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DSE MARKET

DSE price index: 848.56 (+0.47%)
Market capital Tk: 5761.74 cr
Transactions in volume: 306592
Transactions in value Tk: 6.25 cr

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day



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NEWS BRIEFS

Housewife found dead

By Staff Correspondent

A housewife was found dead at her Kathalbagh residence in the city late Sunday. Police recovered the body of Zinat Ara Ferdous alias Nayan, 27, at around 11pm and sent it to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) for autopsy.

12 burnt alive in West Bengal

NEW DELHI, May 6: About 12 people were burnt to death and 17 others injured today when their bus caught fire in the eastern Indian state of West Bengal. The Press Trust of India (PTI) said, reports AFP.

Divisional & dist level officials urged

Ensure fair voting without fear: CEC

Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena, yesterday urged the divisional and district level officials to discharge their responsibilities without fear or favour to ensure free and fair parliamentary elections on June 12, report agencies.

He also issued some directives and guidelines to the officials. Addressing a polls-preparatory workshop at the auditorium of the National Economic Council at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar here the CEC explained the importance of the coming election under the caretaker government and said all must put in their sincere endeavours to present the nation with a truly elected and

representative government as expected by the people.

"Go ahead ignoring any pressure and influence to ensure a peaceful atmosphere for holding the election in an impartial and neutral manner," he said.

The Election Commission is determined to hold the 12 voting in a neutral manner. But it is you by whom the EC will operate all election activities throughout the country at field level.

"There is no alternative to making the election totally acceptable to all," he said reminding them that success or failure depend on them.

All divisional commissioners, additional inspector general, additional inspector general



Abu Hena addressing officials yesterday

Commentary

All that glitters is not gold

— some of it is defaulting bank loans

By Mahfuz Anam

Political parties, especially the two leading ones — AL and BNP — are now involved in a mad scramble to find 'suitable' candidates to contest on their behalf. The only one criterion for 'suitability' appears to be whether or not the candidate can deliver his or her seat to the party. If yes, then everything else — his past role in the liberation war, ideological orientation, past party affiliations, reputation, public image, etc. can be put aside. We are now witnessing politics of expediency at its vulgar worst, whose most tragic victim is likely to be the quality of politics in our country.

When dedicated party workers at mid level, and sometimes even of the highest echelons, leaders see party

nomination slipping away to the very same local politician who stood for everything that he or she fought against, then it is an experience that shatters all belief in principles, in party loyalty, in ethics, in what can be collectively called 'good politics'. What it results into is extreme cynicism leading to a belief that there is nothing called honesty in politics. It is such a belief that has proliferated into much of our party politics.

We do not imply that all parties, or all part of the same party is afflicted with this malaise. But we would like to strongly suggest that this tendency will gain considerable ground if what appears to be the trend from the shameful political horse trading that is

going on, is not put a stop to immediately. Otherwise, as in economics bad money drives out good money from the economy, so also bad politics will drive out good politics from our country, jeopardizing the fundamentals of our democratic process.

Everybody wants to win, especially political parties. But the question is at what cost? As it appears now, at any cost. And that is where we need to ring the alarm bells of reason, propriety, decency and honesty.

Most probably our warning will be most disdainfully brushed aside by the leading political parties — as all our views were over the last few years — with the comment

Election fever grips Chittagong

AL-BNP close fight in most of 15 constituencies likely

From Nurul Alam

CHITTAGONG, May 6: An election fever has gripped the port city and its surrounding areas with the aspiring candidates continuing to lobby with their respective party high command in the capital to set the nominations.

Party leaders and the intending candidates have already embarked on their campaign through holding rallies and mass-contact programme in their respective constituencies, sources in the parties said.

Most of the nomination seekers of the major political parties from 15 constituencies of Chittagong city and its surrounding areas, who rushed to Dhaka to face interviews are still staying there to continue

lobbying for party tickets, the sources informed. In most of the 15 constituencies a close fight is likely, mainly between the candidates of Awami League and BNP as both the parties are learnt to have been drawing individual strategies to win over the majority seats here.

