional costs as the steel plates for the piles were already ordered. And, more importantly, it would also cause a delay in completing the project. Hyun-

dal said.

A Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) official, when contacted, acknowledged that the consultants had rejected the piling design put forward by the contractor. "The original specification at the time of signing the contract has to be followed," he emphasised.

Asked if there is a likelihood of the project being delayed under the circumstances, he said: "There should be no delay." See Page 12 Col 7

Farmer killed in fresh firing Army sent to distribute fertiliser in 10 N dists

The authorities are taking help of the army in transporting and distribution of fertiliser in the country's 10 northern districts facing a severe fertiliser crisis, reports UNB.

Meanwhile, a farmer was shot dead and more than 75 people, including some policemen, were injured when police opened fire to disperse militant farmers demanding fertiliser at Melandah in

Jamalpur yesterday. The dead was identified as Kabir Hossain (27) of Adra village under Melandah thana.

Army convoys so far transported 500 tons of urea from Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Factory to the northern districts since March 27, official sources said.

Some 3,500 tons of urea will be transported by army to ensure their safe and speedy distribution among the farmers.

1800 tons urea seized at Jhalakati

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 29: Police have lodged a case against the proprietor of the Gazi Enterprise, its manager and some others in connection with the fertiliser scandal at Jhalakati. The case has already been sent to the court, police said.

Police seized 1800 tons of urea fertiliser from the godown of the Gazi Enterprise on March 24.

See Page 12 Col 8

When contacted an official at Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Factory said army was sent to meet the emergency situation in the northern districts.

The districts are: Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Bogra, Sirajganj, Gaibandha, Rajshahi, Nogaon, Natore and Chapainawabganj.

Witnesses of Melandah incident said some 10,000 farmers enlisted by the local administration for distribution of fertiliser had thronged the TNO office there since morning to buy fertilizer at fair price.

See Page 12 Col 7

Hajj flight from Apr 13

The first hajj-flight of Biman for the pilgrims of this year under the government management, will begin on April 13, reports UNB.

The last hajj-flight will leave the city for Jeddah on April 26, said a PID handout issued in Dhaka yesterday.

The intending Hajj pilgrims are requested to report to the Temporary Hajj Camp three days before their scheduled flights to Jeddah.

