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Notice
 Our regular Friday magazine will be published on January 1 as New Year's Day supplement.

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DSE MARKET

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| DSE price index | 835.83 (-0.38%) |
| Market capital Tk | 5983.68 cr |
| Transactions in volume | 90306 |
| Transactions in value Tk | 2.02 cr |

Metropolitan
 Dhaka Day by Day

 A Day of Celebrations Page 3

NEWS BRIEFS
Arms, fake US dollars recovered
 CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) today recovered some arms and forged US dollars and arrested two persons in this connection. Police recovered a country-made light gun and 15 cartridges from the possession of one Nasim Uddin aboard a mini-bus near Shah Amanat bridge here. He was taken into custody. Detectives of CMP recovered 31 pieces of one hundred US dollar note from the possession of one Nowshad Parvez from the new market area on Wednesday and arrested them. reports BSS.

Nepalese envoy hosts reception
 Lok Bahadur Shrestha, ambassador of Nepal in Bangladesh yesterday evening held a reception on the occasion of golden jubilee birthday of King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev at the embassy premises. Ministers, diplomats, city elite and journalists attended the reception. reports BSS.

Freedom fighters' reunion today
 A reunion of the freedom fighters will be held at the auditorium of Bangladesh Shishu Academy today on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Victory Day. Organised by the freedom fighters of sector-9, the reunion programmes included hoisting of national flag, reminiscence and cultural function. reports UNB.

I'll exercise constitutional power to end crisis: Biswas

By Nazmul Ashraf

President Abdur Rahman Biswas will exercise his constitutional powers in dealing with the long-standing political impasse.

"It is true that I cannot go beyond the Constitution. But I won't hesitate to exercise the powers conferred on me by the Constitution", the President said yesterday in his first ever comment to the press regarding the political crisis.

He was talking to The Daily Star and two Bengali dailies at the marriage ceremony of Prime Minister's special envoy, Morshed Khan's daughter at Sheraton Hotel in the city last night.

"I'm pledge-bound to go by the Constitution. I studied constitutions of many countries. And I studied our Constitution line by line before I became President.

I am fully aware of my duties and responsibilities as President."

When his attention was drawn to reports that the nation expects a lot from him in the prevailing political situation, he smiled and said, "Is it so?"

The President, who attended the ceremony with his wife, also exchanged pleasantries with Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, ministers and other leaders of the ruling BNP and a number of leaders of the opposition parties.

Later, while taking his dinner at the Vintage Restaurant of the hotel, he also talked to Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali, Food and Agricultural Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Finance Minister M. Saifur Rahman, Communications Minister Oli Ahmed,

Irrigation Minister Majid U Haq, Jatiya Party leader Barister Moudud Ahmed, Gano Forum leader Dr Kamal Hossain, Workers Party leader Rashed Khan Menon and others.

President Biswas discussed with them matters relating to the present political situation and constitutional provisions as regards a solution.

The Prime Minister also exchanged pleasantries with the President, ministers, opposition leaders, diplomats and other guests at the ceremony. Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, who was also invited, was not seen till 10.45 pm.

Those who attended the marriage ceremony included Abdul Mannan, Tofael Ahmed and Abdur Rahman of AL, Anwar Hossain Manju of JP, Go-

lam Azam of Jamaat-e-Islami, Amirul Islam of Gano Forum, KM Obaidur Rahman of Janata Dal and Col. (rtd) Abdur Rashid of Freedom Party. Information and Commerce Minister Shamsul Islam, who is playing the key role in the backstage government-opposition negotiation parleys, was seen talking to US Ambassador in Dhaka David N. Merrill and some Opposition leaders.

The political leaders were seen discussing political and other issues here and there.

When asked, Golam Azam said his party would have no objection if an advisory council with the President heading it was acceptable to the ruling party. In that case, his party might consider contesting the polls and would try to persuade the AL, he added.

Workers Party for advisory council headed by President

Workers Party yesterday urged the ruling party and the Opposition to reach a consensus on the caretaker government issue for holding the ensuing parliamentary election, reports UNB.

Making it clear that it would not take part in the coming election, under any party government, the left party demanded immediate resignation of the Prime Minister and formation of a caretaker government headed by the President to create scope for all the parties to contest the next polls.

Party general secretary Rashed Khan Menon told a press conference that there is still scope for a solution under the provision of the Constitution if consensus is forged between the govern-

Back-stage talks yet to yield results: Hasina

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina said yesterday that there had been no progress in the back-stage parleys between the ruling party and the Opposition to end the current political deadlock.

"So far, we have not received any positive response to our demand from the other side," Hasina said.

The Awami League president was speaking to the press at her party office at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city. She returned from Singapore on Wednesday.

The Opposition stand on its demand for immediate resignation of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and polls under a caretaker government was made clear in the entire negotiation process, Hasina said.

"But she (Begum Zia) has declined our offer and decided to cling to power," the AL chief said. "She doesn't care for what happens to the country."

