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Announcement

Our regular Friday magazine will be published tomorrow as Victory Day supplement

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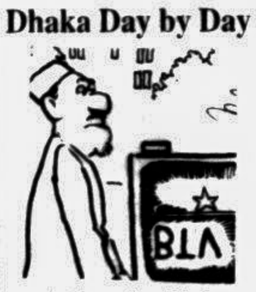
DSE MARKET

DSE price index	830.65 (-0.54%)
Market capital Tk	5325.49 cr
Transactions in volume	233080
Transactions in value Tk	6 cr

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



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NEWS BRIEFS

Scouts' Jamboree Dec 18

A five-day Second Asia-Pacific Community Development Camp (COMDECA) will begin at Taltali in Amtali thana of Barguna district on December 18. Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is scheduled to inaugurate the COMDECA, a special Jamboree of the Scouts, at 2:30 pm. About 3,000 Scouts, Rovers and Scout leaders from 24 countries of the Asia-Pacific region are expected to participate in the camp, reports UNB.

Bomb hurled at poura chairman's house

NARSINGDI, Dec 14: Unidentified gunmen fired gunshots and hurled handmade bombs at the residence of local pourashava chairman Abdul Matin Sarker early today. Police said the hoodlums numbering 10-12 fired at least 10 rounds of gunshots and threw more than a dozen of bombs at the Chairman's Kandapara residence at about 5 am, reports UNB.

1 killed, 25 hurt in road accidents

SUNAMGANJ, Dec 14: A man was killed and 25 others were injured in two accidents on Sunamganj-Sylhet road, police said today. According to witnesses, one Waris Ali died on the spot when an ambulance of Sadar Hospital ran over him at Ujanigaon in Sadar thana on Sunday. The second accident took place on Monday, when a Sylhet-bound coaster fell into a roadside ditch at Cheknikara, reports UNB.

Opposition may join CEC's meeting today

Star Report

The major opposition parties may attend the meeting convened by the Election Commission (EC) today for discussions about the scheduled date for parliamentary polls.

According to Awami League sources, the party is considering the issue of attending the meeting but a final decision in this regard is expected to be taken at a party meeting this morning.

Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami sources also said that the parties would attend the meeting if the AL did so.

"We may go tomorrow," AL General Secretary Zillur Rahman told The Daily Star at 11 last night. "We have not taken any firm decision till now because all our leaders were busy attending different programmes of the Martyred Intellectuals Day.

"But we shall meet in the morning and we may go," Zillur Rahman added.

Till yesterday, the opposition parties had expressed determination not to attend any meeting called by the EC saying that the meetings would not help bring out a solution to the political stalemate over the caretaker government issue.

Jatiya Party (JP) Secretary General Anwar Hossain Manju hinted to The Daily Star that if the AL agreed to attend the meeting, his party might also consider doing the same.

"The situation is now very complex. Many things are left to be resolved first. Even if the caretaker government issue is resolved and all the parties agree to participate in the election, the question of an acceptable voters' list had to be cleared. But there is not much time left," he said.

Jamaat-e-Islami Office Secretary Abdul Kader Mollah said, "If the AL and JP agree to go, we may also decide to go."

Chief Election Commissioner Justice A K M Sadeque told The Daily Star at 11.30

See Page 12 Col 7

'EC decision to depend largely on outcome of meeting'

By Reaz Ahmad

Chief Election Commissioner Justice A K M Sadeque yesterday said that at today's meeting with the political parties he would seek their views regarding the already announced schedule for parliamentary polls.

He, however, evaded a direct reply to this correspondent's query about refixing the elections schedule, only saying "we will take a decision according to their (political parties) reactions."

The Election Commission has convened the meeting with the political parties this morning with the agenda of taking their views on the election schedule. The meet-

See Page 12 Col 3

Commentary

Mr President, rise to the need of the hour

By Mahfuz Anam

There are moments in a nation's history when individual actions become larger than life. This is more true for people in pivotal positions such as yourself. Remember Justice B.A. Siddiqui. His one action - refusing to give oath to Gen. Tikka Khan as governor of East Pakistan, which dealt such a severe moral blow to the legitimacy of Pakistani government in the eastern wing - served to strengthen our resolve to fight for freedom. It was a moral statement, and coming from a man of law, it spoke thousand times louder than the most powerful guns in the arsenal of the Butcher of Beluchistan.

