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STOCK MARKET

DSE price index	765.17 (-0.21%)
Market capital Tk	47.13 billion
Transactions in volume	131668
Transactions in value Tk	19.19 million

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NEWS BRIEFS

Ershad becomes voter in Rangpur

From Our Correspondent RANGPUR, July 8: Deposed President H M Ershad has been enrolled as a voter in New Senpara under Rangpur Paurasava area. His voter serial number is one. The Election Commission sent necessary papers to Rangpur district election office by a special messenger to get him enrolled here as per his will after registration of his name in the Dhaka Central Jail.

Boy falls from third floor, dies

By DMCH Correspondent A 14-year-old boy died after falling from the third floor of a building at North Goran in the city yesterday afternoon. He was working at a flat at the building, sources said. The boy who received fatal injuries died while being taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Three child lifters arrested

From Staff Correspondent KHULNA, July 8: Sonadanga Thana police arrested three alleged child lifters including two women from the city today. Police said the alleged child lifters named Fatema, Minara and Selim were caught while trying to board a Benapole bound bus with the child Shaila, 8, a student of Class Two of a pre-cadet school in city.

Housewife beaten to death

From Staff Correspondent KHLNA, July 8: Police recovered body of housewife Sakshina Khatun, 23, from the bank of Bhadra river under Dumuria thana on Friday. She hailed from Tatgar village under the same PS. According to FIR, Sakshina was beaten to death by her husband Elahi Baksh following an altercation over loss of a fish carting.

No caretaker govt, repeats PM 25-yr treaty with Delhi won't be renewed

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday categorically said her government would not renew the 25-year Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Treaty which expires in 1997, reports UNB.

"The treaty will not be renewed—the question does not arise at all. And there will be no such accord in future either," she told the members of Overseas Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (OCAB) at the International Conference Centre in the afternoon.

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh wanted good relations with all countries, but she said settlement of bilateral issues would certainly help improve the relationship

with India.

Bilateral issues must be resolved without any pre-condition. "Solution to the problems cannot take place in exchange for something," she said.

Immediately after the independence of Bangladesh, the friendship treaty was signed by then Indian Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi and Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in March 1972 in Dhaka.

In reply to another question about SAARC, Begum Zia, the immediate past Chairperson of the seven-nation forum, said it would be difficult for SAARC to achieve real progress without resolving the bilateral issues, many of them considered

irritants, between the member countries.

Begum Zia said next general election is not far off but rejected the opposition demand for holding it under a caretaker government.

She said she will not accept any proposition contrary to the Constitution.

"What is beyond the Constitution cannot be accepted. Caretaker government is completely unconstitutional. And a government cannot be formed with people from outside," she categorically said.

Pressed by pressmen to give a tentative time, she said the term of her government would expire on April 30, 1996.

Hope for the best

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday echoed an old maxim in defending Maj Gen (Retd) Mahmudul Hassan, a crony of deposed President Ershad, who recently joined BNP, reports UNB.

"Even a thief may change into a good man in the company of good people," said a smiling Prime Minister when asked by a correspondent why such a 'corrupt man' was taken into her party.

Hassan was called Thief of Baghdad by his critics for his alleged corruption when he was the administrator of Dhaka Municipal Corporation and a minister during the Ershad regime.

Newsmen burst into laughter hearing the Prime Minister's reply at her meeting with the members of Overseas Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (OCAB) at the International Conference Centre.

2000 deportees arrive tomorrow Local recruiting agent abandons several hundred in KSA

By S Y Bakht

Several hundred Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia have been abandoned, without the promised jobs, by their recruiting agent, a source in the Ministry of Labour and Manpower said yesterday.

Another 200 or so Bangladeshi workers recruited by the same agent have not been receiving their wages from the employer for well over a year.

In a message, the Labour Consul at the Bangladesh Consulate in Jeddah has requested the Labour and Manpower Ministry to take up the matter with the Bangladeshi recruiting agent "seriously so that the sufferings of these workers are redressed" immediately.

Meanwhile, a Saudi ship carrying

over 2,000 Bangladeshi workers deported by Saudi Arabia is scheduled to arrive in Chittagong tomorrow. The Labour and Manpower Ministry has despatched a Manpower Bureau official to receive the workers and provide them with Tk 200 each as contingency funds for their return home, the source added.

According to the message faxed recently by the Labour Consul, the workers were abandoned by the recruiting agent, Silverline Associates, after the employer, M/S Fam Estb, reneged on the employment contract.