Meanwhile, sources close to the BNP-Opposition talks said that no headway had been made in the last three days and both the sides were unwilling to shift from their earlier positions.

AL leader Amir Hossain Amu, who is negotiating with the government side on behalf of the opposition parties, said that his meetings with Commerce and Information Minister, M Shamsul Islam had produced no positive results.

Talking to The Daily Star, he said the last meeting which took place on December 24 ended inconclusively.

Army likely to be deployed in arms drive from Jan 1

The army is expected to be called out to recover illegal arms from January 1 in a bid to clean up the path of coming parliamentary polls, reports UNB.

Election Commission sources said army would be sent to district and thana headquarters to launch a special anti-arms drive.

The army operation will be in addition to the current drive being conducted by BDR, police and other law-enforcing agencies since December 21.

The law-enforcing agencies have so far netted 539 firearms, 1,252 bullets and 1,005 homemade bombs.

Some 5,356 people have been rounded up from across the country from December 21 to December 28 on charge of possessing arms and ammunition and involvement in violence.

Civic Watch puts alternate proposals to resolve crisis

By Staff Correspondent

Civic Watch — Bangladesh, a non-political citizen's and human rights organisation, yesterday came out with two alternate proposals for the consideration of political parties in their effort to resolve the current political impasse.

Of the two proposals, one would require an immediate ratification in the next Parliament while the endorsement of other one would require no amendment in the Constitution, says a press release of Civic Watch.

According to one of its proposals, the Prime Minister will step down 30 to 45 days ahead of the elections and advice the President to form an executive committee taking 10 to 20 neutral and non-political members to take charge collectively of running the state as a caretaker authority.

The committee either through an overwhelming decision or through majority vote will choose a Chairman to head it. As this process

Move to stop registration of new autorickshaws

By Staff Correspondent

A move is underway to stop registration of new autorickshaws in the city shortly as the higher authorities think that their number is increasing at an alarming rate, causing air pollution as well as traffic congestion, according to sources in the Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA).

There are an estimated 20,000 autorickshaws in the city and new registrations are increasing at the rate of 30 per cent every year, the sources pointed out.

The move to limit the number of autorickshaws by stopping new registration was discussed at a meeting of the Regional Transport Committee (RTC) headed by the Commissioner (Traffic) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police recently.

The Commissioner confirmed the new development regarding registration of the three-wheelers but said that it was still at the level of discussion.

"There is a possibility that the decision in this regard will be in force from January 1, next year," said a BRTA official.

4 killed in road accident

NARSINGDI, Dec 28: Four passengers were killed and 15 others injured when a minibus hit a roadside tree at Bandirbazar in Arahazar thana on Dhaka-Sylhet highway today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said the Dhaka-bound minibus from Raipur thana of the district hit the tree when the driver tried to overtake a rickshawvan at about 9 am.

Six of the injured were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Dhaka Pangu Hospital while the rest were admitted to different local clinics.

Poster, graffiti EC directive to take legal action

Election Commission yesterday directed the district and thana police administration to file cases and take legal action against the intending candidates using multi-colour poster, banner and graffiti for election campaign, reports UNB.

Earlier, the EC asked the people concerned to erase their graffiti and remove multi-colour poster and banner by December 25.

According to an EC press release, the use of multi-colour poster, graffiti and banner for election campaign is an electoral offence as per the Representation of People Order, 1972, section 44B and 73.

The EC also urged the owners of house, office and institution to lodge complaint to their respective police station, DC or Police Super against the people involved in wall-writing, postering, and hanging banner on the walls and premises of their houses.

Arms recovery
 Law enforcing agencies recovered 45 illegal firearms on the eighth day yesterday of the combined operation See Page 12 Col 8



A participant in the flower show at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar in the city yesterday organised by Parjatan Corporation marking the tourism month. — Star photo

IDA private sector credit likely to be fully utilised

By R M Titumir and Inam Ahmed

An increased demand for funds provided under the Private Sector Industrial Credit (PSIC) programme of the IDA is likely to dry up the credit line by June, 1996, about a year before its scheduled completion, according to a World Bank source.

Starting in March 1993, the disbursement rate of the 25 million US dollar credit programme till November was very poor — only 6.7 million dollars.

But as the Bank is now considering incorporating two leasing companies — IDLC and ULC — in the programme, which is now administered through financial institutions only, demand for credit under PSIC would increase to a level of 28.6 million dollars during 1996, according to an IDA mission which reviewed the status of the fund during November 20 to December 5.

However, against the likely demand of 28.6 million dollars under the PSIC for

1996, the amount available for new projects will be 18.3 million dollars, the balance of the original 25 million dollar fund.

IDA is also likely to lift its 'problem project status' slammed on the PSIC in view of a substantially strengthened project pipeline and improvement in the environmental component of the project.

The IDA mission will submit its recommendations for lifting the status before the IDA's management, sources said.

