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The Daily Star

Day or Night
Standard Chartered

VOL. V NO. 85 REGD. NO. DA 781

BAISHAKH 1, 1402 BS,

DHAKA FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1995

ZILQAD 13, 1415 HIJRI

16 PAGES: PRICE TAKA 5.00

শুভ নববর্ষ
The Daily Star wishes its valued readers and patrons a very happy Bengali New Year. The offices of The Daily Star will remain closed Friday, Pahela Baishakh, the Bengali New Year. Therefore, there will be no issue of the newspaper on Saturday. Also, see the Special Supplement on the New Year.

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STOCK MARKET

DSE Index	770.52 (+0.74%)
Market capitalization Tk	42.56 billion
Turnover in volume	122774
Turnover in value Tk	18.87 million

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NEWS BRIEFS

One stabbed to death in Ctg
CHITTAGONG, Apr 13: A young man was stabbed to death by unknown assailants in front of Andarkilla General Hospital this morning. Witnesses said four to five miscreants attacked the victim, Mushtaque, at about 8 am and fled the scene after knifing him repeatedly. Police recovered Tk 15,000 from his pocket. Further details about the victim could not be known immediately, police said, reports UNB.

Tribal festival in CHT from today
KHAGRACHHARI, Apr 13: A three-day cultural festival of the Tribals styled 'Biju' of the greater Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) districts begins tomorrow. The Tribals of the CHT — Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban districts — every year observe this traditional festival, reports UNB.

Dudayev survives assassination bid
MOSCOW, Apr 13: Rebel Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev has survived an assassination attempt and is alive and well, the head of Chechen Military intelligence told Itar-Tass news agency today. Russian Movaev said Russian artillery on Wednesday shelled a house in southern Chechnya where Dudayev had been staying, the Chechen leader, who had left the house just two hours earlier, was unharmed, reports Reuters.

Welcome, Pahela Baishakh

By Staff Correspondent
Shubha Naba Bausha. Happy New Year. Today is Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the Bengali year 1402. The nation bade farewell to another 1401 BS yesterday and welcomed the new one at the stroke of midnight Thursday. Pahela Baishakh is celebrated all over the country with traditional festivities. Over the years, especially since independence, Pahela Baishakh has acquired a very special place in the life of the nation. Traders and shopkeepers will open 'halkhata' or fresh accounts books and offer sweets to their customers. But the day is more than that. Pahela Baishakh symbolises our culture and tradition.



The last sun-set of the Bengali year 1401 yesterday. — Star photo

Nor'wester kills 6, injures 100 in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Apr 13: At least six persons were killed and 100 others injured when a nor'wester hit the Chittagong port city and its surrounding areas Wednesday night, sources said. One Ful Meah (28) was killed in Sitakundu. Ayesha Begum (10) was electrocuted at Zakir Hossain Road, two died in house collapse at Jaldanga across Karnaphuli bridge, two others at Halishar, and Chaktai and another at Patiya. The injured were admitted to various clinics and health complexes. Around 500 kutchas houses were damaged in the city's slum areas and other parts of the district, sources reported. The nor'wester with a wind speed of up to 166 KM per hour that lashed the port city uprooted electric poles disrupting power supply from 11 pm last night. The power supply was restored at 1 pm today. PDB officials said. The nor'wester which lasted for half an hour also uprooted many trees at different places. It was accompanied by heavy rainfall. Three leading local dailies — Azadi, Karnaphuli and Naya Bangla — could not come out today as power supply remained snapped, according to UNB. Chittagong Port sources said the anchors of two foreign ships — Sea Franco of China and La Seya of Cyprus — were broken off at jetty no 7 and 8. The vessels were towed back to the jetties for rebirthing. Sixtythree containers piled up at the port were also blown away by the storm. Our Staff Correspondent See Page 8 Col 8

