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STOCK MARKET

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 Federal Insurance
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NEWS BRIEFS

Two ordinances placed in JS

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz tabled two ordinances on the opening day of the 19th session of parliament yesterday. These are: The Supreme Court Judges (Remuneration and Privileges) (Amendment) Ordinance, 1995, and The Judicial Administration Training Institute Ordinance, 1995. reports UNB.

One dies in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Apr 24: One person was killed and three others were injured in an explosion in Sherhat area under Sandwip thana, police said today. Efaz Uddin, 18, died on the spot and three others received injuries when a hand bomb exploded at a local club house yesterday afternoon.

One killed in road accident

KUSHTIA, Apr 24: One person was killed and another was injured in a road accident on Kushtia-Bherama Road this afternoon, 12 miles from the town. Mahabub Hossain Ujjal, 26, met with the accident when his motorcycle collided head-on with a speeding isward bound truck coming from Kushtia. reports UNB.

Bar on Imelda

MANILA, Apr 24: Former First Lady Imelda Marcos has been barred from running for Congress in next month's elections after failing to comply with residency rules. The Commission on Elections (Comelec) said here today. Spokesmen for the official poll watchdog said she still had five days to appeal the decision. reports AFP.

Aum chemist held

TOKYO, Apr 24: Police arrested a senior chemist of Japan's Aum Supreme Truth cult today following the overnight murder of its science chief, which could hamper the investigation into the Tokyo subway nerve-gas attack. Hideo Mura, died in hospital early today from excessive bleeding after being stabbed in the abdomen by a self-avowed right-winger on Sunday night before television cameras outside Aum's Tokyo head office. reports AFP.

JCD factions clash

Two rival groups of students fought a gunbattle on the Dhaka University campus yesterday. Witnesses said at least 50 shots were fired during the half-an-hour-long fight between two factions of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) the student wing of the ruling party. reports UNB.

Khaleda, Benazir agree to expand trade ties

ISLAMABAD, Apr 24: The Prime Ministers of Bangladesh and Pakistan agreed here today to enhance cooperation in the fields of trade, commerce and investment between the two countries. reports BSS.

During the official talks between the two sides, led by Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and her Pakistani counterpart Benazir Bhutto, lasting over an hour, the two leaders expressed the view that the two countries would explore ways to expand cooperation in those fields.

Briefing newsmen, senior officials said the two prime ministers discussed bilateral matters and regional and international issues of common concern, particularly the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Underscoring the need for removing the trade imbalance Begum Zia said, there is a growing need to expand the

volume of trade between the two countries.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister offered to export jute and jute goods, paper, paper products, leather, power and telephone cables.

The Bangladesh side also urged Islamabad to reduce tariff on Bangladeshi jute goods.

Responding to Bangladesh's proposals, Benazir Bhutto said Pakistan would consider Bangladesh's request to reduce the tariff.

She also said a Pakistani delegation would soon visit Bangladesh to look into the prospects of importing telephone cables.

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Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia being received by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto (R) upon her arrival at the Islamabad airport yesterday on a two-day official visit to Pakistan. - PTI photo

Separate div set up for 'economic diplomacy'

By M Anwarul Haq

In pursuance of the government's thrust on 'economic diplomacy', a separate division has been set up in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to monitor and promote the country's trade and investment interests.

The new wing — Trade and Investment Promotion (TIP) — officially started functioning Sunday.

The special division, dedicated exclusively to overseeing economic and trade interests of the country, will operate independently, under the supervision of the Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary. It is now headed by Syed Noor Hossain, a director general in the ministry.

Before the creation of the new division, there were 12 wings or desks in the Foreign Ministry, each headed by an official of the rank of director general.

The TIP will provide inputs and supplements for enlarging the sphere of the country's economic and business activities through its missions abroad. It will also play the role of facilitator for investment and trade.

Besides, making coordinated efforts with Bangladesh missions abroad, the division will maintain liaison with the Board of Investment (BOI), various EPZs under the Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) and the different chambers of commerce and industry in the country.

Talking to The Daily Star, the Director General of the new division said, "It will be a big and challenging assignment. We will have to achieve a lot on the economic front."

The foreign missions are being informed about the new sphere of activity, he said and

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Indian troops kill 36 Kashmiris

RAISABAD, India, Apr 24: In the biggest operation in more than a year, Indian troops killed at least 36 suspected guerillas who allegedly crossed into Kashmir after receiving arms training in a neighbouring Pakistan, officials said today. reports AP.