The funds to be available under PSIC is likely to be fully utilised before the end of 1996 after the above leasing companies are included.

Moreover, IDA would analyse the request made by Arab Bangladesh Bank and SABINCO for participation in the credit project, the sources noted.

Based on the interactions with the financial institutions See Page 12 Col 7

2 NDP activists shot dead in Chittagong

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: Unidentified assailants gunned down two activists of the National Democratic Party (NDP) after storming into their residence at Chawkbazar last night, police said.

The dead were identified as Ali Mullah (24) and Abu Yusuf (25). Police said two gunmen had raided into the rented house of those activists at Urdu lane at Chawkbazar and fled after firing on them at around 9 pm last night.

Mullah and Yusuf were gossiping inside their house while they came under the attack, police added.

However, NDP leaders blamed the activists of Chhatra League for the killings. Chhatra League denied the charge.

Police inspector 'closed' for helping gold snatching bid

Star Report

A police inspector of the Detective Branch has been 'closed' for introducing a civilian as a police sub-inspector and handing over hand-cuffs to him at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) on December 2, police sources said yesterday.

Police Inspector, Kamrul Islam has been taken to the police headquarters following an enquiry committee report on the incident. The committee comprising ADC (East) Sheikh Md Sajjad Ali and AC DB Md Kohinor Miah submitted its report on December 22, the sources added.

The report said Inspector Kamrul did not inform his senior official about the operation at ZIA and had helped an abortive snatching bid. The committee recommended proceedings under the Police Officers' (special ordinance), 1976.

The accomplices of Inspector Kamrul were identified as Mahub-e-Hafiz alias See Page 12 Col 6

BCL activist dies in Ctg jail

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: One Chhatra League activist died in Chittagong jail last night.

Jail and police sources said that he was sick.

Hasan Habib, joint secretary of BCL Patharghata unit, fell sick after he was arrested by Kotwali police four months ago, police said.

BCL leaders in a statement alleged that Hasan died due to negligence of the jail authority to provide adequate treatment to injuries he sustained during torture by police after his arrest.

Clinton to veto defence Bill

WASHINGTON, Dec 28: President Bill Clinton has decided to veto the Defence Budget Bill because it would finance an anti-missile system he believes would violate the 1972 ABM Treaty, the White House said today, reports AFP.

White House spokesman Michael McCurry said that the measure passed by the Republican-led congress would mean a "very real setback in the significant advances in arms control."

The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which limits anti-missile defences to one site per country with no more than 100 interceptors.

Lift operator found dead

By DMCH Correspondent

A lift operator of the Bangladesh Bank was found dead inside the lift in its new 30-storey building at Motijheel in the city yesterday morning.

The body of Shah Alam, 25, was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy. Marks of injuries were found in his chest, hospital sources said.

The cause of the death could not be known immediately. Motijheel police was investigating the incident. However, no case has been filed in this connection till last night.

Cinema enters 2nd century with tribute to Lumiere brothers



The Dhaka University Film Sangsad brought out a colourful procession in the city yesterday on the occasion of the centenary of cinema. — Star photo

PARIS, Dec 28: The cinema starts its second century here today, 100 years to the day after the Lumiere brothers — Louis and Auguste — staged the first public projection of a film before an audience of 33 at a Paris cafe, reports AFP.

In commemoration, a giant inflatable screen — 30 meters wide — has been put up on the Trocadero Esplanade near the Eiffel Tower, where it will remain until January 1.

Strollers, tourists and cinema buffs will be able to view several films on the origin of the cinema as well as a special tribute by 40 directors from around the world — each one of whom shot a 52-second sequence with the very camera used by the Lumiere brothers.

Among the directors featured are Merzak Alouache

of Algeria, Theo Angelopoulos of Greece, John Boorman of Britain, Yussef Shahine of Egypt, James Ivory of the United States, Abbas Kiarostami of Iran, Claude Lelouch of France, Iorissa Ouedraogo of Burkina Fasso,

Repeal of Film Society Control Act demanded

Speakers at a discussion in Dhaka yesterday demanded immediate repeal of the Film Society Control Act 1980 and increased government help for making better films, reports UNB.

The discussion meeting at the Indian High Commission auditorium also demanded construction of a Film Complex in the city See Page 12 Col 8

Fernando Trueba of Spain and Zhang Yimou of China.

They all took turns peering through a brass viewfinder cut into a simple box of walnut wood that fixes images on 17 meter bands of celluloid.

"There's no sound, no colour, no imagination of the Lumiere brothers."

Captured by the modern directors on the Lumieres camera are embraces, a woman nursing her child, a young couple on the Great Wall of China — all miniature masterpieces.

But one sequence serves as a compelling symbol: The train station in the southern French city of Ciotat. It was there that the Lumiere brothers placed their camera for the now famous shot of a train pulling into the station, which so frightened late 19th century viewers.