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DSE MARKET
 DSE price index 781.79 (-1.38%)
 Market capital Tk 4963.94 cr
 Transactions in volume 83722
 Transactions in value Tk 9.34 cr

Supplements
 Today's 24-page issue of The Daily Star contains an 8-page supplement on Indian Republic Day and one page supplement on Australia Day

Weekend Magazine
 Mukti Gan — song of freedom; 53rd Golden Globe Awards; Asian Diary; Truth, love and a little malice; Living, Teens and Twenties; and Rising Stars
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48 witnesses named : Next hearing Feb 7

Ershad charged with ordering murder of Gen Manzur

Former president Hussain Muhammad Ershad was formally charged yesterday with ordering the murder of Major General Abul Manzur, GOC Chittagong, on June 1, 1981, reports BSS.

Md Abdus Salam, Sessions Judge, while reading out the charge against Ershad and four other retired army officers, said they committed the murder "intentionally causing the death of Major General M A Manzur by shooting on the head by Nayeb Subedar Abdul Malek, since dead."

He also brought a second charge against them "for not delivering the body of Manzur to his relations and carrying false propaganda that he (Manzur) was killed after forcibly taken away by unruly troops from army custody."

Ershad, the principal accused, was charged with committing offence under Section 302/109/201 of the Penal Code, while the four other retired army officers who were abettors, committed offence under Section 302/201 of the Penal Code. Major General (ret'd) Md



Gen H M Ershad
 Abdul Latif, Maj (ret'd) Kazi Emdadul Haq, Lt Col (ret'd) Shamsur Rahman Shams and Lt Col (ret'd) Mostafa Kamaluddin Bhuiyan are the co-accused with Ershad.



Gen M A Manzur
 would move to the High Court against the charge. All the co-accused also claimed 'not guilty'.

for charge hearing and framing of charge.

Defence lawyers, in a group and individually, put up obstructions every time the public prosecutor tried to make out the case. At one stage of the hearing, the defence lawyers left the court en masse to protest against the judge's refusal to entertain their petitions which sought adjournment.

The judge allowed Mahabur Rahman, counsel for Kazi Emdadul Haq, to have meeting with his client in Dhaka Central Jail before the next hearing (February 7).

Public Prosecutor Abdur Razaque Khan, assisted by special PP Ashrafuddin Ahmed and a number of assistant public prosecutors appeared for the state. Khandkar Mahbub Hossain defended Ershad. Other accused were represented by their respective lawyers.

Barrister Abul Mansoor, elder brother of Gen Manzur who fled the FIR with Parichalash thana in February last year to initiate the case, was in the court when the charge was framed.

Tug-of-war now on voter turnout

By Masud Hasan Khan and Reaz Ahmed

The ruling party and the Opposition are now set for a new round of tug-of-war over the turnout of voters in the February 15 parliamentary polls.

The 'turnout issue' has become the focus of intense political campaigns by both the BNP and the opposition parties as they prepare for a test of their strength among an estimated 56 million registered voters in the country.

As the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers passed off Tuesday and the ruling party's election campaign started the next day with the Prime Minister's visit to Sylhet, the opposition leaders are now planning how to convince the voters about the 'futility' of the ensuing elections without opposition participation.

A number of BNP stalwarts contacted by The Daily Star said that the main objective of their election campaign was to win people's confidence so that they cast ballots in large number.

The BNP leaders admitted that the safety and security of the voters would play a very important role in their turnout and pointed out that strong security measures would help bring increased number of voters to the polling centres.

BNP Secretary General Abdus Salam Talukder had earlier said that their election campaign would aim at assuring the voters about their security.

Leaders of the three major opposition parties — Awami League, Jatiya Party and Jamaat-e-Islami — said that they would take the Opposition campaigns to the district, thana and union levels.

"We will spread out, particularly to our respective constituencies, with our programme," said top Awami League leader Tofael Ahmed.

The opposition campaign would aim at creating a 'situation of non-cooperation from the voters so that they do not cast their ballots, he said.