One of the workers also died in the Saudi town of Jizan, but the recruiting agent refused to attend to the emergency, as stipulated under manpower recruitment rules, the

source said.

"We would like to inform you that despite our repeated requests, the Bangladeshi representative of Silverline Associates in Riyadh did not persuade the employer M/S Fam Estb to provide employment to these workers," the Consul wrote in the message.

The Consulate attempted to find alternative jobs for 75 of these workers who came to Jeddah and camped at its premises. It eventually managed to provide employment to 36 of them in another Saudi company, he said. Subsequently, the Consulate also found jobs for another batch of the workers. The Labour Consul, however, added that "these workers have been making some unreasonable re-



Hundreds of houses in Bhuapur have been submerged due to the cross-dam for the Jamuna bridge. — Star photo by Enamul Haq

Rivers continue to swell Rail, road links with N-dists threatened

By Staff Correspondent

Road and rail links between the capital and some northern and southern districts of the country were threatened as the major rivers swelled yesterday worsening the flood situation in seven of the eight affected districts. The situation wors-

ened in Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Pabna, Kurigram, Netrokona, Gaibanda and Comilla districts while it remained static in Sherpur, according to reports reaching the capital yesterday.

Two children drowned in Kazipur in Sirajganj while the death toll from diarrhoea and malaria in the flood affected areas of Sylhet and Sunamganj rose to 50 yesterday.

Overflowing of the Padma at Bahadurabad ghat has threatened ferry services. Dhaka's train link with the northern districts and road links with the southwestern districts may be snapped any time.

According to Railway sources here, train communication between Feni and Phoolgazi was restored yesterday. But, Shibiganj-Shayestaganj and Mymensingh-Mohonganj train

links remained snapped for the second day yesterday.

A bulletin issued by the Flood Information Centre here, however, said monsoon is less active but under its influence many places experienced light to moderate rainfall. Most of the rivers of the Brahmaputra, Ganges and Meghna basins kept rising, it said.

Our Sirajganj correspondent reports: Two children — Rankumar, 5, and Anjana, 7 — drowned in flood waters in Kazipur thana while five lakh people were marooned in 70 unions under nine thanas of the district.

Over 6,000 people of the Sirajganj town have taken shelter on rail lines and Water Development Board's embankment. Several areas in Sirajganj town went under water as the Town Protection Embankment near Barbaria collapsed yesterday evening.

Our Jamalpur correspondent reports: Thirty-two more unions of Jamalpur district have gone under flood water following damage of the Harindhara flood protection dam at Islampur.

Our Pabna correspondent reports: See Page 12 Col 1

Bomb scare Tense hours at Delhi airport

By Krishna P Roy

"We were in a state of total helplessness as suddenly we felt uncertain about our fate — confined to our seats inside the aircraft for long 45 minutes," said a lady passenger of the Biman flight which was delayed at New Delhi airport due to a bomb scare Thursday.

The passenger's account raised some questions about the handling of the situation. The passengers were evacuated after considerable delay and their lives reportedly exposed to risk as they were kept close to the aircraft while the bomb search operation was being carried out.

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Chudanga killings Seven more arrested

From Our Correspondent CHUDANGA, July 8: Police today arrested seven more persons in connection with Friday's killing of seven political activists at Ibrahim village under Dhamurhuda thana.

The arrests were made after a combing operation jointly conducted by the Dhamurhuda, Alamdanga, Chudanga and Jibonmugh thana police. Police also arrested another person on the day of killing.

The local unit of the Workers' Party has called a half-day hartal in the district headquarters tomorrow in protest against the murders.

Those arrested today were: Ansar See Page 12 Col 1

Aero Bengal apologises

By Reaz Ahmad

Aero Bengal Airlines, a private airlines company, yesterday expressed regret for its attempt to land an aircraft at the Barisal STOL Airport without prior approval of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB).

CAAB Chairman Shamsur Ali told The Daily Star that the airlines apologised in writing to the CAAB yesterday saying the airlines actually did not mean to land its aircraft at the new airstrip.

Earlier, the CAAB asked for an explanation from the Aero Bengal for its attempt to land its aircraft at Barisal Airport last Friday. It also asked Captain Ahsanuzzaman, Director, Flight Operation of Aero See Page 12 Col 6

WB echoes views of local experts Productivity of soil declining

By Rashed Mahmud Titumir

The World Bank (WB) has come round to the view, held by certain local expert groups, that productivity in many parts of Bangladesh is showing a declining trend under intensive agricultural practices, using modern varieties and high inputs.

