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# The Daily Star

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**DSE MARKET**  
 DSE price index 843.44 (+0.08%)  
 Market capital Tk 5398.75 cr  
 Transactions in volume 1.39 lakh  
 Transactions in value Tk 2.88 cr

**CSE MARKET**  
 CSE price index 418.42 (+0.54%)  
 Market capital Tk 2285.10 cr  
 Transactions in volume 1500  
 Transactions in value Tk 1.87 lakh

## US urges Govt, Opposition Demonstrate flexibility, resolve stalemate

**By Staff Correspondent**

The Clinton administration has urged both the Government of Bangladesh and the Opposition to iron out their differences so that "free, fair and fully contested elections can be held in a peaceful and timely fashion."

The position of the US government was posted in response to a question on Bangladesh on Monday at the State Department's noon press briefing in Washington, circulated through a USIS news release in Dhaka yesterday.

The spokesman of the State Department expressed the hope that both sides would overcome the lengthy political stalemate by demonstrating "creativity and flexibility" and said the stalemate threatened the democratic process and undermined economic progress.

The comment of the US spokesman for the first time made a reference to the role of the military and said "As a general rule, we oppose military intervention against a democratically elected government."

The text of the statement was headlined "US Government position on Bangladesh's political impasse."

"The US government continues to urge both the gov-

## 4 ferries stuck up at char

**MANIKGANJ, Nov 28:** Movement of ferries between Aricha and Nagarbari ghats remained suspended for four hours ending at 11 am today as four ferries were stuck up at a char in the midstream of the Jamuna, reports UNB.

Several thousand passengers of Shah Makhdom and Shah Amanat were stranded till the salvage operation by the BIWTC authorities. The rest of the ferries — Shah Paran and Keramat Ali, loaded with 48 trucks, could not be rescued till this evening.

According to BIWTC officials, sharp fall in water levels in the Padma and the Jamuna has badly affected the normal functioning of the ferry services — Aricha-Nagarbari and Aricha-Daulatdia.

More than 1500 trucks loaded with various commodities were awaiting at the ghats, the source added.

## Govt approval of Ctg master plan delayed

**By Shahriar Khan**

Government approval of the Chittagong Metropolitan Master Plan (CMMP), 1995, is being delayed because the proposed amendments to some laws required for its implementation are still to be cleared by the relevant authorities.

According to official sources in Chittagong, the Recommendations for Institutional and Legislative Changes, which are necessary for ensuring private and community participation in the port city's development works according to the CMMP, were placed before the Chittagong-based Technical Management Committee (TMC) for its clearance in February this year.

All other components of the CMMP were approved by the TMC which comprised representatives of the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), Chittagong WASA, T&T, Power Development Board and Members of Parliament. These components were later approved by the Ministry of Works and Housing and sent to the Planning Commission.

This is the second such master plan for Chittagong city since 1962.

A project — Preparation of Structure Plan, Master Plan and Detailed Area Plan for Chittagong — began preparation of the CMMP in April 1992 and finalised it in March this year. The UNDP gave Tk 10 crore and the government Tk two crore for the project.

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## Modernisation of army linked with country's uplift: PM

**CHITTAGONG, Nov 28:** Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia said here today that the government was engaged in endeavouring to build a modern and stronger army side by side with the improvement of the nation's economic condition, reports BSS.

Speaking at the passing-out parade of the 33rd long BMA course and 12th special course at the Bangladesh Military Academy (BMA) parade ground she said, "Inshallah our army will be more modern and stronger in future."

The Prime Minister said that the goals of the country's Liberation War were the establishment of an economically-sound and militarily strong and democratic

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The once busy Bangabazar Market now in ashes. — Star photo

## Bangabazar fire No report of death or missing

**By Staff Correspondent**

Hundreds of shop-owners started picking through the debris as the entire Bangabazar area still kept smouldering yesterday, a day after the devastating fire destroyed the popular city marketplace.

Fire-fighters were sprinkling water as piles of burnt out merchandise lay on the ground. The rescue workers picked twisted tin-sheets and iron-bars and stacked them on the side.

A huge fire, the biggest in the city in recent times, destroyed the whole area of Bangabazar, country's largest clothing market, Monday morning.

Despite widespread speculation on deaths, till 8 pm yesterday there was no report of any death or missing persons in the area. Leaders of the Shop-owners Association said that they did not find any charred or dead bodies. There is no reports of anyone missing, they added.

"At the time of the fire all the shop owners were in their homes and we do not allow anyone to sleep in the shop areas except the night guards," said an official of the association.