Opposition sources said that considering the legal aspects of 'preventing' the voters from casting votes, there had been a shift in the overall Opposition strategy.

Earlier, the opposition leaders had planned hartals, street demonstrations in the capital and elsewhere in the country simultaneously to off-

Train derails in Ctg: Another disaster averted in Chandpur

CHITTAGONG, Jan 25: One of the bogies of a Chandpur-bound inter-city train from the port city derailed near Mostannagar station in Mirsarai thana today, reports UNB.

Railway sources said the last compartment of the 15-bogie Meghna Express ran off the track near the station at about 6 pm. No casualty was reported immediately.

They said train service on the section was, however, reported normal as the trains were plying through the down route. The Meghna Express left for Chandpur with its remaining bogies at about 7 pm.

A relief train from Chittagong was on way to the spot to salvage the derailed bogey, the officials said.

Another reports says: A train with some 200 passengers narrowly escaped an accident soon after it had departed from Chandpur station this morning.

Passengers said the Chittagong-bound 102 Up train with six bogies left here at 7:45 am on a wrong track as the pointsman gave a mistaken line clearance.

NEWS BRIEFS

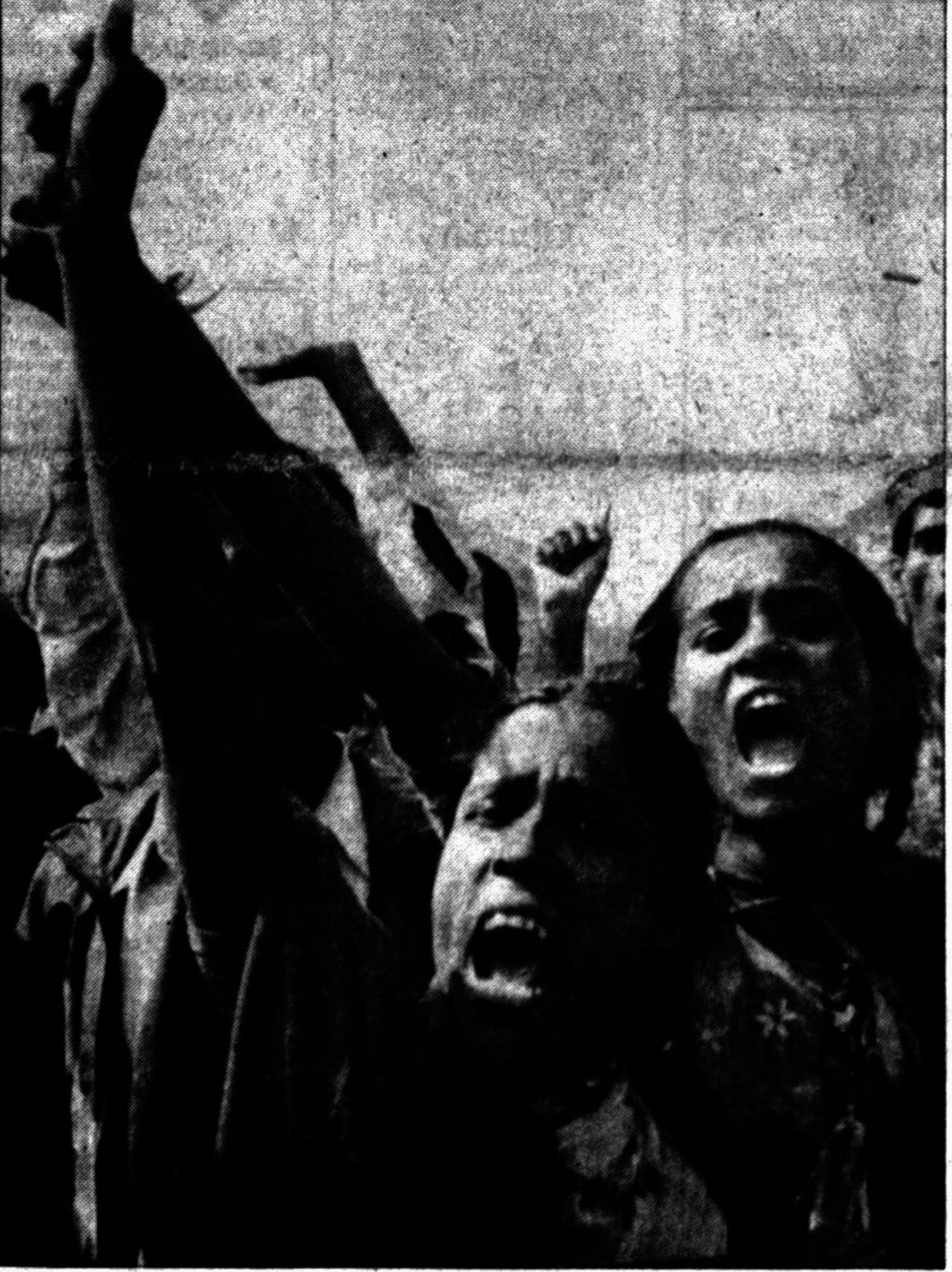
39 arms seized
 Law-enforcing agencies seized 39 firearms, 142 bullets and two explosives from different parts of the country yesterday, the 36th day of country-wide illegal arms recovery drive. Law and Order Coordination Cell of the Election Commission said, during the period, they also arrested 384 people on various charges including illegal possession of arms, reports UNB.