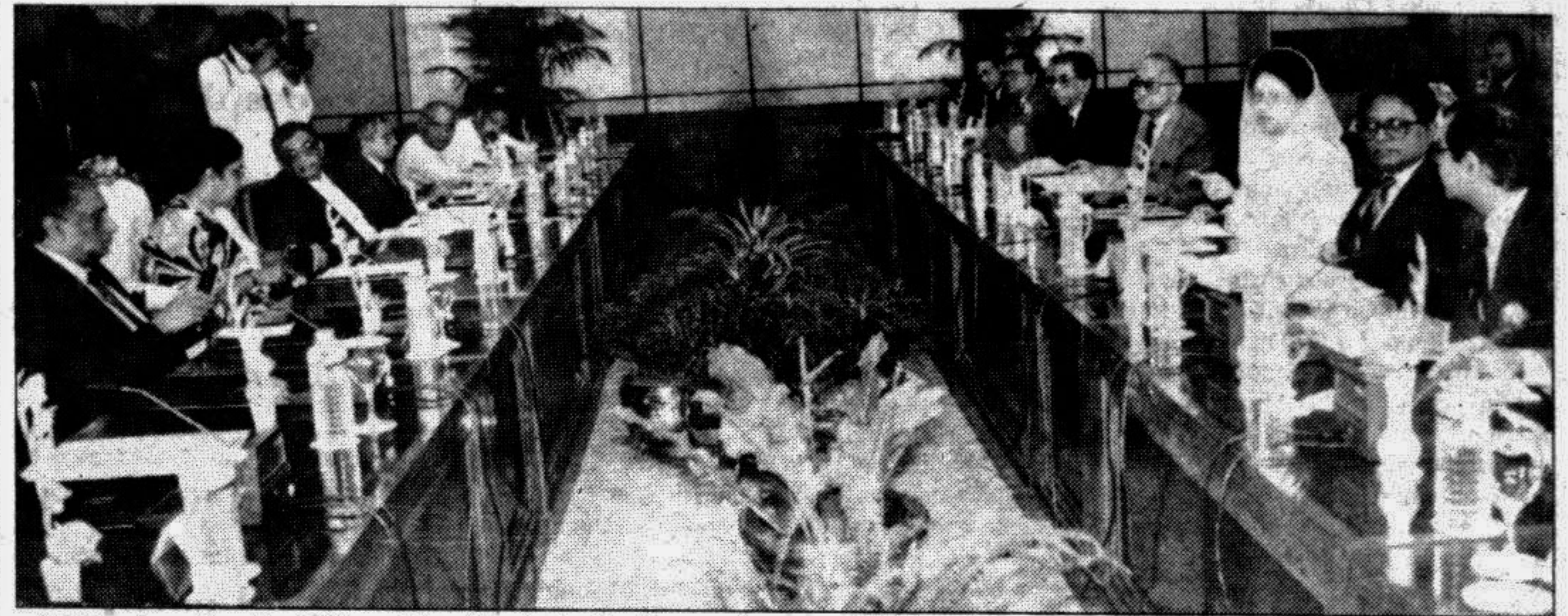
AL polls affairs body meets CEC

By Staff Correspondent

A high level Awami League delegation on election affairs met Election Commission (EC) officials in the city yesterday and discussed the progress in the preparation of ID cards for voters, their registration and delimitation of constituencies, says an EC press release.

During the meet, EC officials and Awami League delegates laid emphasis on the co-operation of people and political parties in implementing the enormous task of registration of voters and preparation of ID cards.

See Page 12 Col 7



Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the formal official talks held at the International Conference Centre in the city yesterday. — PID photo

Dhaka, Colombo agree to boost trade, economic ties

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and visiting Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga yesterday agreed to boost trade and economic ties between the two countries, reports UNB.

"Bangladesh is now particularly interested in enhancing her economic, trade and commercial relations with Sri Lanka," Begum Zia was quoted by the officials to have said in her opening remarks at the formal talks, held at the International Conference Centre in the morning.

Despite the existing friendly relations, the bilateral trade between the two countries remained far below the expected level. Bangladesh's exports to Sri Lanka in 1992-93 were worth 12.03 million US dollars against imports of 6.11 million dollars, according to available figures.

Until recently, transactions between the two countries were limited to items like jute, jute goods, urea fertiliser and coconut oil.

At the hour-long "very warm and cordial" talks, the two leaders underlined the

need for identifying new commodities that can be profitably traded between their countries. They also stressed further activating the Bangladesh-Sri Lanka Joint Economic Commission, set up in 1985.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the JEC would be held in Dhaka on June 6-8 to explore new areas of cooperation, involving the private sectors of the two countries.

Sri Lanka has conveyed its decision that it would immediately increase the volume of import of jute goods from Bangladesh.

Officials said the Sri Lankan side also expressed interest in joint venture projects, particularly industries for canning fruits and vegetable and also coconut plantation in Bangladesh. Kumaratunga reportedly assured the Bangladesh leader that on her return home she would try to inspire her country's business community to invest in Bangladesh.

Begum Zia was aided at the talks by Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman, Commerce and Information Minister M. Shamsul Islam, the Principal Secretary to the PM ASM Eusuf, Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Colombo Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, ERD Secretary Lutfulahil Majid, Civil Aviation Secretary Noor Uddin Al-Masood and Jute Secretary AZM Nasiruddin.

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Lanka struggling to restore peace, democracy

By Staff Correspondent

Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga said yesterday that her nascent government had embarked on a formidable task of restoring democratic institutions, expediting economic reforms and initiating peace negotiations with the Tamil Tigers.

The visiting Sri Lankan President said she would try to inspire her country's business community to invest in Bangladesh.

Hasina calls on Chandrika

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday made a courtesy call on the visiting Sri Lankan President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga at the state guest house Karotoa, reports UNB.

