

**JUICE**  
**JAM**  
**PICKLE**  
**KETCHUP**  
**SHERBET**

**প্রাণ**

**SQUASH**  
**VINEGAR**  
**KEWRA-**  
**WATER**  
**ROSE-**  
**WATER**

**PRAN** for Health **প্রাণ**

# The Daily Star

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**DSE MARKET**

DSE price index	823.52(-0.18%)
Market capital Tk	5307.30 cr
Transactions in volume	209291
Transactions in value Tk	2.94 cr

**Supplement**

Today's issue of The Daily Star contains a 2-page special supplement on US Trade Show '96  
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**NEWS BRIEFS**

**BCL reunion today**

Pro-Awami League Chhatra League, on the occasion of its 48th founding anniversary, will organise a reunion at Ramna Batmul in the city today. Awami League President Sheikh Hasina will attend the function as chief guest. BCL president Enamul Haque Shamim will preside. The BCL activists will also bring out a procession on the Dhaka University campus in the morning and hold a rally in front of 'Aparajejo Bangla' at 10 am, reports UNB.

**37 arms recovered**

Members of the law enforcing agencies in their countrywide drive against illegal arms recovered 37 different kinds of arms, 79 ammunition and one magazine alongwith 11 explosive devices on the 21st day ending yesterday morning. According to a press release of the law and order preservation cell of the Election Commission, law enforcing agency members also arrested 456 persons in connection with various crimes including keeping of illegal arms under their possession, reports BSS.

**Hosiery workers on strike**

From Our Correspondent NARAYANGANJ, Jan 10: Hosiery Labour Union and Local Garments Union have gone for a strike indefinitely to realise their 9-point demand. The demands include 30 per cent increase in their basic salary and festival allowance.

**Folk festival**

COMILLA, Jan 10: A two-day folk festival began at the Town Hall ground here today, marking the silver jubilee of the country's independence. Bhehua Bibi, mother of martyred freedom fighter Abu Zahid Abu, inaugurated the festival. Shikha O Sangskriti Charcha Kendra has organised the festival as part of its 12-day countrywide programme. The 12-day festival will be concluded in Rajshahi and Mymensingh on January 19, reports UNB.

**Malta-Libya ferry services resume**

Ferry services between Malta and Libya have resumed after about two months of suspension, a message received in Dhaka said yesterday. Since the imposition of air embargo on Libya, the east-bound expatriate community including Bangladeshis avail Malta-Libya shipping route to go to and come out of Libya, reports BSS.



Teachers and students of Dhaka University formed a human chain on the campus yesterday demanding trial of Nuban Ahmed's killers. —Star photo

## \$744m project to boost banking

By R M Titumir and Inam Ahmed

The government is finalising a 744 million US dollar project, the biggest ever in the financial sector, to put the banking system on a firm footing within a period of five years.

The project — Financial Sector Development Project (FSDP) — is also aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Bangladesh Bank to implement and oversee the reform and ensure effective supervision of the banking system.

The two key components of the project are to recapitalize the banks and to privatise the nationalised commercial banks (NCBs), according to sources in the Finance Ministry and the central bank.

Other components include loan recovery and legal framework, training and development of technology and human resource of the Bangladesh Bank as well as the scheduled banks.

The project is coming as a follow-up of the Financial Sector Reform Programme

(FSRP) which began in 1989 and expires by December this year. Work on some of the components, which had started as an outcome of the FSRP, has now been incorporated in the new project.

According to a government estimate, the tentative outlay for the project is about 744 million US dollars, the biggest component being the 400 million dollar bank reform and privatisation. Privatisation of NCBs will take 210 million dollars, strengthening of the central bank 29 million dollars, loan recovery two million dollars, human resource development 50 million dollars and technology development about 65 million dollars.

To finance the project, the government is likely to seek 200 million dollars each from the International Development Association (IDA) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) while the rest will be provided from its own resource.

A project preparation plan was worked out in the last

week of December to prepare the FSDP for the WB and ADB financing. To this end, a project preparation committee was formed with the finance secretary as its chairman. He is to be assisted by the banking secretary and a deputy governor of the central bank. A 10-member technical working group was constituted with the responsibility of providing documentation for the project, particularly drafting the project proposal to be submitted to the WB and the ADB.