Ex-JP MP joins BNP
 Nawsher Ali Badsha, a former Jatiya Party MP from Natore, joined the BNP yesterday. He met with BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia at her residence and expressed his allegiance to her leadership and party programmes and policies, reports UNB.

17th BCS exams begin Feb 26
 The written test of the 17th BCS will begin of February 26. The examinations will be held in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna and London centres. Detailed time-table of the examination will be announced through news papers in due time, reports UNB.

Shetri, Ifar timings

Ram	Jan	Shetri	Ifar
5	26	—	5:44 pm
6	27	5:19 am	5:45 pm
7	28	5:19 am	5:46 pm



The Garments Sramik Federation brought out a procession in the city yesterday to press their demands which include payment of arrear wages and Eid bonus. — Star photo

'Solve water sharing dispute before formulating policy'

By Govinda Shil

Experts formulating the country's first National Water Management Plan (NWMP) believe that the regional water sharing issue should be resolved before formulation of the proposed National Water Policy (NWP).

Plans for use of water of the common rivers will be a component of the National Water Policy (NWP) and so disputes over those should be solved to make best use of water during the lean period, they observed.

The experts have also urged for a debate on the terms of references, objectives and scope of the Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO) to avoid any "shortcoming" in the NWP. The debate may be participated by scholars, teachers, engineers, journalists and policy makers.

The Flood Plan Coordination Organisation (FPCO) was merged with the Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO) early this month for formulation of the NWMP with the ultimate aim of framing a long term NWP.

"People should know what would be the objectives of the WARPO in formulating the NWMP," said Ainun Nishat.

Professor, Department of Water Resources Engineering of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET).

A set of "Water Codes" was also necessary for proper and optimum use of water under the proposed NWP, said Nishat, also a member of the Joint Rivers Commission (JRC).

"In Bangladesh, users of water are antagonistic rather than complementary," Prof Nishat said adding country's previous short term water plans were biased towards agricultural output only.

According to witnesses, about 8 to 10 young men went to the BNP office in Shahjalal Upashahar area at about 8:30pm by motorcycles. They exploded about 10 crackers outside the office building and damaged the doors and windows.

Sources said that the proposed NWMP might be completed by the year 1998 to provide a sound basis for the NWP.

Monwar Hossain, Professor and Head of the Water Resources Engineering Department of BUET said all water management plans are largely dependent on the flow of common rivers. Economic viability of the Teesta Barrage has now become questionable following construction of two barrages in India at the upperstream. India is constructing another barrage, he mentioned.

