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DSE MARKET

DSE price index: 1890.36
Market capital Tk: 13225.98 cr
Transactions in volume: 104015
Transactions in value Tk: 2593 cr

CSE MARKET

CSE price index: 770.37
Market capital Tk: 7765.55 cr
Transactions in volume: 200185
Transactions in value Tk: 436 cr

NEWS BRIEFS

Biswas hosts tea party for diplomats

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Begum Biswas hosted a tea party at Bangabhaban yesterday in honour of the diplomats of different countries based in Dhaka. President Biswas and Begum Biswas welcomed the guests and exchanged pleasantries with them, reports BSS.

Khaleda invited to Saudi Arabia

By Staff Correspondent
Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia has been invited by the Saudi King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz to perform Umrah Hajj, said a party press release last night. Begum Zia will leave Dhaka for Saudi Arabia on October 13. Members of the Opposition leader's family would also accompany her to perform Umrah as royal guests, the press release added.

Zia Kishore body meets Khaleda today

BNP chairperson and Leader of the Opposition Begum Khaleda Zia will exchange views with the leaders of Zia Shishu Kishore Sangathan at 7 pm at her Minto Road official residence today, said a BNP press release, reports UNB.

Looted rifle recovered

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Oct 5: Police recovered one rifle and nine bullets from Noapara village under Razan thana this morning and arrested one Afsaruddin Ahmed. The recovered rifle is one of the nine rifles looted from Noapara police camp on September 5. The rest eight rifles were recovered last week.

Kushtia College reopens today

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, Oct 5: Kushtia Government University College reopens tomorrow after a 13-day closure. The college was closed following a clash between the BCL and the JCD on September 23. The decision of reopening the college was taken at a meeting of student leaders of different groups with the principal Anwarul Karim in the chair.

Khaleda assures investors No agitation programme without valid reasons

Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia assured the investors that her party would not launch any programme, without any valid reasons, which can cause suffering to the country and people, reports UNB.

"We have no intention to launch such programmes which can hinder building a prosperous future for the nation by way of socio-economic development of this poor country," she said while addressing the closing ceremony of BATEXPO 1996.

Begum Zia, the chairperson of the BNP, assured all possible cooperation from her party in developing the entire industrial sector including the garment-manufacturing industry.

"We believe in the politics of production and development."

We want to work for the welfare of the country, its people, the whole nation," she said. "We want a congenial atmosphere and continuation of the trend of development."

The former prime minister said during the last few years' movement, garments factories remained closed for 170 working days entailing a financial loss of at least Tk 7111 crore. "Each of the factories suffered a loss of about Tk 42 lakh," she added.

According to reports, Begum Zia said, the garments sector suffered a loss of Tk 5,000 crore only during the non-stop hartal and non-cooperation movement during February-March last year.

She said this type of programme not only caused financial losses to the garments fac-

ories, but also the country had lost international market. Country's image was also tarnished. This loss could not be recovered, she observed.

The BNP chairperson suggested that the government should render all support and cooperation to help recover the loss of the readymade garments (RMG) sector. She hoped that the government would attach due importance to this labour-intensive sector.

The RMG sector fetched 66 per cent of the country's total export earnings. It earned foreign exchange equivalent to 2.5 billion US dollars in 1995 following the trend of development initiated by the former BNP government, she told the function.

Begum Zia said the average

See Page 12 Col 7

Nat'l body on CHT meets Liaison Committee today

KHAGRACHHARI, Oct 5: The national committee on Chittagong Hill Tracts will hold a close-door meeting tomorrow with the liaison committee which mediates between the government and the Parbatyia Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS), reports UNB.

The government has formed the national committee, headed by Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah, to find out a solution to the CHT problem through discussion.

Competent sources said the meeting would discuss present situation of the hill tracts, five-point proposal of the PCJSS and matters relating to peace.

The then government in November 1985 for the first time started negotiation with the Shantibahini to come to a peaceful solution of the CHT problem.