In addition six working groups were formed on: legal reform and loan recovery, human resource development, technology development, restructuring problem of private banks, bank privatisation and institutional strengthening of Bangladesh Bank.

Meanwhile, an IDA mission visited Dhaka from October 26 to November 8 last for the identification of the commercial banking reform project and sent an aide-

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## 'Try killers of Nuban Ahmed'

By DU Correspondent

Hundreds of students, teachers and employees of the Dhaka University yesterday formed a 'human chain' protesting the deterioration of law and order and demanding trial of the killers of Nuban Ahmed.

Nuban Ahmed, a lecturer of the Economics Department of Dhaka University, succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital on December 26. He was attacked by some unidentified miscreants at the south plaza of Sangsad Bhavan on December 17.

Organised by the students of Economics Department, the one-hour anti-terrorism human chain programme began at 10 am from the 'Aparajejo Bangla'.

The human chain formed with spontaneous participation of hundreds teachers, students and others encircled the entire Arts Faculty Bhavan and stretched up to the TSC building and the Central Library.

Wearing black badges, the participants carried placards containing various slogans — 'terrorism and its multifarious nature ... are our only enemy', 'No more innocent'.

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## Hartal on Jan 17, gherao of EC offices next day

By Staff Correspondent

The three major opposition parties have announced fresh agitation programmes including a countrywide hartal on January 17 and gherao of the Election Commission offices on January 18.

The Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami announced the identical programmes from separate rallies in the city yesterday to press home their demands for cancellation of the February 15 polls and holding of elections under a caretaker government.

The three parties will also bring out separate processions tomorrow, go for mass contact throughout the country on January 13-15 and bring out torch processions on January 16.

The programmes were announced by AL President Sheikh Hasina, JP acting Chairman Mizanur Rahman

Chowdhury and Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Matur Rahman Nizami from their party rallies held at the Panthapath and South Gate and North gate of Baitul Mukarram mosque respectively.

The leaders rejected the latest election schedule announced by the EC, saying that elections could not be held during the holy month of Ramadan.

The also reiterated that they would not take part in any elections under a party government and demanded that the Prime Minister resign immediately.

The hartal and the gherao programme will coincide with the last date for filing nomination papers — January 17 and the date for scrutiny — January 18, as rescheduled by the EC for the third time.

## Barapukuria project Poor logistic support slows down work

By Govinda Shil

The work on the Barapukuria Coal Mine Project may suffer setback due to lack of proper telecommunication facilities, delay in setting up of rail track, absence of Mine Codes and a Mining Training Centre, according to official sources here.

"If necessary measures are not taken immediately, the on-going work might be disrupted," said an official of the Petrobangla. The departments concerned have not yet started work for rail and road links to the project site although funds were sanctioned last year, the Petrobangla official claimed.

Moreover, at least two consignments of machinery are awaiting custom clearances for two months, the official said.

The Tk 887.36 crore project with a local currency component of Taka 486.88 crore is being implemented by the China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation (CMC) with the help of a British consultancy firm the International Mining Consultant Ltd (IMCL).

and the CMC asked for modern telecommunication facility to help them maintain overseas links for the technical part of the work," said another official.

The official said, we have been requesting Bangladesh Telegraph and Telephone Board (BT&T) to set up lines at the project site at Barapukuria but it is yet to act.

"If the BT&T turns the nearby Phulbari Municipality exchange into a Nation Wide Dialing (NWD) system, we will be benefitted," added the official.

An amount of Tk 180 crore has been spent since the project work was handed over to the CMC in 1993, the official said. The mine has an estimated reserve of 30 crore metric tonnes of coal of which five to six crore metric ton could be extracted using "cutting and slicing (mining) method," the official said.

The government had sanctioned Taka 33 crore last year to connect the Barapukuria (and the Madhyapara Hardrock) mine site by rail-track. Funds were also allotted.