Talking over the proposed NWP and withdrawal of water by India at the upstream, Q K Ahmad of the Bangladesh Umman Parishad said, a detailed study is required to determine the environmental degradation due to unilateral withdrawal of water from the Ganges at Farakka.

Criticising the Indian proposal of augmentation of water flow at the upperstream, Ahmad said, it is a long term matter. "We are suffering severely now. So we need short and medium term agreements on sharing of water of the Ganges and other transboundary rivers."

US favours full participatory, peaceful polls

The United States has said it will continue to encourage efforts of both the government and opposition parties in Bangladesh for a long-term solution to the issues which divide them, reports UNB.

"We regret that the major political parties in Bangladesh apparently have not been able to arrive at a mutually agreed upon formula under which fully participatory elections can be held," US State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said in a statement on Wednesday.

He said the United States hopes that both sides will continue to work for a long-term solution to the issues which divide them, a solution which will preserve and strengthen Bangladesh's democratic institutions.

Gunfight at DU hall

By Staff Correspondent

More than 50 rounds of gunshots were fired during a gunfight reportedly between two factions of the pro-Awami League Chhatra League at Jagannath Hall of the Dhaka University early yesterday.

However, none was injured in the gunfight, hall sources said.

Some residents of the hall alleged that a faction of the BCL, known as Gopalganj Group, tried to enter the hall by indiscriminate firing near the entry gate adjacent to Shamsun Nahar Hall at around 6 am.

Hearing the gunshots, the insiders of the hall went out of their rooms and resisted the move of the Gopalganj Group, hall sources said.

Fake manpower agent held: 24 people rescued

By Staff Correspondent

A fake manpower agent was arrested and 24 people were rescued from a residential hotel in the city's Nawabpur area in the early hours of yesterday.

The fake agent identified as Akkel Ali, 50, brought these people from Sripur village of Magura to smuggle them into Malaysia via Thailand, police suspected. His son Daud Ali, who was also in the hotel, escaped before the raid.

Kotwali police rescued the victims during a raid in Hotel Shekhar at around 3:10 am.

Daud Ali was involved in manpower exporting business for a long time. He sent a number of people to Malaysia illegally, sources said, adding that most of them were now in jails and hiding in jungles in Malaysia.

The rescued were identified as Yunus, Md Kabir Hossain, Ayub, Majedul Islam, Narayan Chandra, Bikash Kumar Biswas, Gopal Kumar Biswas, Shubol Chandra Biswas, Shubanta Kumar Biswas, Bolal Kumar Mondol, Nobuat, Masud, Lal Miah, Joban Ali, Abdur Rouf, Karam Ali, Nanchalan, Abu Sayeed, Montu Mondol, Saiful Islam, Mukul Ali, Rafiqul Islam, Lokman Hossain and Ali Mollah, police said.

Opposition parties allege BNP using army to cling to power

By Staff Correspondent

The three major opposition parties yesterday alleged that the army and other security forces were being 'used' by the BNP government and a number of places is 'very unfortunate', he said.

Nasim termed the unopposed election of BNP ministers a "big joke" and said there was no instance of "such polls scandal" anywhere in the world.

He congratulated the people of Sylhet for what he called rejecting Prime Minister and BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia's election campaign and said she would face "similar resistance" elsewhere in the country.

Held at the Kalabagan

PM's public meet at Khulna cancelled

By Nazmul Ashraf

The planned public meeting of Prime Minister and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia in Khulna tomorrow has been cancelled, official sources confirmed last night.

The cancellation followed a dawn-to-dusk hartal called by the local units of the three major opposition parties at Khulna city aimed at "resisting Begum Zia's election campaign" there.

"The PM's two-day tour to Khulna and Bagerhat has been curtailed to a one-day programme only at Bagerhat", said an official of the Prime Minister's secretariat.

"She would now address a public rally at Bagerhat," the official said.

