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STOCK MARKET

DSE Index	778.71 (+3.29%)
Market capitalisation Tk	43.01 billion
Turnover in volume	128874
Turnover in value Tk	24375810.00

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NEWS BRIEFS

Hillary visits BAF Base

Visiting US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton met the participants of the US-Bangladesh joint training programme at the BAF Base Mafur Rahman yesterday afternoon on her way back to Dhaka ending her visit to the Jessore area. Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal Altaf Hossain Choudhury received the US First Lady on her arrival at the BAF Base, and saw her off to Dhaka, says an ISPR press release.

Foodgrains under OMS raised

The government will increase allocation of foodgrains under open market sale (OMS) in all 64 districts in the month of April. According to the decision one ton more rice and one ton more flour will be sold under the OMS in every district headquarters in addition to the existing allocations, reports BSS.

839 more Rohingyas go home

From Our Correspondent COX'S BAZAR, Apr 3: As many as 839 more refugees of 161 Rohingya families repatriated to Myanmar today. With this the total number of returnees now stands at 1,84,503.

Grameen activities impress Hillary

The Jamdani finds a famous new model

By Staff Correspondent

US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and her daughter Chelsea wrapped themselves in dresses made from Grameen Check during their field trip to Jessore yesterday.

The First Lady seemed extremely elated about the beautiful jacket and scarf she donned over a long skirt, all sporting the Grameen Check, a highly popular all-cotton handloom fabric design. The clothes, which fitted See Page 12 Col 5



Hillary Clinton clad in a Jamdani saree at Moishahati in Jhenidah yesterday.

US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton flew to Jessore yesterday, to witness the Grameen Bank's activities and have a firsthand knowledge of Bangladesh's efforts for self-reliance and development.

"I am very happy to see for myself what I have been long hearing and reading about," she told a group of women, beneficiaries of the Grameen Bank programme that has won international acclaim for its unique banking system for the rural poor.

The wife of US President Bill Clinton and their daughter Chelsea spent more than an hour with the disadvantaged women of the quaint Rishipara village in Moishahati.

"I heard about the bank almost 10 years ago. Now I have come to see and learn how the bank has benefited you to help

you become self-reliant in society," she said.

She was flown to Jessore and later taken to the village in a motorcade where hundreds of village men, women and children lined up to welcome the distinguished visitor.

Prof Mohammad Yunus, founder of the bank, greeted Mrs Clinton and introduced her to the members of the bank.

The local branch of the bank has nearly 2,500 clients who take loans for housing, farming, cattle-raising and setting up small and cottage industries.

The village men waved their hands to welcome the US First Lady while the children sang welcome songs and displayed physical feats.

The children of the village See Page 12 Col 4

Food for Education Programme lauded

US First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton yesterday lauded various development efforts in Bangladesh, especially the government's Food for Education Programme, reports UNB.

"How did the project begin? I don't believe there is any such programme in the world," an official quoted Hillary Clinton as saying during a meeting with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Clinton had 15 minutes of talks with the Prime Minister at her Hare Road office from 6:45 pm before joining a dinner. Begum Zia hosted in honour of the US First Lady.

The US First Lady said she was very much impressed by the ongoing development programmes in Bangladesh and called the cooperation between the government and NGOs as excellent.

She acclaimed the performance of the Bangladesh Army as UN peacekeepers and expressed her happiness over the cooperative relations between Bangladesh Air Force and the US Army.

Hillary Clinton said the US journalists accompanying her had widened their knowledge

about Bangladesh and were moved by the excellent works being done by Bangladeshi people.

She said she was also impressed while flying over the countryside. "I saw excellent land and cultivation here."

Briefing the US First Lady on her government's development programmes, Begum Zia said the country's food production would have been better had there been no scarcity of water caused by drought in the northern part of the country.

She said the country had also experienced serious environmental degradation due to unilateral withdrawal of water upstream during the dry season. "It is very important to resolve the problem."

The US First Lady hoped that the water problem would be resolved by Bangladesh and her neighbour.

Earlier on her arrival at the Hare Road office, Hillary Clinton was received by the Prime Minister and together they gave some time to the photographers for a picture session.

Attired in black skirt and light green tops, the First Lady See Page 12 Col 6



Local people in a countryboat trying to prevent the fire from spreading along the bank of the Buriganga river. A devastating blaze gutted numerous shanties in the city's Islambagh slum yesterday, the second such fire in the area in less than a month. — Star photo

Honest warmth transcends all else

By Staff Correspondent

Barriers of distance, colour, race, wealth, culture and even language floundered at the doorstep of unmixing affection. Our simple village women, as if doing what they have always done for any special guest, just laid their hearts and home open. Mrs Clinton could see their warmth, their sincerity and their love, and she responded just as spontaneously.

Whatever was lost in Prof Yunus's translation from rural Bangla to American English and vice versa, was more than made up by an extreme eagerness to communicate on both sides. A most intimate series of questions and answers followed, that covered everyday issues of life and living. "Don't you want another child?" asked an admiring villager. "We are very proud of Chelsea, and are happy to have only her," she replied.