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## Hasina vows again not to bow out

By Staff Correspondent

Awami League (AL) chief Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her party would continue to fight, even if it took years, for realising the demand for elections under a neutral, non-partisan caretaker government.

"There will be attempts for creating confusion among the people regarding our movement. There will be conspiracy. But we will not participate in the election scheduled by the Election Commission to allow the BNP to steal votes," Hasina said at a rally at Panthapath where she announced her party's next agitation programme.

Demanding cancellation of the election schedule, revised thrice by the Election Commission, the AL chief announced a programme of countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal on January 17 and gherao of EC offices across the country on January 18, the last date for filing nomination papers and the date for scrutiny.

The rally was organised to mark the homecoming day of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman from captivity in Pakistan in 1972.

She also blasted the Jatiya

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## Specialised bank for Ansars, VDPs opens

A specialised bank for the welfare of the country's nearly five million Ansars and VDPs (Village Defence Party) kicked off in Dhaka yesterday, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia inaugurated the bank, styled as Ansar-VDP Unnayan Bank, at a colourful ceremony in the capital's Aman Court at 14 Outer Circular Road, Rajarbagh in the afternoon.

The bank has come up with an authorised capital of Tk 100 crore which will be divided into 1 crore shares, each valued at Tk 100.

Its initial paid-up capital is Tk 10 crore. 75 per cent of which have been subscribed by the members of Ansar and VDP as well as by officials and employees of the bank and the force. Government has subscribed the rest 25 per cent.

The bank will be a government-controlled but specialised commercially run banking institution which will provide group credit only to Ansar and VDP members for small and medium-sized income generating projects. Loan up to Tk 10,000 will

not require any equity. Loan can be taken up to Tk 50,000 by giving 20 per cent equity in cash or mortgage of total credits 50 per cent immovable property (except the dwelling house).

The interest rate of the bank will be 16 per cent plus 4 per cent as service charge. Initially, the bank has identified 37 areas for financing, including poultry and dairy farming, cattle fattening and pisciculture and shrimp cultivation.

The bank will open branches in all the district and thana headquarters in phases. More than 90 per cent of the branches will be situated in rural areas. Shares of the bank will be available at the head office of Ansar-VDP Unnayan Bank, selected branches at thana and district levels of Sonali Bank.

The nature of payment of loan will be fixed up according to the size of credit. Trained entrepreneurs will be given priority in taking project loan.

Inaugurating the bank Begum Zia said her government was establishing the Ansar-

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Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at Panthapath in the city yesterday. — Star photo

## US trade show opens today, 150 cos to have stalls

By Staff Correspondent

About 150 American companies will participate in the 5th annual US Trade Show '96 beginning today at Hotel Sheraton.

The three-day trade show, jointly organised by the American-Bangladesh Economic Forum and the US Embassy in Bangladesh, will be formally opened by US Ambassador in Dhaka David N Merrill at 10 am.

Disclosing this at a press conference yesterday, the organisers said, the first session of the show today will remain open exclusively for the local consumers and businessmen to see different varieties of US products.

The show will be open to the public from 5 pm to 8 pm on Thursday and 10 am to 8 pm on Friday and Saturday.

Addressing the newsmen, Forrest Cookson, president of the American-Bangladesh Economic Forum, said that as the United States is the most important trading partner of Bangladesh, the US corporations are showing increasing interest to invest in this country.

The US Trade Show represents an opportunity for the local consumers and businessmen to see different varieties of US products.

Cookson said. The head of US embassy's economic and commercial section, Cornelia M Weirebach, A Gafur, Executive Secretary ABEF, Larry Andre, M Nurul Islam and Donald Bishop also spoke on the occasion.

Weirebach said trade relation between the United States and Bangladesh have been developing rapidly, especially since the take-off of Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry.

Giving an account of recent trade between the two countries she said through since July '95 total imports

into the US from Bangladesh were up 36 per cent over the same period of 1994.

The US imported nearly 1.1 billion dollars worth of goods from Bangladesh in 1994, 918 million dollars of which consisted of garments and knitwear, the US embassy official informed.

She said the US exports to Bangladesh in 1994 was 233 million dollars, which included 122 million dollars worth of wheat and 29 million dollars of raw cotton.