No feud in JP, says Manju

By Chapal Bashar
Chairman Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury on certain organisational matters. Manju a former minister in Ershad's cabinet, categorically said that he would steadfastly follow the directives of the JP Chairman, Acting Chairman and the President. "I do not think there is any intra-party feud — if there is any, that is due to lack of communication," said Manju when asked to comment on the reported quarrelling in the JP. He maintained that the JP comprises some leading personalities, thinkers, stalwarts and great leaders. "It is natural that such personalities would try to uphold their own ideals and especially since the party chairman is behind bars, they may try to promote their personal views and beliefs," said Manju, adding, "This only proves the dynamism of the organisation. In my opinion, this is not feuding." "What will be your immediate task as the new Secretary General of the Jatiya Party?" In reply, Manju said, as a coordinator he would work according to the directives of the party chief. "We, who are in the Jatiya Party, will unite as one — we should strengthen the ongoing anti-government agitation and achieve the conditions set by the Opposition for holding free and fair elections," he added. Manju, 49, thrice elected member of Parliament since 1986, mentioned that despite See Page 8 Col 7



Anwar Hossain Manju

Manzur murder 2 more army men interrogated

By Staff Correspondent
CID officials yesterday interrogated two more retired army personnel as they continued probing the mysterious killing of Maj Gen Abul Manzur in 1981, police sources said. But the sources could not give the names of the two questioned at the Malibagh office of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in the afternoon. About two dozen people were interrogated till yesterday in connection with the case, the source said, adding, a See Page 8 Col 1

May 28 fresh date for hearing Zia murder case

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Apr 13: The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) here today set May 28 as the fresh date for hearing the President Ziaur Rahman murder case. After a brief hearing, CMM M Maitur Rahman announced the new date with the Kotwali police once again failing to submit the report of its en See Page 8 Col 2

Rafiquzzaman granted bail

By Court Correspondent
The District and Sessions Judge, Dhaka yesterday granted the bail prayer of Dr M Rafiquzzaman, arrested by the Anti-Corruption Bureau earlier in connection with the defalcation of a bank loan. In granting the bail, the court set a bail bond of Tk one lakh and ordered the accused not to leave the country without the permission of the Home Ministry and the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka. The ruling was issued on a criminal miscellaneous appeal case filed on behalf of Rafiquzzaman. Appearing on behalf of the petitioner, Barrister Moudud Ahmed stated that Rafiquzzaman was arrested in this case See Page 8 Col 3

Hasina visits tornado-hit Munshiganj

MUNSHIGANJ, Apr 13: Awami League president Sheikh Hasina today asked the government to ensure immediate supply of adequate relief material for tornado victims of Louhaganj, Sirajdikhan and Sirinagar thanas, reports UNB. Hasina, who visited remote areas of Saturday's tornado-hit areas of Louhaganj and Sirajdikhan, said, "Not even a drop of relief supplies reached the worst-affected areas." Thousands of people are living in the open sky after six days of the devastating cyclone that killed nearly 40 people and damaged hundreds of kutchas houses in the three thanas of the district. The Awami League chief visited Kurigaon, Pansa, Bogda, Palgaon, Bejgaon, Gaodia, Kushumpur and Sirajdikhan Bazar. She walked about the affected areas for more than six hours either on foot or by a rickshaw, talked to the victims and distributed relief.



Formal talks between Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and visiting Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Saad Al-Abdallah Al-Salem Al-Sabah were held at the International Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday. — Star photo

Three joint bodies set up at formal talks Kuwait for top priority to Bangladeshi manpower