PM office sources, however, declined to cite any reason for dropping her scheduled public meeting at Khulna.

However, BNP sources said that the Khulna programme was dropped to avoid any undesirable situation that may be caused by the Opposition programme.

Earlier on Wednesday, Begum Zia's visit at Sylhet was marked by a day-long hartal as well as widespread violence.

According to the PM office sources, Begum Zia would go for a massive election campaign across the country

Manpower export to Malaysia remains stalled

Despite official-level negotiation for full-scale resumption of recruitment, manpower export to Malaysia from Bangladesh remains virtually stalled owing to "inaction" of the government recruiting agency in finding new jobs, reports UNB.

Official sources said the Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Service Limited (BOESL), the public-sector recruiting agency, so far sent directly only 100 workers to Malaysia after export resumed last August.

The Malaysian foreign task force recently sent to the BOESL a requisition for 2,980 workers, the first installment of some 70,000 workers the Malaysian authorities have promised to recruit from Bangladesh.

But, said the sources, selection of job-seekers from a huge number of people who registered for overseas employment became difficult in absence of a set policy.

Officials said over a lakh people got registered with manpower offices across the country, mainly for employment in Malaysia, after the registration began last September.

And, it was learnt, the BOESL has been fumbling on selection of the employment-seekers for Malaysia as some officials questioned the monopoly awarded to the government-run recruiting agency for manpower export to the ASEAN country.

According to sources, a recent meeting at the Ministry of Labour and Manpower had reviewed the performance of the BOESL which, the meeting observed, has an inherent disadvantage as a government body in finding new jobs for Bangladeshi workers.

Recognising that the private-sector initiatives have developed Bangladesh manpower market in Malaysia, the meeting viewed that a recruiting policy for Malaysia should be formulated, accommodating the private recruiting agencies.

The meeting also viewed that since the Malaysian authorities are not willing to entertain private recruitment agencies, there should be an in-built mechanism in the recruitment policy so that

Bangladesh Bank staff abstain from work in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 25: Transactions and other official functioning of the Chittagong branch of Bangladesh Bank were hampered today as the employees went on a day-long work abstention protesting the recent arrest of six staff members of the bank.

The agitating employees also demonstrated in front of the office.

The six were arrested from the port while they were taking delivery of one-taka coins imported from abroad on January 22, sources said.

The employees alleged that the port security personnel arrested the six staff of Bangladesh Bank here in a fabricated case when they were coming out from the port shed with some sample coins worth Taka 1,000.

Police and port security sources said they were arrested as they could not produce any document regarding the sample coins carried by them.

However, they were released on bail today.

Store manager stabbed to death by muggers

By DMCH Correspondent

Muggers stabbed to death a department store manager and took away Tk 5500 from him at Manik Mian Avenue yesterday morning.

Meanwhile, extortionists stabbed and assaulted two persons in separate incidents in New Market and Syedabad areas in the city yesterday.

Adhi Kumar Shaha, 30, manager of Grihini Department Store in Lalmitia, fatally injured when an unidentified gang of muggers attacked him on Manik Mian Avenue at around 7 am, hospital sources said.

Two students of Tejgaon College took injured Shaha to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where the attending doctors declared him dead.

The store manager, who resided in West Dhanmondi, received fatal injuries in his chest, said the owner of the store who rushed to the hospital hearing the news.

The store owner, Raihan

Testing at Sangu-I exploration well soon

Sangu-I Exploration Well Offshore Block 16, Bangladesh, is now operating at total depth, and a testing programme is planned soon, reports UNB.

Cairn Energy Plc made the announcement in London on Wednesday on behalf of Cairn and its wholly owned subsidiary, Holland Sea Search Bangladesh BV (HSSB), according to press release of British High Commission here yesterday.

It said on completion of operations and subject to BOGMC approval the rig will move to a location approximately 3 to 5 km north of the Sangu-1 well location and will commence drilling the Sangu-2 appraisal well.

A further announcement will be made on completion of the Sangu-1 testing programme, it added.