Today, time has come for you to act in service of the nation. Just as you cannot go beyond the constitution, so also you cannot just sit there and see the virtual destruction of the democratic process. As the Head of the State, you are ultimately responsible for facilitating actions that are in the best interest of the nation.

We are fully aware that when we amended the constitution and reverted back to the parliamentary system, we deliberately made the President a titular head so that the Leader of the House, the Prime Minister, could be all powerful. So it is a matter of irony

See Page 12 Col 1

Hectic parleys on to settle impasse

By Nazmul Ashraf

In its hectic bid to settle with the Opposition the 20-month-old political impasse, the ruling BNP has proposed that Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia would step down on the last day of filing nomination papers under a fresh schedule for parliamentary polls.

The ruling party, however, continued to insist that the PM's resignation, formation of an interim government and other polls related issues would be decided in a formal dialogue between Begum Zia and Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina.

The AL, on the other hand, reiterated that the PM's resignation should precede resolution of all the issues relating to the elections,

See Page 12 Col 7

People from all walks of life visited the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Mirpur in the city yesterday to pay homage to the memory of intellectuals. — Star photo

LPG crisis: No early solution in sight

By Govinda Shil

The supply crisis of liquified petroleum gas (LPG) is persisting, with no immediate way out, because of two major factors.

Explaining this, official sources said that natural gas liquid (NGL), the input of LPG, was not being produced at the Molecular Sieve Turbo Expander (MSTE) Plant at Kailashtila.

The plant was finally commissioned with 'some modifications' by the Press International PLC of the United Kingdom under an ODA assistance. It now produces condensate, another raw petroleum product, the sources said.

Besides, the World Bank (WB) has withdrawn its funding for the proposed Ashuganj NGL Plant, the sources pointed out.

Later, the government had allocated fund for the Ashuganj Plant but "Petrobangla did not call fresh tender or inform the participating bidders about the change of funding for this project," said the Petrobangla source. As a result, the previously long drawn negotiation with the selected contractor of Canada was unsuccessful and the project could not be implemented in the last five years, he added.

"What Petrobangla could do is to initiate local or joint venture with private sector firm," the source further said. But, experts think that private entrepreneurs would not come forward if the price of LPG was regulated by the government.

The government regulated price would not cover the cost of production and distribution cost of the LPG, sources pointed out.

Realising this, Petrobangla has asked for fresh allocation of fund by the authorities for the NGL Plant or allowing it to approach commercial banks for possible financing, sources said.

Interview of BNP nomination seekers continues

About 400 nomination seekers for 78 parliamentary constituencies of Chittagong and Sylhet divisions appeared yesterday before the BNP Nomination Board for party tickets to contest the January 18 national election, reports UNB.

The interview on the third day yesterday began at 8 am at the party's Election Office in Kakrail with BNP Chairperson Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair.

Interview of the nomination seekers of Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Feni, Laxmipur and Noakhali continued late into the night but could not be completed.

Members of the BNP Standing Committee and presidents and general secretaries of the respective districts were present during the interview.

Prominent among those who appeared for interview were: Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister

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Concern for democracy

Star Report

The quest for democracy was heightened yesterday as people renewed their pledge to rekindle the spirits of the country's glorious Liberation War on the martyred intellectuals day.

The people's mood on the day was mixed. They were sad but proud for those who sacrificed their lives on the eve of Bangladesh's emergence as a new nation in 1971.

And, they were equally worried about the on-going political impasse.

Almost all the speeches made in different functions on the day had an edge, and people hoped for an early solution to the stand-off be-

See Page 12 Col 8

Fresh vow to materialise dreams of martyrs

By Staff Correspondent

The nation renewed its pledge to preserve and uphold the spirit of the Liberation War on the Martyred Intellectuals Day yesterday.

People from all walks of life thronged two sites at Mirpur and Rayerbazar in the city to pay homage to the memory of country's illustrious sons who were killed by the marauding Pakistani forces and their collaborators 24 years ago.

The Day started with the requiem played by army bands as president Abdur Rahman Biswas placed wreaths at 6:30 am at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Mirpur in the city.

Family members and relatives of the martyred intellectuals spent the day visiting Mirpur and Rayerbazar, and their mazars.

They offered fateha and prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, flanked by her cabinet colleagues, visited the memorial and paid tribute to the martyrs.