"Do you have cows in your house?" asked another. "Well, my current residence does not permit it. But many Americans do so. Do you have your own source of income?" "Yes I did, from the age of 13. But now, as See Page 12 Col 7

Daring break-in at Finance Ministry

By Staff Correspondent

A daring break-in took place in 12 rooms of the Finance Ministry, including the offices of the minister and the banking secretary, late Sunday night, officials confirmed yesterday.

The intruders forced their entry into the rooms, located on the third floor of Building No 7 at the Secretariat, and forcibly opened and rummaged through the file cabinets.

They broke into four rooms on the eastern part of the floor used by the Finance Minister and his staff, including his private secretary's room and the special file room adjacent to it. The intruders also went into eight other rooms on the western portion of the floor belonging to the newly upgraded Banking Division, including the banking secretary's room.

Two separate FIRs were filed with Ramna Thana and police picked up three government employees working at the building for questioning but released them later.

Finance Ministry officials insisted that nothing was miss-

ing from the rooms that were broken into. "Nothing was found to be missing from the rooms," they claimed.

Police investigators later found that although some of the locks in the rooms were broken, the locks in the two sets of collapsible gates in each portion of the floor remained intact.

Guards at the building told police that the collapsible gates on the floor were closed immediately the last officer left his office around 4:15 pm Sunday.

However, the main ground floor entrance to the building was only closed around 11 pm, when other Finance Ministry officials at the second floor, working late hours perhaps on the upcoming budget, left their offices, police was told.

Later, police also found that the eastern wing of the third floor could also be entered through one of the offices located in front of the staircase. Police is continuing the investigation.

Official sources suspected See Page 12 Col 8

3 killed in another fire at Islambagh

By Staff Correspondent

A devastating fire again struck the Islambagh area in Lalbagh in the capital yesterday leaving two women and a baby killed.

At least 30 people were wounded and about 300 shanties gutted in the fire that completely destroyed a slum of some 1500 people.

One of the victims was identified as Monowara Begum (28). The body of an unidentified mother clutching her child was also recovered from the debris.

Her body was found hanging from a bamboo pole and rescuers believe she got stuck between two crossed poles while trying to escape the blaze.

It took five hours for the fire-brigade personnel to douse the inferno that might have originated from a stove.

In a similar fire at the Islambagh slums only a few days See Page 12 Col 1

4 Jhenidah Sonali Bank staff killed in road accident

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Apr 3: Four Sonali Bank employees were killed and four others injured when a car carrying them collided with a bus on the Jhenidah-Jessore road today.

Police said head cashier Aminul Islam, guard Anwarul Bashar, cashier Hafizur Rahman and driver Motahar Hossain died on the spot when their car met with the accident at about 11 am near the Kotgachi Digi village, about eight kilometre off Jhenidah town.

Zahid Hossain, Serajul Bashar, Abdul Bari and Abdur Rouf, all employees of the Jhenidah branch of Sonali Bank, were admitted to the hospital in critical condition.

The bodies were sent to the hospital for autopsy. A case was filed with Jhenidah police.

Siltation continues to shrink waterways

By Nazmul Ashraf

Continued siltation of the major rivers is reducing the length of navigable waterways maintained by the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), affecting river communication in the country, official sources said.

The length of classified navigable waterways under the BIWTA declined from 8433 kilometres in 1984 to 5984 km in 1992, the sources said, adding, the mileage shrink down to only 3800 km during the dry season.

According to BIWTA sources, the total length of navigable waterways including channels for low draft country boats is about 13,000 km and more than half of the country's land area is located and three quarters of all commercial activities take place within a distance of 10 km from a navigable waterway in all the seasons.

Although maintenance of the basic waterways system is becoming more arduous due to continuous siltation of the rivers, it is generally much less capital intensive than the construction and maintenance of land transport modes, an official noted.

The annual maintenance cost of bituminous roads stand around Taka lakh 50 thousand per km without the periodical upgrading and rehabilitation costs whereas the estimated cost of development and maintenance dredging of the classified inland waterways is about Tk 42 thousand per km, the official pointed out.

Meanwhile, the World Bank, in a recent report on the water transport sector, recom-

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A most heart-breaking tale

By Morshed Ali Khan

One of the country's most well-equipped hospitals, the recently set up wing of the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city, is facing allegations of poor services for coronary emergencies.

Patients, relatives and experts alleged that the new hospital lacks a healthy operational strategy for patients requiring emergency attention.

A patient, who was treated at the hospital recently and preferred not to be named, said that from the time of arrival at the hospital after feeling 'sick in the heart', it took the doctor at the emergency unit 20 minutes to transfer him upstairs for treatment.

"At the emergency unit they did an ECG (Electrocardiogram)," said the patient, "then they asked my relatives to take me upstairs to the Coronary Care Unit (CCU)."

The patient said that a wheelchair was procured after a long search in the corridors. A hospital attendant then pushed the wheelchair with the gasping patient on it through the corridors and stairs to the CCU (Coronary Care Unit) upstairs.

The attending doctor at the CCU gave a hastily written prescription and asked his relatives to buy the medicines immediately.

