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by Mahfuz Anam
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DSE MARKET

DSE price index 1059.58 (-0.48%)
Market capital Tk 7194.56 cr
Transactions in volume 398021
Transactions in value Tk 8.94 cr

CSE MARKET

CSE price index 441.80 (-0.71%)
Market capital Tk 3976.03 cr
Transactions in volume 18200
Transactions in value Tk 42.03 Lakh

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Dhaka Day by Day



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NEWS BRIEFS

Siratunnabi (SM) on July 29

The moon of the Hijri month of Rabiul Awwal was not sighted yesterday anywhere in Bangladesh. The National Moon-sighting Committee at a meeting yesterday with its vice-president and secretary of the Religious Affairs Ministry Mohammad Abdul Hannan in the chair, decided that the month of Rabiul Awwal will be counted from tomorrow, July 18 and holy Siratunnabi (SM) will be observed on July 29, reports BSS.

Faezul given charge of textile ministry

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has given State Minister for Jute Ak Faezul Haq the charge of Textile Ministry with the same status, said an official handout last night, reports UNB.

Rail link with Dinajpur restored

Train-communication between Dinajpur and the rest of the country was restored yesterday, official sources in Dhaka said. The communication was snapped due to landslide near Kaogaon railway station under Dinajpur-Parbatipur section caused by heavy rain and hill water from catchment area on Monday night. According to a Bangladesh Railway press release, movement of train through the track resumed at 11 am yesterday after completion of necessary repair works, reports UNB.

Tenure of envoy to Poland extended

The tenure of contract appointment of Nazem Ahmed Chowdhury, Bangladesh's ambassador to Poland has been extended by one year, till July 4, 1997, says a government announcement.

More areas flooded as rivers rise further

The overall flood situation in the northern districts worsened yesterday with fresh areas going under water due to further swelling of rivers in the region, reports agencies. The Brahmaputra continued to rise at downstream points and the Ganges at all points, deteriorating flood situation across the country, according to a Flood Information Centre Bulletin. Five rivers—the Dharla at Kurigram, the Brahmaputra at Chilmari, Bahadurabad, Sirajganj and Aricha, the Punarbhaba at Dinajpur, the Ganges at Goalundo and Bhagyakul and the Surma at Sunamganj—which were flowing above danger levels, registered further rise at most of the points. As a result, almost all thanas of Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Gaibandha and Dinajpur

districts including Dinajpur Sadar thana and Gangachara, Kaunia and Pirganj of Rangpur district, Sariakandi, Sonatola and Shibganj of Bogra district, Kazipur, Belkuchi, Sahajadpur, Chowdhali and Sadar thana of Sirajganj district and Islampur, Madarganj, Sarishabari and Dewanganj of Jamalpur district are likely to be inundated.

The Flood Forecast and Warning Division said new areas of Daulatpur, Shibalay, Ghior and Ibrahimpur of Manikganj district, Nawabganj and Dohar of Dhaka district and Sirinagar, Lauhajang, Tongibari and sadar thana of Munshiganj may also be flooded.

In Sirajganj, a deluge of water from the rain-swollen Jamuna washed away two children inundating fresh areas in the district.

A six-year-old baby girl, Rina, of Koljuri village in Shahjhadpur thana and an eight-year-old boy, Rashid, of Khasrajbari in Kizipur thana drowned in the flood water yesterday morning.

Fortyfive more villages were submerged while some portions of the flood-control embankments in Shahjhadpur and Kazipur thanas gave in the swirling flood water.

With this, some 252 villages in Kazipur, Sadar, Belkuchi, Chauhan, Shahjhadpur, Tarash and Raiganj thanas of the district were affected by the flood onslaught.

In Jamalpur, some two lakh people in 34 unions of Melaudaha, Dewanganj, Islampur, Madarganj and Sarishabari thanas were affected by the fresh spell of flooding.

See Page 12 Col 1

CID interrogates 15, no trace of jail escapees yet

Star Report

The CID police yesterday interrogated 15 officials and employees of the Home Ministry in connection with the escape of 13 prisoners from the jail in the early hours of Monday.

But they declined to make any comment. "It is premature to comment how the prisoners collected all the instruments to make hole in the wall of Cell-15 and managed to escape," a police officer told The Daily Star.

The government yesterday announced reward of Taka 20,000 for information leading to arrest of each of the escapees, a Home Ministry press release said. Despite a countrywide police hunt, none of the fugitives could be arrested till late last night, according to police sources.