She placed wreaths as Prime Minister and as chief of the BNP.

Awami League president Sheikh Hasina also placed wreaths at the memorial and stood in silence for some time.

Besides, leaders of other

See Page 12 Col 4

On second day of *Bijay Mela*

By Staff Correspondent

With a chorus of sweet little voices rendering patriotic songs, the second day of *Bijoy Mela* '95 commenced Thursday afternoon at the Central Shaheed Minar.

The girls clad in red and white sarees and the boys in white *panjabis*, the youngsters, representing various cultural organisations of the city, performed songs and group dances to the delight of the crowd, that had gathered at the Shaheed Minar in the twilight.

The four-day *Mela* organised by the [illegible] Shangskritik [illegible] celebrate the 25th [illegible] Day continued into the [illegible] with a variety of performances, put

See Page 12 Col 7

Prices of reconditioned cars shoot up

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 14: Prices of vehicles — mostly reconditioned cars — increased substantially in the market after the government on Tuesday banned the import of four types of vehicles under the Preshipment Inspection (PSI) system, market sources said today.

The banned items include car, jeep, microbus and pick-up vans. Sources said some vehicle importers and traders have already started demanding exorbitant prices to make a windfall profit out of their present stock-lot by taking advantage of the ban.

But the mostly reconditioned vehicles now available in their show-rooms and stocks were imported under the PSI system before the ban.

According to market sources, prices of all types of imported reconditioned cars, microbus and jeeps increased by an average of Taka 50,000 to Taka 300,000 each depending on the model since Wednesday.

As a result, most of the customers who already intended to buy cars and microbus started to back out from the market against the backdrop of sudden price hike, sources said.

According to reports,

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Malaysia to send back sick, detained Bangladeshis

Malaysia will send back sick and distressed Bangladeshis detained in different camps, reports BSS.

The Malaysian authorities declared this decision following a request by Labour and Manpower Minister Mir Shawkat Ali to the authorities to allow the detainees amnesty and employment in Malaysia.

Malaysia will also issue approval for more than 20 thousand Bangladeshi workers within this month.

Mir Shawkat Ali returned home Wednesday night after a four-day visit to Malaysia.

During the visit the minis-

See Page 12 Col 8

Bosnian peace agreement signed

PARIS, Dec 14: The presidents of Bosnia, Croatia and Serbia signed a peace agreement at the Elysee Palace in Paris today to end the 44-month-old war in Bosnia, reports AFP.

The historic, US-brokered agreement was signed by presidents Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Franjo Tudjman of Croatia and Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, who negotiated for the Bosnian Serbs the peace deal reached in Dayton, Ohio, on November 21.

The ending of Europe's worst conflict since the end of World War II came after extended NATO bombing of Serb positions and will be implemented by a 60,000 strong NATO force, including 20,000 US troops.

Earlier, French President Jacques Chirac opened the summit, shown live on television, at the Elysee Presidential Palace in Paris at 11.38 am (1638 BST) today.

Chirac said in opening remarks the treaty sealed "a final settlement of the Yugoslav conflict" even though it could not wipe out the 200,000 dead and millions of refugees.

Chirac, German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and British Prime Minister John Major also signed the agreement.

The agreement divides Bosnia almost equally between Serbs and a Muslim-Croat alliance but guarantees its international borders and fragile statehood. The treaty consists of a four-page framework agreement, 12 annexes and more than 100 detailed maps.

AP adds from United Nations: The United Nations could turn over its Bosnian peacekeeping operation to NATO within four days of a Security Council decision formalising the transfer, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali says.

But the United Nations would still play a role in civilian operations in Bosnia, including humanitarian assistance, police and prosecution of war criminals, the secretary-general said.

His comments were contained in a report presented Wednesday to the council. Advance copies of the text, due for formal release Thursday, were distributed to reporters.

In the report, Boutros-Ghali said that once the Security Council votes to transfer peacekeeping authority to NATO, the process "could occur within 96 hours of the council's decision."

British Gen Rupert Smith, commander of UN peacekeepers in Bosnia, would become

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Shantibahini man shot dead

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 14: One Shantibahini man was shot dead this afternoon during an exchange of gun fire with a security patrol at Nayachharapara under Thanchi thana of Banderban district, security sources said.