Police men said they have found 36 bodies in Chatoosa Nowgam and other villages in the area near the disputed India-Pakistan border, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) north of Srinagar.

The toll could be higher because the troops were still fighting with militants today in the area of about 20 villages, a Defence Ministry spokesman said on condition of anonymity.

Ten people, including two soldiers, were killed in separate clashes between separatist rebels and the military in Shopian and Uri towns since Sunday night, the spokesman said.

In the border area, troops were blocking all roads and preventing residents from entering or leaving their villages.

Villagers said the army often conducts such search operations, but rarely in such a huge area of the Jammu-Kashmir state.

Changes in Foreign Ministry

By Staff Correspondent

Some major changes in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is underway, it was learnt yesterday.

Ahmed Tariq Karim, who was serving as the country's ambassador to Iran, will be appointed an Additional Foreign Secretary. He is likely to be given the charge of South Asia and SAARC. Syed Muazzem Ali replaces Ahmed Tariq Karim as ambassador to Iran.

AKM Farooq, ambassador to Indonesia, will also be appointed

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NBR-FBCCI joint body soon to review VAT system

By Staff Correspondent

A joint committee will be set up at the national level with representatives of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) to review the existing practices relating to the operation of Value Added Tax (VAT) system and suggest measures to simplify the procedures.

According to a press release issued by the FBCCI, this was agreed yesterday at a joint meeting of the representatives of the NBR and the federation.

Held at the federation's conference room, the meeting was presided over by FBCCI president Salman F Rahman and attended by industrialists and businessmen from around the country.

During evaluation of the system by the FBCCI and its member bodies, it was pointed out that the implementation of the VAT collection was causing a lot of problems to the industrialists and the businessmen.

The press release said that the meeting was aimed at identifying the operational problems and ensuring that while government collection did not suffer, entrepreneurs were also not subjected to different kinds of harassments.

The meeting decided that at the level of collectors (VAT) advisory committee would be set up comprising FBCCI representatives and NBR officials to review the local operational problems and find out solutions. If the problems cannot be solved at that level, those may be forwarded to the national advisory committee for review and recommendation to the NBR for appropriate action.

SAARC can't lag behind: Khaleda

ISLAMABAD, Apr 24: Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia tonight emphasised that SAARC must make quick progress in core social and economic issues like poverty alleviation and trade liberalisation. reports BSS.

"SAARC can not lag behind while the rest of the world move ahead," the Bangladesh Prime Minister said in her speech made at the banquet hosted in her honour by her Pakistani counterpart Benazir Bhutto.

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SAARC gives us common regional identity: Benazir

ISLAMABAD, Apr 24: Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said here tonight that the relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh had been steadily expanding and the two countries were working together for regional peace and security. reports BSS.

Speaking at a banquet hosted by her in honour of Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at the Pakistan Prime Minister's house, Benazir said "We are the members of SAARC and this has given our peoples a common regional identity."

Bangladesh and Pakistan, Benazir said, stand steadfast on the principles of sovereign equality, independence and territorial integrity of all states.

"We believe in the non-use of force in inter-state relations."

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Karadzic may be tried for war crimes

THE HAGUE, Apr 24: Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and Bosnian Serb Military Commander General Ratko Mladic could be charged with war crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a UN war crimes tribunal spokesman said today.

Christian Chartier, spokesman for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, confirmed to AFP that the two men were under suspicion but added that they had not been officially charged.

He said the tribunal's prosecutor Richard Goldstone would be making public at around midday (1000 GMT) today, a request asking the Bosnian government to suspend its own case against both the leaders.

Chartier said if the Bosnian government reacted favourably to the request, the UN tribunal would take up the investigations and could formally charge the suspects.

"Sarajevo is inquiring into matters concerning several suspects, including Karadzic and Mladic," he added.

Chartier also named a third suspect, Mico Stanisic, an interior minister with the self-proclaimed Serb republic in Bosnia.

Murder of lady magistrate: Trial begins

Two prosecution witnesses were examined as the trial of a fugitive magistrate accused of killing a lady magistrate began yesterday. reports UNB.

On October 8, 1993, Saheda Chowdhury, a magistrate of Sherpur, was stabbed allegedly by her colleague, Liaquat Ali Khan, at Kurmitola Airforce officers quarters when she reportedly refused to marry him.