In the 1991 election, BNP won in eight constituencies and AL in five while NDP in one and Jamaat-Islami in one out of the 15 seats.

This time crucial contests may be held in three constituencies in the city, including Chittagong-8 (Dharmapasha), Chittagong-9 (Kotwali) and Chittagong-10 (Chandgaol Boalkali). All three of these seats were being held by BNP

candidates. Outside the city, tough contests may be seen in Chittagong-1 (Mirsharai), Chittagong-2 (Sitakund), Chittagong-4 (Fatikchhari), Chittagong-6 (Raozan), Chittagong-7 (Rangunia), Chittagong-11 (Patiya), Chittagong-12 (Anwara) and Chittagong-15 (Banskali) according to political circles. Meanwhile, Awami League leaders are reportedly planning to field presidential member Sajeda Chowdhury at Chittagong-5 (Hathazari) to challenge the BNP candidate who won the seat in 1991 polls. Chittagong-5 (Hathazari) is the home constituency of the AL leader's husband. Besides, Awami League is

See Page 12 Col 8

BTTB's digital line project

Fresh bonds worth Tk 294 cr may be issued for funding

Star Report

The government is likely to issue more bonds worth Taka 294 crore to raise funds for completing installation of 1.3 lakh digital telephone lines, under a BTTB project, according to official sources here.

Taka 108 crore bonds would be issued in the current financial year and Taka 186 crore bonds in the next financial year, the sources said.

These new T&T bonds may bear interest rates in keeping with the existing 'market rates'.

Bonds bearing 5 per cent interest, auctioned in March this year, had failed to evoke response from members of the public and financial institutions because of the upward trend in the call money rate, the sources said.

The government had also floated Taka 275 crore bonds in fiscal 1993-94 and Taka 335 crore bonds in fiscal 1994-95, all bearing an interest rate of five per cent, to partly finance the Taka 1281 crore BTTB project.

When asked about the rationale of floating new bonds at a time when payment on previous bonds are pending, a high official of the Post and Telecommunications Ministry said the financial institutions did not ask for interests on their purchased bonds in the first year, they did not ask for in the second year.

The official added that the banks should have asked for interests by April or May so that provision could be made

in the budget. The ministry official further added that since the ministry did not receive any intimation in due time, it had not kept the provision and sought only Taka 225 crore under the ADP. However, he said there is no question of non-payment of interests as revised budget has addressed the issue.

He said the central bank had notified the ministry only in November last year for payment of interests and from then on, has been pursuing it every week.

However, bankers said they had applied to the central bank for interests as soon as their bonds matured and any delay on part of the central bank is not their fault.

HSC exams now from June 30

By Staff Correspondent

The Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) examinations of 1996 will begin on June 30, according to an official hand-out issued in the city last night.

The examinations were earlier scheduled to start from June 6.

The decision was taken at a high level meeting presided over by the Adviser, Education, Youth and Sports and Cultural Affairs ministries, Prof Md Shamsul Haq yesterday.

Education Secretary Abdul Haye, Additional Secretary Md Shahidul Alam, and other officials of the ministry attended the meeting.

The meeting also decided not to set up any examination centre outside the thana headquarters.

Imports rise by 7 pc

Imports rose by seven per cent in first eight months of the 1995-96 fiscal over the same period the previous year, according to figures released by Bangladesh Bank yesterday, reports UNB.

Letters of credit (L/Cs) worth Tk 17,835 crore were opened during the July-February period while the outstanding amount of L/Cs by end-February this year stood at Tk 9,887 crore.

Textile fabrics and accessories for readymade garments accounted for the highest import bills during the period. L/Cs worth Tk 4,165.12 crore were opened while the outstanding L/C amounts by end-February were Tk 2,202.13 crore.

L/Cs valued at Tk 1,603.08 crore were opened for machinery with L/Cs worth Tk 1,858.83 crore remaining outstanding by end-February. It was followed by rice for which L/Cs valued at Tk 1,523.03 crore were opened with L/Cs worth Tk 604.15 crore outstanding.