It was learnt that some employees slept on the first and second floors of the makeshift tin and wood structured market where they worked in the tailoring section until late night. But the shop-owners claimed that there was no report of any of the employees was missing.

The police last night cordoned-off the whole area while thousands of onlookers gathered around the burnt out market. The owners of the shops picked through the debris and gathered charred

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## PM's letter to Hasina soon

**By Staff Correspondent**

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia's fourth letter to Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina is likely to be sent within a day or two, BNP Secretary General and LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar told a group of newsmen at his Bailey Road official residence in the city yesterday evening.

"The letter is being drafted," he said, declining to divulge its contents. "You'll come to know in time."

According to BNP sources, the PM may specify the agenda for the dialogue she had earlier proposed to Hasina and the agenda may contain the opposition's demand for a neutral caretaker government.

In her earlier letters, Begum Zia had mentioned that all issues would be discussed at the negotiating table. Hasina, in her replies, insisted on a specific agenda and acceptance of the concept of caretaker government in principle.

Earlier, on Monday night, Begum Zia had a meeting

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## WB praises PPP, but warns against high hopes

**By Staff Correspondent**

World Bank mission chief in Dhaka Pierre Landell-Mills has said the "Participatory Perspective Plan (PPP)" is a "major breakthrough" in the country's development planning.

"We can think collectively and in a participatory way," Landell Mills said at a seminar on the "Participatory Perspective Plan for Bangladesh, 1995-2010" organised by the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI) at the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation auditorium yesterday.

The seminar was also addressed by State Minister for Planning Abdul Moyeen Khan as the chief guest. Shaikh Maqsood Ali of the Planning Commission as the key note speaker and AM Subid Ali, President of BCI.

Mills said the policy makers should be aware of the opportunities and limitations placed before them while preparing such a long-term plan.

He said the PPP is an "interactive, people-centred, and creative process" towards poverty alleviation, but that required constant efforts to achieve better results. However, Landell Mills was skeptical about achieving the proposed 8 per cent GDP growth by the year 2000 and eradication of poverty by 2002, as envisaged in the PPP.

"We need to be ambitious

Biman's Ctg-ME flight begins today

**CHITTAGONG, Nov 28:** Biman Bangladesh Airlines for the first time will operate an international flight from Dubai to Chittagong tomorrow, reports UNB.

With the operation of the flight the Chittagong Airport will also come under the international network of Bangladesh Biman.

The flight will be operated by Biman's wide-bodied DC-10 aircraft that successfully completed a probing flight to Chittagong earlier this month, said a Biman press release yesterday.

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## British team for partnership deal with local businessmen

**From Staff Correspondent**

**CHITTAGONG, Nov 28:** Leader of the visiting British trade delegation Peter Lee expressed his team's interests to promote relationship with the business community of Bangladesh.

"We are looking for a true partnership deal with the businessmen here," he said while addressing a discussion meeting this afternoon with the members of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) at its conference room.

"We had a successful meeting in Dhaka and we hope to have the same in Chittagong," Lee noted. "We are keen to identify the opportunities of business with you," he told the chamber members.

"We are here to look for those investment opportunities and we will try to find out a positive message," he added.

Earlier, President of CCCI Sarwar Jamal Nizam read out his address of welcome highlighting the infrastructural facilities available in the port

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## Hasina tells DU Senate members PM's rigidity pushing country toward danger

Awami League President Sheikh Hasina yesterday renewed her demand that the Prime Minister resign immediately and advise the President to form a neutral caretaker government to conduct the national elections, reports UNB.

"The President has dissolved Parliament on the advice of the Prime Minister, but she (PM) is not taking any effective step to form a caretaker government for free and fair polls," she told a group of Dhaka University Senate members who called on her at the party's Dhanmondi office.

Hasina said that in the prevailing situation, there was no alternative to movement for realising the demand. The programme for indefinite "road, rail and waterways blockade" from December 7 and the "march towards the PM's office" on December 9 would remain unchanged, she added.

She said as the time was running out fast, so she had phoned the Prime Minister and also requested her through letters to sit in a dialogue by accepting in principle the demand for a caretaker government.

"But the Prime Minister said that she does not understand the neutral non-party caretaker government and she will not accept the demand," Hasina said. "Her (PM's) rigid attitude is pushing the nation towards a dangerous situation."

Awami League central leaders Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mannan, Prof Qamruzzaman, Zillur Rahman, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain Anu, Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed, Abdul Jalil and Obaidul Kader were present at the meeting.