Hasina welcomed Chandrika to Bangladesh on behalf of her party and the people of Bangladesh, and exchanged greetings with the Sri Lankan President. She also expressed greetings for the people of Sri Lanka and wished them peace and happiness.

See Page 12 Col 6

Conversion of green jute into pulp, paper to save Tk 2385 cr in 7 yrs

By Krishna P Roy

The conversion of green jute into pulp and paper would help the country save Tk 2,385 crore in seven years, according to a survey report of the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC).

The survey reveals that about 55,000 tonnes of industrial grade paper are manufactured locally and 1,43,000 tonnes are imported at a cost of about Tk 1,049 crore a year.

With sharp decrease in the availability of traditional fibrous raw materials (bamboo or wood), experts of the BCIC in consultation with those of the Bangladesh Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) evolved the idea of using jute as a cellulose material

for meeting the increasing deficit of fibrous raw materials in the country.

The BCIC succeeded in making commercial batch of pulp from green jute in Sylhet Pulp and Paper Mills on November 19, 1993 and industrial grade papers in Karnaphuli Paper Mills on January 2, 1994.

The result of the first commercial batch production of pulp and paper from green jute being positive, it was felt that the corporation could now go for large-scale manufacture of industrial grade paper, the demand for which was met only through import, said a high official of the BCIC.

The BCIC has taken up a

plan for manufacturing 25,000 tonnes of pulp in its four mills — Karnaphuli Paper Mills (10,000) Sylhet Pulp and Paper Mills (5,000), North Bengal Paper Mills (5,000) and Khulna Newsprint Mills (5,000 tonnes) during the period September 1994 to October 1995.

For this the BCIC requires 1,32,500 tonnes of green jute which are being collected from the command areas of the respective enterprises, officials said.

The large-scale use of green jute will rapidly increase demand for jute for pulp and paper sector and induce the farmers to go for increased See Page 12 Col 1

467859 maunds of rice imported last week

Bangladesh has imported 4,67,859 maunds of rice against letters of credit (LC) during last week and 79,03,050 maunds of wheat till date, according to an official handout yesterday, reports BSS.

Out of the above imported rice 2,99,082 maunds reached through land routes while 1,68,777 maunds through waterways. With consignments in hand the imported quantity of rice against LCs now stood at 70,18,780 maunds.

Meanwhile, a ship named "Al Sayma" carrying 1,68,777 maunds of boiled rice from Thailand reached Chittagong port yesterday and two other ships carrying 4,15,245 maunds of rice are expected to reach Chittagong within a day.

Two candidates among 8 killed in Bihar polls violence

NEW DELHI, Mar 29: Eight people, including two rival local political leaders, were killed as vote counting began today in the east Indian state of Bihar, officials said, reports Reuters.

The killings took place as left-leaning parties paralysed parliament in New Delhi for the second day, accusing Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao of seeking to stall their "imminent victory" in India's second most populous state.

Parliament deputies said a local candidate from India's ruling Congress Party was killed with four aides when his car was bombed as he drove to

vote counting in Kharagpur in southeastern Bihar.

Sachchidanand Singh of Congress was the second candidate to have been killed in Bihar. A Marxist candidate was killed before polls began on March 11.

Later today, Prabhakar Singh, a district president of the left of centre Janata Dal, the party in power in Bihar before the imposition of direct rule on Tuesday, was shot dead with two aides as he went to Kharagpur hospital to see the bodies of the Congress candidate and his aides.

More than 80 people have now died in violence surround-

ing the vote.

Home Minister Shankar Rao Chavan told an uproarious lower house that counting for 251 constituencies of the 324-member Bihar Assembly had started today.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) said a new vote was taking place today in 101 booths across 25 constituencies in Bihar where the earlier poll had been cancelled because of violence or electoral fraud.

Chief Election Commissioner TN Seshan had rescheduled the Bihar election several times because of the lack of security for the vote. More than 100,000 paramilitary police were drafted into the state during the election, which took place in five phases.

Rao imposed President's rule in Bihar on Tuesday, dismissing Janata Dal Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav, whose five-year term expired on March 15.