Meanwhile two committees, one formed by the Home Ministry and the other by the jail authorities, started investigation into the incident.

The four-member home ministry committee, formed yesterday, is headed by joint secretary Giasuddin Pathan. The committee visited the

Editorial on page 4

spot and talk to senior officials of the jail yesterday.

The three-member committee formed by the IG, Prison is headed by an Additional IG, Prison. The committee will start field work today, sources said.

Both the committees have been asked to submit their reports within seven days, according to sources in the

Home Ministry and the Directorate of Prison.

Ten persons including Deputy Jailer Subodh Ranjan Saha were suspended immediately after the incident.

Talking to The Daily Star, a high official of the Home Ministry claimed that mismanagement inside the Dhaka Central Jail and serious flaws in planning of construction works inside gave the scope to the prisoners to escape.

Explaining the official said that adjacent to the boundary wall, finished houses have been constructed, electric poles have been erected and trees planted without maintaining 'safe distance,' as laid down in the jail code.

See Page 12 Col 1

Indian FM likely to visit Dhaka early Sept

Indian Minister for External Affairs Indore Kumar Gujral is expected to visit Bangladesh early September to discuss the bilateral disputes with his Bangladesh counterpart, reports UNB.

Foreign Office sources yesterday said that the date of the visit was yet to be worked out, but it was likely to take place in the first week of September. IK Gujral, during his visit to Bangladesh in 1990, felt urgent necessity for early solution of all outstanding issues between Bangladesh and India in the interest of improving relations between the two neighbours.

He had told a press conference in Dhaka that effective steps would be taken to solve the Farakka and Chakma refugee problems 'as soon as possible.'

Foreign Minister Abdus See Page 12 Col 6

Taka devalued by 15 poisa

By Staff Correspondent
The Taka has been devalued by 15 poisa against the US dollar with effect from Monday, said a Bangladesh Bank press release yesterday.

Bangladesh Bank's buying rate for one US dollar from the banks now stand at Taka 41.80 instead of the earlier Taka 41.65 and the selling rate is now taka 42 instead of the earlier Taka 41.85.

The press release said, "with a view to maintaining competitiveness of Bangladeshi exports and better return to wage earners, the Bangladesh Taka has been depreciated."

This is the first time that taka has been devalued under the 24 day old AL government.

Sub-jail for Ershad near JS to cost Tk 1 lakh a month

Star Report
The shifting of jailed Jatiya Party chief and former president HM Ershad to a sub-jail near the Jatiya Sangsad would cost the government over Taka one lakh per month for its maintenance, said an official of the Home Ministry yesterday. Ershad had been shifted to a house near the Jatiya Sangsad for the convenience of the administration to enable him to attend parliament sessions.

Security measures in and around the house has been tightened with round-the-clock vigilance. Asked whether Ershad was See Page 12 Col 7

Rathajatra today

The Rathajatra festival begins at Dhamrai today, reports BSS. LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Md Zillur Rahman will attend the inaugural function of the festival at Madhab premises at 4 pm today as the chief guest.

State Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana Md Nurul Islam and State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Satish Chandra Roy will be special guests at the function which will be inaugurated by the chief of the Dhaka Ramkrishna Mission Swami Aksharanandaji Moharaj.

Mayor of Dhaka Md Hanif will attend the Utharath function as the chief guest at the same place on July 25.



Cuban Olympic campaigners sharing a light moment with Izzy, the official mascot of the Centenary Games, on their arrival at the Atlanta airport on July 16. AFP/UNB photo

Israel fails to block use of 'Palestine' at Atlanta

ATLANTA, July 16: The first Palestinian team in Olympic history will definitely compete under the name 'Palestine' at the Atlanta Games, reports AP. The International Olympic Committee on Monday rejected a request by Israel's new right-wing government to block the use of the Palestine designation.

"The IOC position is quite clear," IOC director general Francois Carrard said. "These sorts of requests to change the name we have already approved are purely last-minute political moves."

The Palestinian Olympic Committee was recognised by the IOC in 1993 following the peace accords between Israel and the Palestinians.

The designation of Palestine is perfectly consistent with the designation used by the United Nations, Carrard said. "That's our position and we stand by that position. We do not want to enter into any kind of political issue."

Israel's consul-general in Atlanta, Arye Mekel, sent a letter Sunday to IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch objecting to the use of the Palestine name.



It's an improper effort to introduce politics into the Games," Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Danny Shek said in Tel Aviv.