L/Cs were opened for petroleum products worth Tk 1,272.73 crore during the 8-month period with outstanding L/Cs valued at Tk 433.73 crore. See Page 12 Col 7



BNP parliamentary board continued interviewing nomination seekers at its Kakrail office in the city yesterday.

BNP may finalise list of candidates tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Another 294 applicants seeking BNP nomination for 73 seats under 15 districts in the coming parliamentary election were interviewed yesterday.

Of the nomination aspirants, 110 applied for 31 seats in the Dhaka, Gazipur, Narayanganj, Rajshahi and Munshiganj districts while 106 for 23 seats in Barisal, Bakerganj, Bhola, Patuakhali, Jhalokathi and Pirojpur districts and 78 for 19 seats in Sylhet, Sunamganj, Habiganj and Moulvibazar districts.

Until yesterday, the BNP nomination board, headed by the party chief Khaleda Zia, completed interviews of 788 nomination seekers for 191 seats under the Dhaka, Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions. Interviews of the nomination aspirants from

Rajshahi and Khulna divisions are scheduled to take place today.

If interviews of all the nomination seekers for 300 seats of the Jatiya Sangsad are completed today, the BNP standing committee is expected to meet to finalise the list of the 300 candidates and announce it tomorrow. BNP office secretary Nazrul Islam Khan told journalists at the party's Kakrail election office in the city last night.

Of the applicants interviewed yesterday, 20 were lone candidates for BNP tickets. They are: Prof AQM Badruddoza Choudhury (Munshiganj-3), Abdul Hye (Munshiganj-4), Amanullah Aman (Dhaka-3), Mirza Abbas (Dhaka-6), Choudhury Tanvir Ahmed Siddiqi (Gazipur-1), Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan (Nar-

singdi-2), Abdul Matin Choudhury (Narayanganj-1), M Saifur Rahman (Sylhet-4 and Moulvibazar-3), Fazlul Haq Aspia (Sunamganj-4), Sheikh Sujat Mia (Habiganj-1), Ebadur Rahman Choudhury (Moulvibazar-1), Shafiqur Rahman (Moulvibazar-4), Mosharraf Hossain Shahjahan (Bhola-1), Hafiz Ibrahim (Bhola-2), Maj (ret'd) Hafizuddin Ahmed (Bhola-3), Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal (Bakerganj-2), Mosharraf Hossain Manju (Bakerganj-3), Shahjahan Omar (Jhalokathi-1), Nurul Islam Manzur (Pirojpur-2), and Mostafizur Rahman (Patuakhali-4).

Among others who faced the BNP nomination board yesterday were: Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, M Shamsul Islam, Mir Shaukat Ali, Maj (ret'd) Abdul Mannan, Abdul Mannan, Sadek See Page 12 Col 7

JP interview begins

By Staff Correspondent

The Jatiya Party (JP) started interviewing nomination seekers for the 7th parliamentary elections at its Banani office in the city last night.

The eight-member JP parliamentary board headed by Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, acting chairman of the party, began interviewing the nomination seekers from Rajshahi Division at about 9.30 pm, two hours behind schedule. The interview was continuing till filing of the report late last night.

Over 400 aspiring candidates have sought nomination for 72 parliamentary seats in Rajshahi division, according to a JP sources.

The sources said that more than 1800 aspiring candidates have sought nominations for contesting in the 300 parliamentary constituencies in the country. The party had sold over 3550 application forms. See Page 12 Col 6

Rajuk Commercial Plot Auction Notice

Most ideally located Commercial-Cum-Residential Plot No. 9 and 11 of Sector No. 6, Shahjalal Avenue, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka measuring more or less 1194 sqr metre (17 katha 13 chattak 24 sft.) each will be allotted for 99 years lease on open auction.

Applications on prescribed form with terms and conditions to be obtained from Sonali Bank, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka on payment of Tk. 500/- (Five hundred) only in cash for each set (non-refundable) and will be received by the Deputy Director (Estates) from the intending bidders up to 2:00 PM on 20.5.96.