Analysing data on yield trends at district level, an environment department report of the WB says that despite rising input levels, yields had been declining or remained stagnant in about two-thirds of the area brought under cultivation of modern varieties in the boro season in the last one decade and remained stagnant throughout the country in the aman season.

"The implications of yield stagnation or decline for productivity are severe, since these trends have occurred despite rapid growth in the use of chemical fertilisers," says the report released recently.

"(The trends) indicate that productivity is falling and land degradation is reducing achievable yields, it adds.

However, the report, in keeping with the previous WB documents, says that if increases in input use had not counteracted the effects of degradation, yields might have fallen even further.

Earlier, the results of long term tests by Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) indicated that intensive rice cultivation could result in declining yields, even under good management with full recommended doses of all nutrients.

The WB report — Environmental and Natural Resource Degradation in Intensive Agriculture in Bangladesh — also says that the evidence in Bangladesh is consistent with patterns of yield change in other Green Revolution (GR) countries, many of which too have experienced a slowdown in the rate of growth of production and productivity.

Referring to the considerable debate over the exact causes of diminishing productivity in other GR countries, it says, "In Bangladesh the most likely cause is nutrient imbalance."

Like the previous WB documents, this report also stresses the need for accelerated use of fertiliser. "Chemical fertiliser use has increased, but not sufficiently to compensate for the higher rates of offtake and has been offset by reductions in applications of farmyard manure, which is in increasing demand for use as fuel," it said.

Besides, the WB study, prepared by Stefano Pagiola, says "Diversification in physical and chemical properties of soil, such as changing quality and quantity of organic matter and formation of a plowpan, also play a role in fall of yields."

Pointing to the consequence of deteriorating productivity, it says "While further expansion of irrigation is possible, it will be progressively more difficult," if current trends continue, the scope for production growth arising from intensification alone will be exhausted by the year 2000, it added.

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EC starts selling tender schedules for ID cards

By Staff Correspondent

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday started selling tender schedules for preparation of identity (ID) cards.

On the first day, three schedules were bought by the bidders, said Mohammad Zakaria, assistant secretary of the EC. Tender schedules will be sold till July 22.

Though the EC has taken initiative to issue ID cards to nearly 50.60 million voters of the country, the plan for establishing a computerised electoral data base has been abandoned.

The EC earlier sought amendments to the law considering the fact that electoral data base and ID cards for all voters could not be prepared before the next general elections.

As per the EC Bill, passed in the See Page 12 Col 3

Indian seeks US visa to attend Reagan's funeral!

NEW DELHI, July 8: An Indian in time for former president Ronald Reagan's funeral, US Ambassador Frank Wisner told a meeting of the rotary club here late on Thursday, reports Reuters.

"Somewhat taken aback, our consular officer advised the applicant that Reagan is still very much alive," Wisner said.

"I am aware of that," came the reply, "I would rather wait there than here," the Indian told the visa officer.

Wisner did not say whether the man eventually got the US visa, an elusive document coveted by most travelling Indians.

HSC exams: 1376 more expelled on 2nd day

At least 1376 examinees were expelled on the second day yesterday of the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations that began on July 6 under the country's four education boards, reports UNB.

This year 4,98,391 students have registered for appearing at the examinations in 881 centres, including six in overseas.

The Dhaka Board sources said 564 candidates were expelled for adopting unfair means in Bengali second paper.

Of the expelled, 3 were from Dhaka city, 5 from Narayanganj, 66 from Gazipur, 34 from Narsingdi, 6 from Munshiganj, 40 from Manikganj, 33 from Tangail, 88 from Mymensingh, 30 from Jamalpur, 91 from Netrokona, 26 from Sherpur, 7 from Shariatpur, 9 from Faridpur, 13 from Gopalganj, 3 from Rajbari, 65 from Madaripur and 45 from Kishoreganj.

Rajshahi Board sources said examination was held peacefully in different centres under the board, but as many as 514 candidates were expelled.

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Twenty five of them were from Rajshahi Sadar, 30 from Chapainawabganj, 74 from Bogra, 53 from Rangpur, 44 from Gaibandha, 70 from Kurigram, 28 from Thakurgaon, 11 from Panchagarh, 42 from Naogaon, 5 from Lalmonirhat, 8 from Natore, 13 from Pabna, 35 from Nilphamari and 76 from Dinajpur.