During the past BNP government, there was a number of meetings with PCJSS, the political wing of the Shantibahini, See Page 12 Col 3

Nat'l policy to ensure freedom of press underway: PM

By Staff Correspondent

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said an initiative has been taken to formulate a national policy for ensuring freedom of the press and growth of the newspaper industry.

"I like to assure you today that my government will never use advertisement and newspaper quotas as tools to suppress press freedom," she said while inaugurating the second annual conference of the Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) at a city hotel yesterday.

The opening session of the two-day conference of the DRU, an organisation of Dhaka-based reporters, was also addressed by Minister of State for Information Prof. Abu Sayeed.

Communications Minister Anwar Hussain Manju, Ship-

ping Minister ASM Rob. State Minister for LGED and Cooperatives Sayed Abul Hussain, editors of national dailies, dignitaries and over three hundred members of the DRU attended the function, chaired by the Unity's president Shafiqul Kabir. General secretary of the DRU, Mostafa Firoz Dipu, delivered the address of welcome. Widow of late renowned reporter Monazatuddin was also present.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced a donation of Tk five lakh to the journalists' welfare fund of the DRU and appreciated its plan to give awards to five freedom fighter journalists on the Victory Day, December 16.

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Rice procurement target refixed at 4.2 lakh tonnes

The government has decided to procure an additional quantity of 20 thousand metric tons of Irri-Boro, bringing the total to four lakh and 20 thousand tonnes, reports BSS.

The procurement drive which was launched on May 1 to ensure fair price to the growers has been satisfactory, said an official handout yesterday.

Earlier, the target for procurement of rice and paddy was fixed at three lakh tons including 75 thousand tonnes of paddy.

The revised target was fixed at 4.20 lakh tons as the supply of paddy is still adequate in the markets. The procurement drive will continue till October 15. Meanwhile, four lakh tons of foodgrain has been procured.

The district-wise additional procurement target of rice is as follows: Dinajpur-2000 tons, Thakurgaon-1500 tons, Panchagajon-1000 tons, Rangpur-1500 tons, Gaibandha-1000 tons, Naogaon-2000 tons, Sirajganj-2000 tons.

See Page 12 Col 3

Ershad granted bail in Holiday Inn Case

Former President H M Ershad was granted bail yesterday in a corruption case, better known as the Holiday Inn Case, linked to the allotment of land in the capital, allegedly through a shady deal, reports UNB.

The bail was granted by Senior Special Tribunal Judge Mohammad Abdus Salam.

Other accused in the case are: former Vice-President Barrister Moudud Ahmed, former Works Minister Shafiqul Gani Shawpan and Abul Khair Iqbal, a businessman.

Another accused, Abul Bashar, former chairman of DIT (Rajuk) expired soon after his bail in the case.

Anti-corruption officer Ataur Rahman filed the case with Motiheel police station on May 9, 1991.

Ershad, the principal accused, was charged with causing the state to sustain a loss of Tk 5 crore by allotting a prime piece of land in Shahbagh area at lower price.

After the charge was formed in early 1992, the defence went to the High Court for quashing the proceedings that resulted in a stay which lasted for more than three and a half years. Recently, the petition was rejected and the case came up for hearing.

Application seeking to stop swearing-in of Shahabuddin as President rejected

Chief Justice IC Abu Taher Mohammad Afzal yesterday rejected an application seeking stoppage of the swearing-in of former Chief Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed as the President of Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The Chief Justice also rejected the application for constitution of a special bench for disposal of the appeal preferred against the High Court judgement on the writ petition filed by an advocate challenging the election of Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed as the President of the Republic.

The application for constitution of special bench to hear the appeal was rejected by the Chief Justice as the appeal is not ready for hearing.

Both the applications were moved by appellant Advocate Abu Baker Siddique in person as his counsel Barrister Azmalul Hossain was not in Dhaka.

Attorney General Barrister K S Nabil, Additional Attorney General Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Deputy Attorney General Shahabuddin Ahmed and Advocate on-record Shartuddin Chaklader were present on behalf of the government.