"At least forty minutes had elapsed before I got treatment for my stroke," said the patient.

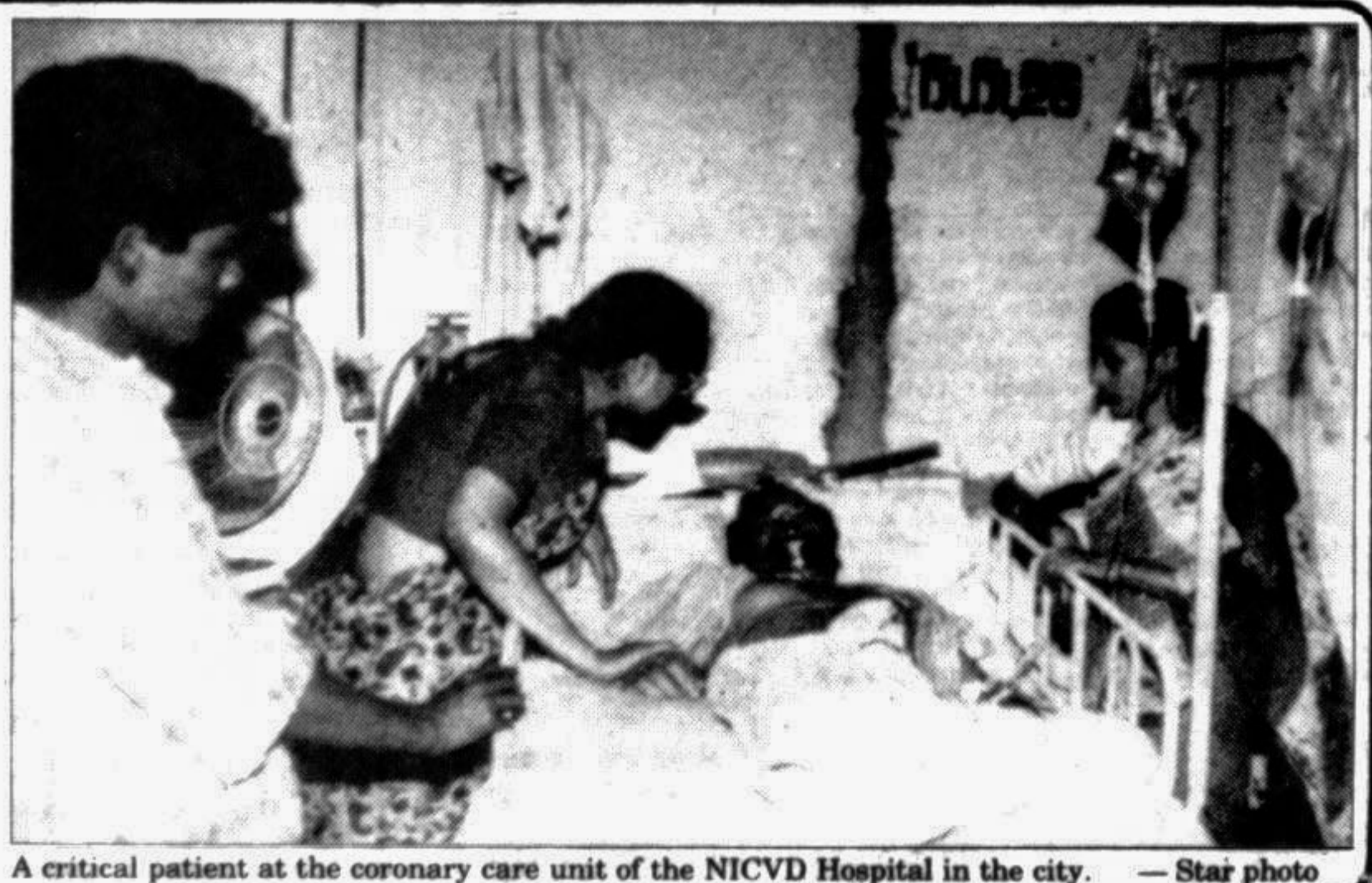
patient.

The hospital is situated on a nine-acre plot and the first phase of the three-phase project is over. When completed, it would have 400 beds and other facilities for a modern cardiovascular institute.

At the CCU, anxious relatives of patients surrounded every bed. The electronic monitors beeped ceaselessly while the only two duty nurses kept busy with handful of papers.

A visitor at the CCU, who came to see her father, said that the patients' personal attendants have to do most of the nursing since only two or three nurses are assigned to the unit. "Sometimes cock-

See Page 12 Col 6



A critical patient at the coronary care unit of the NICVD Hospital in the city. — Star photo

Hasina exchanges views with DU teachers

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina yesterday exchanged opinion with Dhaka University teachers on overall situation in the country, reports UNB.

Terrorism on the campus, crisis of fertilizer, rice and other essentials were discussed in the meeting held at the party's Dhanmondi office yesterday evening.

Hasina said, "We want a campus free from arms and terrorism." But it is yet to be achieved due to what she called armed vandalism by a pro-government student organisation.

On present political development, she said that Parliament and the government lost legitimacy with the See Page 12 Col 8