A Gafur said the US Trade Show '96 has registered 25 per cent growth in terms of the number of US firms represented, 14 per cent in terms of exhibitors and 34 per cent in terms of booth occupancy.

This year, 150 firms will be represented by 48 exhibitors occupying 78 booths. At last years show, 120 US firms were represented by 42 exhibitors occupying 58 booths, Gafur informed.

The US products which will be on display, includes — computer and computer related products, information technology, airlines, hotel, foodgrain, fertilizer, generator, boiler, life insurance, audio-visual equipment, stationeries, milk powder,

pharmaceutical, fishing reel, petroleum products, electrical goods, textile printing machineries and chemicals.

Among the major participating US firms are: American Life Insurance Co, IBM, Procter and Gamble, Compaq, Caterpillar, Lanier, Motorola, American Airlines, ITT Sheraton, Cargil, Kholer, Clever Brooks, 3M, Protein Technologies, Hewlett Packard, Airstep, Caltex, Bose Corp, Dell, AST, oracle, Cooper, Novell, AT and TM and R Printing, American Power Conversion, GCC Technologies, Zyxel, Micron Corp. and Citibank NA.

## Gulshan incident Bail prayers rejected

Star Report

Eight of the nine persons arrested in connection with the murder of Shamsul Islam at Gulshan in the city on Monday were produced before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Court yesterday which placed them on police remand.

The CMM court yesterday cancelled their bail petitions, submitted on January 8, following a report by the Detec-

Editorial on page 4 tive Branch for the incident, police said. Police however said bail bonds on behalf of the arrested persons could not be submitted to the court till Tuesday.

Meanwhile it was learnt that a Sub-Inspector of Gulshan thana, with which a case was lodged in connection with the murder, was suspended yesterday. However, it could not be confirmed from Gulshan thana till late last night.

The case was transferred to the Detective Branch on Tuesday.

Faroque Thakur, one of See Page 12 Col 4

## Amu, Tofael meet Merrill

By Nazmul Ashraf

The opposition is now willing to go for a fresh back-stage negotiation with the ruling BNP if any offer is made in writing, competent sources in the Opposition said yesterday.

Two top negotiators of the Awami League — Amir Hossain Amu and Tofael Ahmed — yesterday met US Ambassador in Dhaka David N Merrill to communicate their decision to this effect.

The new initiative by the AL leaders followed a series of back-stage parleys and discussions with the ruling party in the past few days.

Sources close to the AL negotiators said that the Opposition wanted to know by writing through Merrill, what measures the ruling party would take as regards their demand for a caretaker government for holding the polls. The Opposition would also provide a written statement on the matter.

Until last night, the BNP did not communicate its reaction to the Opposition initiative.

A minister involved with the negotiations, however, termed the Opposition proposal an 'insult'.

None of the AL leaders, taking the initiative, was available for comment.

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## JP rejects advisory body under President

By Staff Correspondent

An advisory council under the President with executive powers vested in the latter's office would not be acceptable to the Jatiya Party (JP), party leaders said while announcing the next course of their anti-government agitation from a rally in the city yesterday.

Organised by the city unit of JP, the rally was addressed by acting Chairman of the party Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, central leaders Begum Raushan Erhad, Moudud Ahmed, Shah Moazzem Hossain and Abul Hasnat and leaders of the party's front organisations.

"Abdur Rahman Biswas was elected to the offices of President as a BNP nominee and not on the basis of a national consensus," said Mizan Chowdhury, adding that an advisory council under him with all powers vested in his office would not be acceptable to the JP.

"Ershad has directed the party leaders and workers to resist elections under a party government," Raushan said quoting a message from her

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## Maid shot dead in Islampur

By Staff Correspondent

A maid was shot dead during a shooting incident at the second floor of a building at Islampur in the old part of the city yesterday afternoon.

The victim, Fatema, 40, received fatal bullet injuries in her chest and died within a short time, police said.

An unidentified armed gang reportedly belonging to a local gang entered the house at 59/3 Islampur at around 2:30 pm and started firing indiscriminately, police said, adding that a stray bullet

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