Both the applications were moved before Chief Justice ADM Afzal in his official residence yesterday morning.

The administration of the oath of office to the President elect Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed is now free from all legal complications.

The tenure of office of outgoing president, Abdur Rahman Biswas ends on October 8.

10 hurt as BCL, JCD clash in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Oct 5: At least 10 people were injured in a clash between supporters of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at Gasbaria College under Chandanai thana at noon today, police and local sources said.

Among the injured, three were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital and the rest to local health complex. Police said the clash began when a BCL procession came under attack on the college campus. Police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

The clash was marked by gunshots and blasts of cock-tails, local sources said.



A Dhaka City Corporation employee, using a hand-held loudspeaker, urges traders and residents of Dayaganj to keep the pavements free for pedestrians, launching a drive ordered by Mayor Mohammad Hanif yesterday.

— Star photo by A K M Mohsin

Kibria tells IMF-WB jt annual meeting Reinforced liberalisation to lower rent-seeking, corruption

Finance Minister SAMS Kibria said the scope for rent-seeking and corruption in the country's economy would be diminished through reinforced deregulation and liberalisation for a rapid growth, reports UNB.

This would be possible through transparency and public accountability in the system of governance, he said while speaking at the joint annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the World Bank and the IMF in Washington on Friday.

"The government is committed to removal of corruption and rent-seeking through a series of measures including independent judiciary, representative local self-government and deregulation and liberalisation in economic sphere," he said.

According to an official release in Dhaka, the finance minister told the donors that the present government's goals of social and economic development, including 7 per cent growth rate per annum by the end of the century, are realisable through committed political leadership.

The growth would be sustained by adequate investment at 16-20 per cent of GDP, he said mentioning that the government's aim is alleviation of

poverty and improvement of quality of people's life to be achieved through rapid development.

Besides, he mentioned that maintaining macro-economic balance and stability through prudent management of the budget, and balance of payments and non-inflationary growth are the fundamentals of the government's economic strategy.

The finance minister reiterated the present government's willingness to expand economic space for private investment, including foreign investment.

Accord on \$ 105m micro credit finance project

World Bank, the country's largest multilateral donor, has assured that the Bank group will provide full support to the government efforts for rapid development and poverty alleviation, reports UNB.

The assurance came from World Bank President James Wolfensohn when Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria met him in Washington on Thursday, according to a message re-

See Page 12 Col 8

through appropriate regulatory reforms and incentives.

He also referred to the strong commitment of the government to improve the condition of the people of Bangladesh — the vast majority of whom live in poverty — and implement necessary reforms towards that goal.

"Development cooperation will help us achieve that cherished objective," he added.

The Bangladesh finance minister said IDA continues to be the world's most important channel for providing concessional financing to the 79 low-income developing countries with a total population of three billion.

The IDA embodies the commitment of the developed countries to foster economic growth, social development and a better living for the people of the poorest countries, he said stressing the need for adequate funding for IDA's operations.

Kibria cautioned that much reduction of concessional flow from the industrial societies to developing countries would pose a threat to their sustainable growth.

A mechanism needs to be evolved to eliminate uncertainty about the funding of any

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ADB concerned at change of BOU Vice Chancellor

By Staff Reporter

The Asian Development Bank (ADB), which provides most of the funding for Bangladesh Open University, has expressed concern over the project following appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor for BOU.

Prof M Aminul Islam, a teacher of Soil Science of Dhaka University, replaces Prof Shamsher Ali, founder VC and project director of BOU, on October 21.

In a letter to the authorities, ADB said that the appointment of a new VC would hamper the on-going projects of BOU, which so far provided distance learning opportunities to thousands of teachers, elderly people and others since it began operations in 1992.

Prof Shamsher Ali, a well-known physicist and an expert in distance learning, had been doing very good job both as VC and project director, the ADB noted in its letter.

Trouble is feared in the BOU with its 11 projects going on alongside academic programme as colleagues close to Prof Shamsher Ali said he would not continue as project director under a new VC. BOU sources said.