Senate members who attended the meeting included Dr SM Arefin Siddiqui, Dr Anwar Hossain, Dr Mohammad Enamul Huq, Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Mohammad Enamul Huq, Syed Rezaul Rahman, Syed Ahmed and Advocate Oza Farooq.

Dr Anwar Hossain, Syed Afnan and Advocate Oza Faruque congratulated Sheikh Hasina for taking the gesture to resolve the pre-

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## No more phone call to PM, says Zillur

**By Reaz Ahmad**

There would be no more attempt from Awami League to make any telephone call to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, party General Secretary Zillur Rahman said yesterday.

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina had rang up Khaleda Zia on Sunday last and talked over the current political situation. During the 16-minute conversation, the Prime Minister again rejected the AL chief's plea for agreeing, in principle, to the concept of caretaker government before any dialogue.

Talking to The Daily Star Zillur, however, said that any call from the Premier's side to the Awami League chief would always be welcome.

"If she (PM) changes her mind and makes a phone call to give us the good news that she wishes to sit for a dialogue agreeing, in principle, to the peoples' demand, we will gladly receive the message," said Zillur.

"Our leader is not going to

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## 'Shantibahini buying time through dialogue'

**By Inam Ahmed back from CHT**

The outlawed Shantibahini is trying to build up fighting capability through recruitment and procurement of arms taking advantage of the prevailing ceasefire in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, according to army sources.

It has reportedly recruited 1500 youths in their training camps during the truce to add to its about 4000-strong troops and is trying to procure modern arms from Myanmar. The militants have already procured grenade launchers, modern sub-machineguns and M-16 assault rifles which they use in their

ambush, reaching here say.

Shantibahini militants have also embarked on a massive fund raising programme by collecting tolls both from the tribals and Bengalees, army sources said. For every economic activity, inhabitants have to pay money to them.

The ceasefire unilaterally announced by the militants on August 10 is to expire by December 31 unless extended.

"They are buying time through dialogue to build up their troops," said Major General M Azizur Rahman.

General Officer Commanding (GOC), 24th Infantry Division, Chittagong, "We have definite proof that they are planning changing their strategy of attack. Instead of the previous hit and run tactics, they are planning for attack, re-attack and massive attack strategy."

The GOC was talking to a group of journalists at his headquarters in Chittagong.

"The Hill Tracts problem must be solved politically," Gen Rahman stressed. "Military victory would not be the real solution. Even if we do bring the whole of CHT

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## Beating 2 to death Procession, memo to N'ganj DC

**From Our Correspondent**

**NARAYANGANJ, Nov 28:** Some local people brought out a mourning procession in the town carrying the bodies of the two persons killed on Monday, apparently in a mob-beating suspecting them to be child-lifters.

The processionists paraded the main thoroughfares of Narayanganj town and handed over a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner demanding trial of the killers. Claiming that they were killed as a sequel to an earlier rivalry

Abdur Rashid, our driver

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## JU bus under police escort attacked

**By JU Correspondent**

Some youths, reportedly activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS), hurled cocktails and fired shots at a Jahangirnagar University (JU) bus which was coming to the city to take teachers to the campus yesterday morning.

The attackers fired three shots aiming at the driver and hurled seven cocktails damaging the bus, the driver said. The driver and the conductor swerved sharply and the shots pierced the windshield, the driver said. There were no passengers in the bus during the attack near the Pangu hospital at about 7:30 am.

Challenged by the police, the attackers fled the scene immediately and none could be arrested.

Police have been escorting the university's teachers' buses since November 11 when the ICS activists started to attack the university buses to retaliate their failed bid to capture the university halls.

Bus services for students remained suspended since then fearing attack by ICS activists.

The ICS activists have badly damaged all the eight buses, one minibus and one ambulance of the university as part of their revenge after

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## Raushan meets Ershad

Begum Raushan Ershad had a meeting with her ailing husband at the Dhaka central jail yesterday.

"I was there for about an hour," she told BSS over phone.

Begum Raushan Ershad said, she found the former president still very weak, "the colour of Ershad's eyes as well as body is still yellowish," she added.

This was her second meeting with Ershad since he became afflicted with viral hepatitis early this month.

He has still vomiting tendency, Begum Raushan Ershad said adding that she intended to see him again soon.

Although she did not seek permission earlier, she was allowed to see him as she arrived at the jail gate accompanied by some Jatiya Party leaders including former minister Shaiful Ghani Swapan.