Rao had allowed Yadav to continue in a caretaker capacity, apparently fearing he would exploit any move to impose direct rule during the election.

But without an assembly to pass a budget before the end of the financial year on March 31, Bihar faced a crisis without President's rule. See Page 12 Col 8

Smoke, sound pollution Rule nisi on BRTA chief

By Staff Correspondent

The High Court yesterday issued a rule nisi upon the Chairman of the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) and the Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) to show cause why they should not be directed to take measures to check pollution caused due to the emissions of hazardous smokes from motor vehicles and the use of audible

signalling devices. The rule was issued upon a writ filed by a Supreme Court advocate and Secretary General of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association (BELA) Dr Mohiuddin Farooque.

The petition was filed against 13 respondents, including the secretaries of the See Page 12 Col 8

Manzur murder case Emdad's petition puts investigators in spot

Star Report

The petition submitted by Maj (ret'd) Kazi Emdadul Huq seeking to withdraw his confessional statement has put the officials probing the alleged murder of Maj Gen Abul Manzur in 1981 in a bit of a spot, police sources said.

Abdul Kahhar Akand, ASP of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and investigating officer of the case, spent the whole day in the city's metropolitan magistracy yesterday, holding consultations with police and court officials regarding the latest developments in this regard in the court of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM), Chittagong.

"He had a long meeting with the AC (Prosecution), Shaful Islam at the latter's office," a court source said. He, however, could not give details.

Emdad, one of the three suspects so far arrested in connection with the case, submitted a petition Tuesday in the CMM's court, Chittagong, for withdrawing the See Page 12 Col 3

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DHAMECSU polls today

By DMCH Correspondent

The Dhaka Medical College Students Union (DHAMECSU) elections will be held today. About one thousand voters will cast their votes from 8:30 am to 2 pm.

A four member election commission headed by Professor FA Azim, Head of the Department of Pathology, will conduct the elections. Three separate panels of the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Ch- See Page 12 Col 8

Light rain brings welcome relief

By Staff Correspondent

City dwellers as well as the people of a few other places in the country experienced a welcome relief yesterday when light to moderate rain slightly mitigated the current hot spell.

The capital experienced trace rains along with squally wind at around 12:30 pm which lasted just a few minutes, but long enough to make the weather a little comfort- See Page 12 Col 5

ইজারা বিজ্ঞপ্তি

গুলশান আবাসিক এলাকার ৭০ নং রাস্তার লেডিজ পার্ক সংলগ্ন লোকটি বাৎসরিক ভাড়া ভিত্তিতে ৫ (পাঁচ) বৎসর মেয়াদী শুধুমাত্র মৎস্য চাষের জন্য সীল কোটেশনের মাধ্যমে ইজারা দেওয়া হইবে। পরিচালক (এস্টেট) কর্তৃক আগামী ৯-৪-৯৫ইং তারিখে বেলা ১২ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত ইচ্ছুক কোটেশনদাতাদের নিকট হইতে রাজউকের নির্ধারিত ফরমে সীল কোটেশন গ্রহণ করা হইবে। কোটেশনের শর্ত ও নিয়মাবলীসহ কোটেশন ফরম নির্ধারিত হারে প্রতিটি টাঃ ২০০ (দুইশত) মাত্র নগদ মূল্যে (অফেরতযোগ্য) জনতা ব্যাংক, রাজউক ভবন শাখা, ঢাকা থেকে পাওয়া যাইবে। উল্লেখ্য, কোটেশন দাখিলের দিন কোন কোটেশন ফরম বিক্রী করা হইবে না।

আগামী ১০-৪-৯৫ইং তারিখ বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে পরিচালক (এস্টেট) মহোদয়ের অফিস কক্ষে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাজে কোটেশন জমা দিতে হইবে। প্রাপ্ত কোটেশনসমূহ এদিনই বেলা ১.০০ ঘটিকার সময় উপস্থিত কোটেশনদাতাদের (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) সম্মুখে খোলা হইবে।

ডিএফপি-৭২২৩-২৭/৩
জি-৪৭২
চেয়ারম্যান
রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ, ঢাকা