The ADB pointed out that this would delay the project and undermine the excellent work

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Half of 5000 seized birds perish at Dhaka Zoo

By Morshed Ali Khan

Nearly half of the 5,000 birds, handed over to the Dhaka Zoo after being seized at the Zia International Airport (ZIA) recently, have perished, Zoo officials said.

The birds mostly Munias, were seized at the ZIA by Customs personnel on September 5 as they were being smuggled out of the country in a Karachi-bound flight.

The birds died at the Dhaka Zoo due to congestion, said Zahurul Alam, Zoo Officer. "Birds have the highest mortality rate in our zoo, we do not have so much space to accommodate so many at a time," he added.

There has been an outbreak of skin diseases among the deer, rhinoceros, bears and some other types of animal at the zoo and "they are getting treatment," Alam said.

Two spotted deer died last month when a fierce fight broke out among the stags. "We found them dead from wounds inflicted from the fight," he said.

Four Royal Bengal Tiger cubs, born on August 6 at the Zoo, are still being breastfed. Within a short time they will switch over to solid food, the Zoo Officer told this correspondent.

The Royal Bengal Tiger family at the Dhaka Zoo is now so big — 20 in number — that the

Zoo authorities have stopped naming them. "We can no longer keep tag on the rapidly growing tiger population," said Md Alsar Ali, Curator of the Zoo. "We are now looking for overseas zoos interested in an animal exchange programme."

To procure a Royal Bengal Tiger for a zoo, the cost is between Tk six to seven lakh, he pointed out.

The lion family, with 18 heads, is also thriving. The Curator said that they would also include lions in the exchange programme.

One of the cheetahs, the swift running spotted felines, is pregnant. She will deliver within two or three months, Alsar said.

Many priced animals including the orang uto, red panda, giraffe and zebra are passing days in the zoo without partners. The zoo is to embark upon a Tk six-crore project soon for its facilities. Of the amount some Tk 58 lakh would be spent for procuring animals from abroad. In addition to finding partners for the lonely animals, a Chinese panda would be added to the animal population of the zoo, he said.

The rest of the money would be spent for refurbishing the Zoo.



Bangladesh Child Rights Journalist Forum arranged a colourful rally of tokais (street urchin) in the city yesterday marking the Child Rights Day.

— Star photo

Protest mounts against Miss World contest in Bangalore

From Kunal Ganguly

NEW DELHI, Oct 5: And, the Miss World is?

This year, before the words are uttered to crown the world's most beautiful woman, organisers of the pageant will have to thread a difficult path strewn with threats of suicide squads to demonstration by grandmothers.

And, there will be a heap of one million protest postal cards that will be mailed to reach the venue of the final day of the glamorous show.

And, beauty will have to mix with guns as hundreds of Indian commandos, known as 'black cats' for their black security, will be posted to ensure security.

Since its inception in 1951 in London, the Miss World contest is travelling to India — the land of 'Kamasutra', or the ancient art of lovemaking — for

the first time.

"The show itself is huge, difficult to police, and now we have these people threatening that they will send women protesting," said C.O. Burman, the police administrator of Bangalore in Southern India, which has been selected as the venue of the three-week final contest starting November 23.

"We will not allow the show to be held, where people, mostly men, will judge a woman by her legs, breasts, waistlines and lips," said Pramila Nesargi, one of the seven women elected as deputies to the male-dominated 224-member Karnataka state assembly of which Bangalore is the capital.

Prestige of women is at stake and they can not take us for a ride, said Nesargi, a firebrand politician who has been to jail

several times for picking up the causes of the poor and battered women.

"We are forming suicide squads of women who will go inside the venue and counter the show," she said.

Police and organizers say local Indian media is hyping the threat and that the city's 15,000 police force will be able to cope with the menaces.

"But you don't want any unpleasantness and you don't want to see men with guns in a beauty show," said Burman, a Bengali who commands Bangalore police.

"I am trying to figure out the security dimension," he said. Burman plans to call in federally-trained commandos to help him in the security. "I will need many many men with

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