Jessore Board sources said some 41 students were expelled. Of them, 2 were from Sadar, one from Jhenidah, 5 from Pirojpur, 9 from Khulna, one from Narail, one from Barisal, 2 from Barguna, 15 from Kushtia and 3 from Magura.

Comilla Board sources said some 257 examinees were expelled yesterday.

Our Correspondent from Khulna adds: The vice principal and three demonstrators of the Mongal Adarsha College were seriously injured in an armed attack by some unruly students. The attack came after two HSC examinees were expelled for al-

City's eco-system : Part II Natural canals disappearing

By Morshed A Khan and Krishna P Roy

Unplanned and random filling of the city's low-lying areas and obstructing natural drainage system will create serious environmental problems and ecological imbalance in the Metropolitan, experts say.

The city areas will be flooded with a little rainfall, ground water level will fall further as natural recharging process is being hampered and air pollution within the city will increase manifold, they warn.

Many natural canals, used for flashing out waters for a long time, have gradually narrowed over the years due to unauthorised occupation by a section of people. For instance, the Segun Bagicha canal, about 50 feet wide in the original official map, is now only 10 feet. Major portions on both sides of the 3.1 km canal now have buildings. Same is the situation with almost all the natural canals of the city, stretching about 110 kms since the Mughal period.

"You can find a natural drainage system in the map of the city, but you hardly find their existence now," said an engineer of the WASA. "What See Page 12 Col 7"



Even a little rainfall inundates many areas of the city. This picture was taken from inside the Secretariat. — Star photo

40 injured in stampede during ultorathajatra

SAVAR, July 8: At least 40 people, including 15 women, were injured in a stampede during 'Utorathajatra', a religious festival of the Hindu community, at Dhamrai bazar here today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said about 50 thousand people from different places of the country, clad in red-ochre clothes, joined the Utorathajatra (return of the chariot) of Sri Sri Jashomadhob. Of the injured, Raishuddin, 15, and Sheetal, 12, were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a critical condition. The rest were given first aid in local hospitals and clinics.

Meanwhile, a 21-day fair arranged on the occasion of Rathajatra also ended in Dhamrai today.

AIDS cases will cross 30000 by year 2000

Deadly AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome) cases in Bangladesh have been projected to increase to 5-10 thousand annually by the end of this century, reports UNB.

The cumulative infections by the HIV, the virus that destroys the immune system in human body leading to inevitable death, will be close to 300,000 and cumulative AIDS case will be over 30,000 in the country by the year 2000.

The projection was made in a recently published World Bank report on the HIV/AIDS situation in the country.

It says that there will be over a quarter of a million cumulative AIDS cases and deaths in the country during the first decade of the 21st century compared with about 30,000 during the last decade of the current century.

Further, the report projected a cumulative total of over 20,000 maternal AIDS orphans under age 15 when their mothers have died by year 2000 and close to 150,000 by the year 2010.

Another major public health problem apprehended in Bangladesh is the increase of clinical tuberculosis in those persons dually infected with

HIV and the TB bacillus.

The parallel epidemics of AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) will be especially severe in Bangladesh where a large percentage adults (over 40 per cent) are already infected with the TB bacillus.

It is estimated, by the end of this decade there will be over 12,000 TB cases related to HIV infection each year and these numbers will continue to increase in the first decade of the 21st century.

Thus, the handful of AIDS cases and HIV infections in Bangladesh, reported in early 1994, represent only a minuscule portion of the clinical burden of HIV infection that is feared over the next two decades from the infection already within the country.

While major uncertainties exist regarding the precise number of HIV related diseases and deaths that may be expected over the couple of decades, there is no doubt that significant increase will occur.

A total of about 40,000 blood samples were tested from 1990 through 1993. About half of the 21 positive samples found during this period were from Bangladesh over-

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Launch with over 100 passengers missing in Bay

From Staff Correspondent BARISAL, July 8: A passenger launch with more than 100 people on board has been missing in the Bay due to strong current since 11 am yesterday.

The launch — Taruner Avizan — bound for Patharghata via Taltali was missing in Tetulbaria-Laldia area. It started from Patuakhali in the morning.

Navy ship BNS Pabna rushed to the deepsea in search of the missing launch.

Fishermen in the Bay said the launch went towards the deep sea.

Wimbledon Result HIGHLIGHTS
Courtesy
KLM
Royal Dutch Airlines

- Women's singles (final)
- Steffi Graf (Germany) def Sanchez-Vicario (Spain)
- Men's singles (semifinals)
- Boris Becker (Germany) def Andre Agassi (USA)