Shek said the use of the name without coordination with Israel was a violation of the Israel-PLO autonomy accords which set explicit guidelines for the Palestinians' use

of symbols of sovereignty. Israel's letter to the IOC suggested the team could be called Palestinian Authority, Palestinian Autonomy or Palestinian Delegation.

In May, Israelis elected a right-wing government headed by prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is more determined than his predecessor to prevent any upgrading of the Palestinians' autonomy to statehood.

Israeli sources in Atlanta said there was never any threat of a boycott or other punitive action by Israel.

"We welcome the participation of the Palestinians," a source said. "However, this appearance should reflect the actual situation of the Middle East. There simply is no country as Palestine. It is an attempt to use the Olympics to seize some political gains."

Israel's national Olympic committee and Israel's member on the IOC, Alex Gilady, opposed the government move and stood by the IOC's decision. See Page 12 Col 6

Resist violation of Constitution: Khaleda

Leader of the Opposition and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday said it is mandatory for all who hold constitutional posts to abide by the Constitution, reports UNB.

No one who has taken oath under the Constitution has the scope or right to bypass or violate the Constitution," she said addressing the leader of Jatiyatabadi Sangskritik Sangathan (JSS) at the party's Kakrail office last night.

Calling the Constitution a 'sacred document,' the BNP Chairperson said everybody from top to bottom who holds the constitutional post in the government should abide by the Constitution.

In this context, Begum Zia called upon the patriotic people to remain alert so that no one could violate the Constitution for selfish end.

The Leader of the Opposition also laid importance on matching words with works.

Retaining Shaheed Presi- See Page 12 Col 2

Smuggled goods worth Tk 1 cr seized in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, July 16: The anti-smuggling squad of Chittagong Customs seized contraband worth Tk one crore from two separate places, official sources said.

Foreign current nets and cigarettes were recovered from underground cavities near a graveyard at village Latupur near Foudherhat last night, sources added.

The smugglers blasted series of cocktails to resist the raid but no casualty was reported.

In another raid this morning the same team intercepted a running car at Fakirhat near Chittagong port and seized 380 cartons of smuggled cigarettes. The owner of the car, however, managed to flee, official sources said. The cigarettes were being smuggled from Patenga, they added.

Meanwhile, Chittagong Customs Authority stopped the delivery of two consignments of chemical goods worth about Taka 40 lakh from the port jetties when a case regarding See Page 12 Col 8

Orientation course for MPs begins Take lessons from past wrongdoings: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked her party deputies to act responsibly to make Parliament the centre of all power doing away with the legacy of extra-constitutional rule, reports UNB.

"We must act responsibly to make parliament the centre of all power and give democracy an institutional shape," said Sheikh Hasina inaugurating a two-day orientation course for the treasury bench members at the Parliament house.

The Prime Minister said the formation of this government would have no value if people were not benefited. Pointing to the misdeeds of post-75 government who came to power through killing and applying force, Hasina said in their bid to legalise their illegal powers they had ignored people's rights and destroyed democracy.

In a flashback on the Pakistani era, the Prime Minister said, "We had very little scope for practising democracy."

The electoral mandate of 1970 which Awami League won under the leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was snatched and after the independence Bangabandhu was assassinated, she said.

"Removing a people's government General Ziaur Rahman came to power and to have legalised his illegal power they destroyed the electoral institutions," she said.

General Ershad also followed the footprint of Ziaur Rahman, and thus the trend which was thus created kept no scope for people's representation.

After the fall of Ershad, Hasina said, the party which formed government failed to bring transparency in the administration.

Representatives of one of the world's leading oil companies, Exxon Esso Corporation of the US, are now in the city to review prospects for exploring hydrocarbon reserves in Bangladesh, Petrobangla sources said.

A four member Exxon delegation arrived in the city Friday to initiate talks with the government. The team met the Energy Minister on Monday.

The sources said that inspired by discovery of a large gas reserve in Sangu-1 well in the Bay of Bengal by a British-Dutch joint venture, Exxon plans to assist development of Sangu-1 well as well as go for negotiations for block-wise exploration.

Exxon has applied for purchase of a promotional package worth 7,500 US dollars from the Petrobangla which would later allow it to have full access to the latter's data base.

The US company has expressed keenness to sit for unsolicited negotiations with the government on exploration

of hydrocarbon reserves in greater Noakhali region, the sources said.

After the government allowed private participation in hydrocarbon exploration, Cairn Plc of Scotland and Holland Sea Search signed agreements for exploration, in blocks 15 and 16, covering the Bay of Bengal around Cox's Bazar, Sandwip region and Chittagong respectively. Occidental of the US signed agreements for three blocks covering the Sylhet-Netrokona region.