The auction will be held on 21.5.96 in the Conference Room 3rd floor of the Rajuk Bhaban, Dhaka at 10:00 AM.

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Janata Tower case HC rejects Ershad's appeal for bail

The High Court yesterday rejected the bail prayer of former president Hossain Mohammad Ershad in the corruption case known as 'Janata Tower Case' in which he and his wife Begum Rowshan Ershad and 17 others were sentenced to seven years simple imprisonment, reports BSS.

Though yesterday was fixed for hearing Ershad's appeal against the judgement of the Special Tribunal, Dhaka, Ershad's counsel Khondker Mahabub Hossain prayed for adjournment of the appeal hearing and pressed for hearing the bail application first when the court rose for the day.

The HC Division Bench comprising Justice Mohammad Golam Rabbani and Justice Mohammad Tozafzal Islam, however, allowed the prayer of adjournment till July 5, 1996, and discharged the rule of bail application upon hearing both the appellant and the state.

The court delivered the judgement and said, "We do not find any logic as to why the appellant should be granted bail after allowing his prayer for adjournment of hearing of this appeal which has already been heard in part."

The court further held, "We do not find any logic to grant bail to an appellant who prayed for adjournment of his party heard appeal. Under the cir-

cumstances we do not like to consider the rule on merit. This is discharged."

The appellant's counsel submitted that Ershad had already served out 35 months of his sentence out of 63 months. The appellant is in jail custody since December 12, 1990 and he being an aged man of 67 years is entitled to be released on bail, he argued.

Deputy Attorney General Amirul Kabir Chowdhury with Assistant Attorney General Abdur Rouf opposed the bail prayer and submitted that the appeal filed by Ershad being a

See Page 12 Col 8

BSF kidnaps 2 Bangladeshis

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, May 6: The Border Security Force (BSF) of India kidnapped two Bangladeshis from near the 'No Man's Land' attached to the Sripur stone quarry in Gowainghat thana this morning.

Dhanu Miah, 15, a stone quarry labourer was collecting stones from near the zero line adjacent to the border pillar number 1280.

The BSF men took him to the Indian territory forcibly. They also kidnapped

See Page 12 Col 2

CPB announces 17-pt election manifesto

By Staff Correspondent

The Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) released its election manifesto yesterday, pledging to repeal several constitutional amendments in order to restore the basic principles of the Constitution of 1972 which included democracy, secularism, nationality and socialism.

The 17-point CPB manifesto advocates for decentralisation of administration by empowering local governments, replacement of the open market economy with socialist economy, empowering women, strong control over law and order and checking corruption.

Jamaat will lead the coun-

try backwards, BNP and Jatiya Party are rightist reactionary political organisations, Awami League is also leaning towards the right by slipping away from the spirit of the liberation war. CPB Secretary General Mujahidul Islam Selim said at a press conference at the party office in the city. Therefore, only the CPB and other leftist parties can ensure a true progressive change of the country.

He said "We appeal to the country's voters, where there is no leftist candidate, elect someone who believes in the spirit of the liberation war."

The press conference was also attended by CPB President Shahidullah Chowdhury, central leaders Manjurul Ahsan Khan, Dr. Dibalok Singh, Abdul Maek and others.

The manifesto stressed on restructuring of the rural economy so that no farmer can become landless. All agricultural inputs will be availed to farmers at low cost. Various types of works would be availed to the rural community.

The manifesto pledges to transfer the responsibility of monitoring and implementing development and administrative work to local governments instead of Parliament Members.

See Page 12 Col 3

List of Jamaat candidates tomorrow

The Jamaat-e-Islami Bangladesh will announce tomorrow the names of the party candidates who will contest the upcoming parliamentary polls, reports BSS.

The parliamentary board of the party last night held its meeting at central office to finalise the list of the 300 candidates. Prof Gholam Azam, ameer of the party, presided.

The Jamaat has almost completed the scrutiny of the nomination papers of the candidates

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