A G-3 rifle was recovered from his possession while some other Shantibahini men fled into the forest in the face of heavy resistance from the security patrol.

The exchange of gun fire that lasted for about half-an-hour, began at 1:30 pm, when a security patrol came under attack by the outlaws, security sources said.

'State condemns but allows prostitution'

By Masud Arif and Mizan Ali

The social process combined with the mechanisms of the state machinery support the continuation of prostitution in different forms in an institutionalised manner, according to some social researchers.

The state perpetuates this institution through its contradictory role of condemning it while at the same time allowing it to operate through its agencies such as the police, social researchers and some officials of the law-enforcing agencies observed while talking to The Daily Star.

In a recent anthropological study on prostitution conducted jointly by Prof Zarina Rahman Khan and Prof Helaluddin Khan Arfeen of the Dhaka University observed that prostitution is a highly stigmatised profession which creates opportunities for their exploitation and deprivation from services and rights as citizen of the state.

The samples of the study were collected from border areas, semi-urban localities and commercial towns. Besides, posh areas of the capital and the streets, where the business goes on in full swing, were also included. The study had a sample of 1479 persons working at various brothels and as floating prostitutes.

Interestingly enough, these women who form not only a significant part of the female population but also are engaged in an economic activity involving substantial volumes of money transaction, have been kept out of the census, reveals the study.

It has been learnt that the brothels are well organised units which operate through the combined control of formal and informal functionaries such as police, managers, agents, mastans, *sardarnis*

See Page 12 Col 8

Death in custody

Jhenidah-Jessore highway blocked for 9 hrs

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Dec 14: A number of local people staged a demonstration and blocked Jhenidah-Jessore highway for more than nine hours from 9 am today protesting the death of a homeopath doctor in police custody at Kaliganj thana.

Abul Hossain, 55, of Kashtabhanga village under Kaliganj thana of the district, died at about 10 pm after

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ভাষা কুইজ প্রতিযোগিতা

আয়োজকঃ
ঢাকা জেলা ভয়েস অব আমেরিকা (ভিওএ) ফ্যান ক্লাব

প্রথম, দ্বিতীয় এবং তৃতীয় পুরস্কার যথাক্রমে ঃ ঢাকা-হংকং-ঢাকা, ঢাকা-করাচী-ঢাকা এবং ঢাকা-কাঠমন্ডু-ঢাকা বিমান টিকেট। এই পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হবে বিমান বাংলাদেশ এয়ারলাইন্স-এর সৌজন্যে।

প্রতিযোগিতার নিয়মাবলীঃ

১। ভিওএ'র শ্রোতা এবং ফ্যান ক্লাব সদস্যসহ বাংলাদেশে অবস্থানকারী যে কোন ব্যক্তি এই প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন।

২। প্রতিযোগীদেরকে চারটি উত্তরের মধ্যে সঠিক উত্তরটির বাম পাশে টিক চিহ্ন দিতে হবে।

৩। ঢাকাস্থ মার্কিন দূতাবাসের কর্মীবৃন্দ, তাদের পরিবারবর্গ এবং ঢাকা জেলা ভিওএ ফ্যান ক্লাবের কর্মকর্তাবৃন্দ এবং তাদের পরিবারবর্গের কেউ এই প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারবেন না।

৪। পূরণকৃত ফরমটি (ফটোকপি গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়) 'ঢাকা জেলা ভয়েস অব আমেরিকা ফ্যান ক্লাব, ১৬/১, নয়াপল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০' এই ঠিকানায় আগামী ১৫ই জানুয়ারী, ১৯৯৬ তারিখের মধ্যে ডাকযোগে পৌঁছাতে হবে (সরাসরি গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়)।

৫। প্রাথমিকভাবে নির্বাচিতদের নামের তালিকা আগামী ২৫শে জানুয়ারী, ১৯৯৬ তারিখে এই পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত হবে এবং ডাকযোগেও জানান হবে। পুরস্কার বিতরণের তারিখ এবং স্থানও তখন জানিয়ে দেয়া হবে। একই ব্যক্তি একাধিক কুপন পাঠাতে পারবেন। একাধিক সঠিক উত্তরদাতার ক্ষেত্রে লটারীর মাধ্যমে বিজয়ী নির্ধারণ করা হবে।

[কুপন এগার-এর পাতায় দেখুন]