By Staff Correspondent
The visiting Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait has said his country requires a lot of foreign manpower and gave the assurance it will give top priority to employing more workers from Bangladesh. The assurance was given by Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al-Abdallah Al-Salem Al-Sabah during formal talks with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the International Conference Centre yesterday morning. The Crown Prince expressed his deep interest to invest in the petroleum, energy and gas sectors of Bangladesh. Senior government officials told newsmen after the talks that the two prime ministers had extensive talks on the development of bilateral trade, and economic cooperation between the two countries. The two leaders also discussed regional and international issues of common concern, including the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Palestine and the prospects of peace in the Middle East. They had talks on activating the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) to meet the challenges of the time. The most important result of the formal talks was the decision to set up a joint commission and two joint committees to accelerate and expand bilateral cooperation in various fields. The Bangladesh-Kuwait Joint Commission and the two joint committees became functional immediately yesterday. The Bangladesh-Kuwait Joint Commission, headed by the Bangladesh Foreign Minister and Kuwait's Cabinet Minister, will discuss ways and means of expanding overall cooperation between the two countries. The commission met later in the day. A joint committee, headed by the commerce ministers of the two countries, will discuss expansion of bilateral trade See Page 8 Col 1

IFC urged to help privatise oil refinery and fertiliser units

By Staff Correspondent
The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) has sought the support of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a World Bank subsidiary, in privatising the country's oil refinery and fertiliser industries. The MCCI also urged the government to carry out faster reforms in privatisation, administration and the labour sector. MCCI leaders at a meeting with the chief of the IFC's South Asian Regional Office, Denise Leonard, said, the World Bank subsidiary could also persuade the government to extend the tax-holiday period, which will expire on June 30, or give the industries alternative incentive. The IFC, said to be the largest multilateral source of financing for the private sec See Page 8 Col 4

Sabah family urged to invest in Bangladesh

By Staff Correspondent
The visiting Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait, Sheikh Saad Al-Abdallah Al-Salem Al-Sabah has said his country seeks to 'reinforce' ties with Bangladesh through economic cooperation. "We are here to reinforce the historical bonds of brotherhood between our two peoples and to open new avenues of fruitful cooperation in all fields, including economy, investment and other areas," he told a gathering of local businessmen yesterday. Making a brief speech at a luncheon meeting with the Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), the Kuwaiti Prime Minister also expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the people of Bangladesh for contributing to the liberation of his country from Iraqi occupation in 1990. Held at a local hotel, the meeting was attended by ministers, members of the Kuwaiti delegation, business community leaders and senior government and military officials. Welcoming the Kuwaiti Crown Prince, FBCCI President Saiman F Rahman made special request for considering an See Page 8 Col 3

First batch of Hajj pilgrims leaves Dhaka

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday saw off at the airport the first batch of 301 pilgrims who flew for holy Makkah for performing Hajj, reports UNB. Begum Zia joined the Hajis in a munajat on board the City Shah Mogdhum (R), the aircraft that will take the pilgrims to Saudi Arabia for the coming Hajj. She requested the hajis, clad in white cloth, to pray for peace and progress of the country.

Agri Ministry refutes allegations

Reports published in yesterday's issues of different newspapers, blaming the Ministry of Agriculture for the supply and distribution of fertiliser are untrue, a handout issued by the Ministry of Agriculture said, reports BSS. Indecent remarks and untrue allegation were made against the Ministry of Agriculture by different political parties in expressing identical views on the subject, the handout said. It said such reports and complaints have created confusion in the minds of the public, which is not at all desirable. The ministry will restrain See Page 8 Col 6

Two more gas fire victims die

By DMCH Correspondent
Two persons including a minor boy who suffered first degree burns in a gas stove explosion in the city Tuesday died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday, raising the death toll in the accident to four. The two who succumbed yesterday are Saddam Hossain, 4, and Mofazzal Hossain, 40.

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Prokrichi scales down strike programme

By Staff Correspondent
Prokrichi members have scaled down their planned five-day strike and other agitation programmes in view of what they said, the present "crisis situation" in the country. Doctors, engineers, agriculturalists and members of the 26 non-administrative cadre services, belonging to the See Page 8 Col 7

Double-murder accused produced in court

By Court Correspondent
Romana Begum, the maid accused of committing the double murders of mother and daughter at Lalmitia in the city last year, was produced before the court of the fifth Additional District and Sessions Judge yesterday. Nilufar Chowdhury, 50, a teacher of the Home Economics College, and her 20-year old daughter Mahjabeen Chow See Page 8 Col 6