The Petrobangla sources pointed out that there are still 15 more blocks left for exploration. Petrobangla itself, inspired by the discovery of 0.40 trillion cubic feet gas reserve in Shahbazpur, Bhola, late last year, wants to work in some blocks. A seminar inviting various oil companies of the world will be organised by the World Bank.

Meanwhile, representatives of British company Midland Power are expected to hold See Page 12 Col 6

25 WARPO key posts vacant despite repeated reminder

By Mizan Ali

The Water Resources Planning Organisation (WARPO), the highest statutory body created four years ago to plan and advise the government on water resources management and development, is yet to build its organisational structure with its own experts and manpower.

The WARPO was mandated to be formed with multi-disciplinary teams of experts to give decisions regarding water resources development and management projects, according to sources in the organisation.

No project is supposed to get government clearance for implementation without approval from the WARPO, the sources told The Daily Star.

The WARPO was formed under the Water Resources Planning Act 1992 (Act-12 of 1992) and gazetted on April 18, 1992.

But the WARPO could not recruit its manpower even after repeated reminders from the ministry concerned according to sources in the organisation. Since its inception it is being run by personnel most of whom are on deputation from the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB). As a result, it failed to

build itself as an autonomous organisation, the sources pointed out.

Officials for almost all the 87 allocated posts in the WARPO have been drawn from other government organisations, mainly from the BWDB, they said.

Even after repeated reminders from the ministry, the WARPO failed to recruit officials for the 25 key posts although the ministry issued NOC on 1.7.95," said one official.

The water resources ministry sent at least five letters during the last six months to recruit personnel at the earliest, but no action has yet been taken," another official added.

In its last circular, the ministry urged the WARPO to build up its own manpower structure and end dependence on the BWDB, the official said.

The authorities in the WARPO said that recruitment of personnel would be considered after completion of the job distribution in the organisation.

M H Siddiqi, Director General of the WARPO, talking to The Daily Star said, "The whole setup of the WARPO was in a mess when I took over as DG and it will take time to reorganise it," adding that the personnel would be recruited in due course.

Some officials however alleged that even after six months of merger of the Flood See Page 12 Col 8

Some 500 applicants including some Ph.D degree holders had applied for those 25 posts including one post of Chief Scientific Officer which is now being manned by a person not having 'ordinary educational background,' the official added.

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Alleged mugger beaten to death, 2 hospitalised

By DMCH Correspondent

An alleged mugger was beaten to death and two others were seriously injured by a group of angry local people as they allegedly snatched Tk 4.29 lakh from a person at Islampur in the old part of the city yesterday.

The deceased aged about 35, sustained fatal head injuries after the mob pounced on him at about 2 pm. He died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at around 4 pm, police and hospital sources said.

The two others identified as Kawsar, 38, of Sanir Akhira, and Aziz, 35, were admitted to the DMCH under police custody.

The muggers snatched the money from Shafiqul Islam, 30, when he was passing by the Lion Cinema Hall area at about 1:45 pm.

According to police, Shafiqul, manager of an export-import trading house, Shamoli Biponi Bitan, was returning to his office at Mirpur Road after withdrawing Tk 4.29 lakh from the Islampur branch of the United Commercial Bank.

A group of six muggers, after snatching the money, tried to escape by an auto-rickshaw. But some local people immediately started chasing the muggers and at one stage held three of them when

their auto-rickshaw was forced to stop as a truck was crossing the Bangladesh intersection at the time, police said.

The three alleged muggers were severely assaulted by the mob. Police rescued the muggers from the mob and took them to the DMCH where one of them died. The body was sent for autopsy. The two others were under treatment at the DMCH till last night.

The angry people also burnt the auto-rickshaw, police said. However, the money could not be recovered.

A case was filed with Kotwali thana.

BNP activist shot dead

From Our Correspondent

KHULNA, July 16: An activist of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and member of the Amadi Union parishad was shot dead by gunmen last night.

Abdus Sattar, 35, was attacked when he was returning home from the party office, police said.

Police arrested three of the six persons named in the FIR filed in connection with the murder. The arrested were identified as: Babu, Ruhul and Anup.

Hitting the Stands Soon

The Daily Star special on Atlanta Olympics... a gorgeous production in colour on art paper and imported newsprint... a 36-page extravaganza on the Greatest Show on Earth for only Tk. 10.00. Ask your hawk for your copy or get it from your nearest newsstand.