She died on October 15 at the CMH and also made a dying statement accusing magistrate Liaquat of stabbing her.

The accused was arrested in the murder case but was enlarged on bail. Since then, he has been hiding.

Additional Sessions Judge Md Akhlaque Rahman Chowdhury recorded the depositions by the witnesses.

APP Borhanuddin conducted the prosecution case.



Awami League MPs who resigned in December last leaving the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday after staging a sit-in before the Speaker's chamber. - Star photo

Opposition MPs' sit-in near Speaker's office

By Staff Correspondent

The opposition MPs yesterday staged a two-hour sit-in in front of the Speaker's office to protest his ruling rejecting their en masse resignations. late last year.

Some 90 MPs belonging to the Awami League, the Jatiya Party and the Jamaat-e-Islami squatted in the corridor and staircase outside Shaikh Razzak Ali's office, preventing him from attending the session. Ruling party MP Shahidul Islam Jamal was inside the Speaker's room during the two-hour drama.

Razzak Ali, however, later told reporters that he had stayed in his office of his own choice and denied being confined there by anyone.

He also declined to give his reaction on the opposition programme.

Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Fanni chaired the first

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Dissolve illegal Parliament: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina said yesterday that the ruling BNP would be compelled to step down if it tried to cling to power although Parliament and the government had lost legitimacy.

Addressing a rally after the party MPs staged a sit-in near the Speaker's Chamber, Hasina said, "Both Parliament and the government had lost legitimacy following the en masse resignation of the opposition MPs."

But, she alleged, the Speaker and the ruling party attempted to 'keep the legislature alive' by arranging another session of it.

Hasina also blamed the Speaker for 'obstructing' the MPs in staging their planned sit-in in front of his office and thanked the MPs for their

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B Chowdhury criticises sit-in

By Staff Correspondent

Deputy Leader of Parliament Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury yesterday said that holding meetings on the corridor of the House and chanting party slogans were contrary to parliamentary norms.

"I leave it to the conscience of the opposition members

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PSC for thorough reform of selection process

By Staff Correspondent

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has called for making government jobs more attractive and improving the standard of the BCS examinations so that better qualified persons could be employed in the government services.

In its 1994 annual report, placed before the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, the PSC also suggest thorough reform in the process of holding written, oral and psychological tests when selecting candidates for public service.

The PSC has, meantime, revised the syllabus for BCS (Bangladesh Civil Service) examinations to meet the demands of the times. Candidates sitting for the upcoming 17th BCS tests would have to follow the changed syllabus.

The report notes that the number of candidates appearing in the BCS examinations has been increasing dramatically over the years.

For regular BCS tests, the ratio between candidates and vacant posts, which was 1:6 in 1985, has jumped to 1:51 at present. For the Education cadre, the ratio was 1:8 in 1992. In 1994, it was 1:14.

According to the report, from now on there will be two subjects in the name of Sociology and Social Welfare Social Work and only female candidates would be able to choose Home Economics as their optional subject.

Subjects like Anthropology, Library and Information Science, Marine Science and Urban Development have also been included in the syllabus, the report says.

The Commission, in consultation with experts, has restructured the syllab of Mathematics and Everyday Science, Bangladesh Affairs and International Affairs, in keeping with the times.

The report also suggests changes in the recruitment rules so that appointments to technical posts, such as computer experts, could be made smoothly.

The vacant technical or professional posts could not be fulfilled because examinations

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N'ganj Jubo Dal activist shot dead

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Apr 24: A Jubo Dal activist was gunned down by a group of armed men near BB Road here in broad day-light today.

The victim was identified as Maksudur Rahman Elahi alias Dayal Masud, 22, son of Abdul Motalab Mia of Bhuiyarbagh, Deowog in the town.

Witnesses said seven or eight youths waylaid Masud in front of the Barshan Super Market near BB Road at around 12:30 pm and took him to the backyard of the market. They fired two rounds of revolver point-blank on his left chest and right hand. Masud died on the spot.

Police said, Masud, who was accused in three cases including a murder case, was at that time returning from the court.

Local unit of the pro-BNP Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal brought out a procession in the town carrying the body.

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The auction will be held on 4.5.95 for Plot No. 12 and on 7.5.95 for Plot No. 16 in the conference room, 3rd floor of the Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka at 10 am.

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