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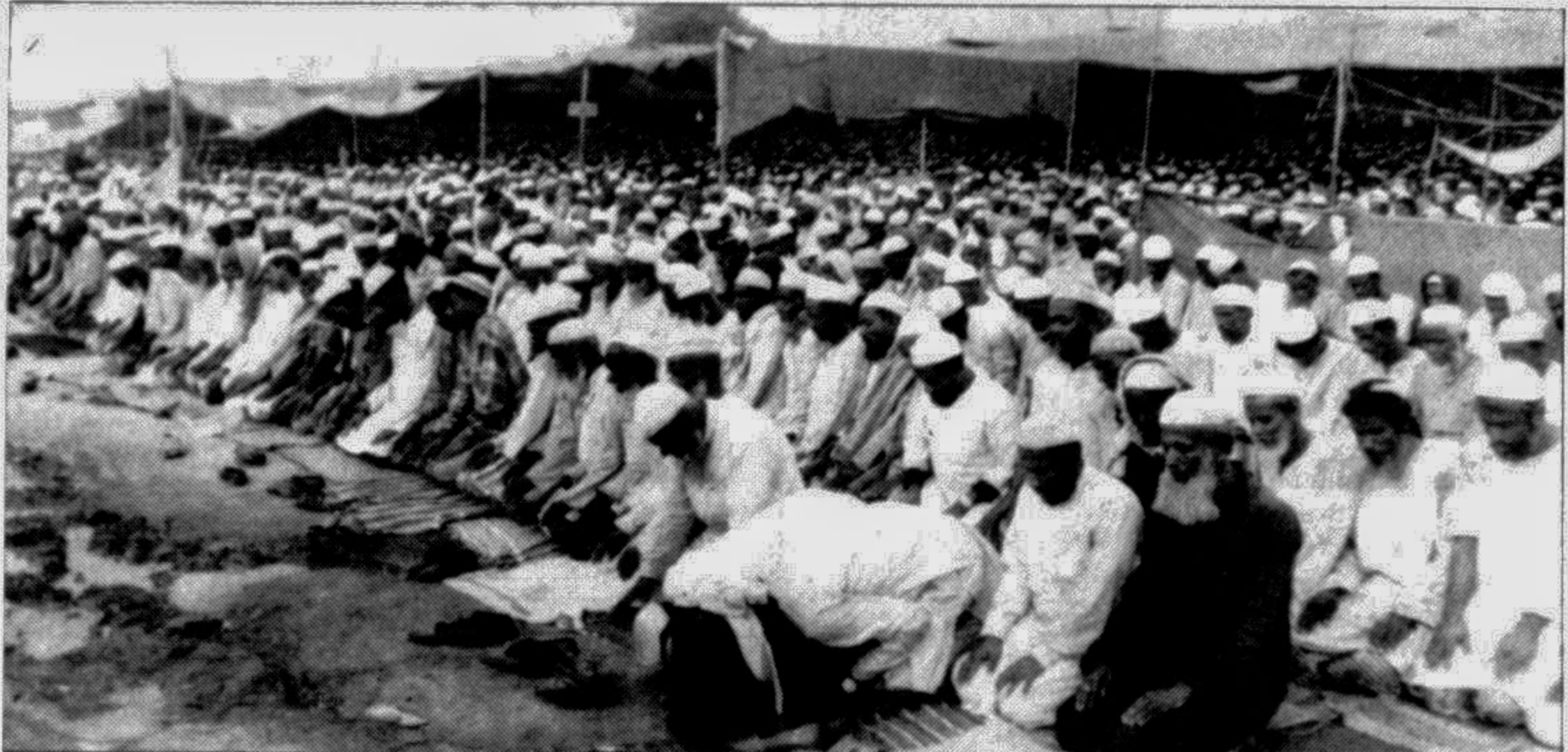
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DSE MARKET

DSE price index	2241.83
Market capital Tk	16011.46 cr
Transactions in volume	65257
Transactions in value Tk	231 cr

CSE MARKET

CSE price index	1161.57
Market capital Tk	14207.57 cr
Transactions in volume	8778
Transactions in value Tk	1386080



Biswa Ijtema began at Tongi yesterday. —Star photo

Death of BCL activist in recent gunfight

Police raid houses of Kader, Latif Siddikys

From Our Correspondent

TANGAIL, Dec 28: Police raided the houses of Awami League MPs Abdul Kader Siddiky and Abdul Latif Siddiky here last night.

The houses of the district Chhatra League General Secretary Khorshed Ali Khokan and Joint Secretary Aminur Rahman were also raided.

However, police failed to recover arms from any of the houses.

The raids followed a gun fight between two rival groups of the Bangladesh Chhatra League, which resulted in the death of one person last week.

At a press conference today, Kader Siddiky said police raided his house last night. He demanded that the Home Minister be sacked for "his failure to maintain law and order." A heavy contingent of police and BDR surrounded the house of

Kader Siddiky around midnight last night and continued the siege until 3 pm today.

The family home of the MPs was raided by police with the aim of recovering illegal weapons and arresting Azad Siddiky and Murad Siddiky, two of their brothers, police said.

It is alleged that Azad Siddiky is accused in 19 criminal cases.

Angry supporters of Siddiky put up barricades on the Dhaka-Tangail road in the morning protesting the police action.

But they cleared the road at the intervention of Kader Siddiky at around noon.

UNB adds: According to district administration and police officials, the search was part of an operation to arrest the rival terrorists who had been creating trouble in the town since early December.

Police could not enter the house as it was locked from inside. Police waited outside.

On hearing of the police raid, Kader Siddiky said: "I am shocked and angry. I will not be intimidated. I will continue to fight for the rights of the people." —Star photo

Biswa Ijtema begins

By Staff Correspondent

The three-day Biswa Ijtema began through Fazr prayers yesterday on the eastern bank of the river Turag at Tongi, about 25 kms from the capital.

Hundreds of thousands of Muslim devotees from across Bangladesh and from over 70 other countries have already arrived to attend the Ijtema, the second largest congregation after the Hajj.

The gathering will exceed two million this year, leaders of the Tabligi Jamaat, organisers of the Ijtema told this correspondent.

After Fazr prayers, internationally reputed religious scholars from home and abroad started a session of recitation from the holy Quran and Hadith, followed by discussions on Islam.

Recitations and discussions after Fazr, Zohr, Asr and Magreb prayers will continue till the Akheri Munajat (final prayer) on Monday.

Earlier on Friday, President Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in separate messages greeted the devotees.

BNP chairperson and Leader
See Page 12 Col 1

BNP announces 3-day agitation programme

Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has announced a three-day fresh agitation programmes across the country, reports UNB.

The party will stage demonstration and hold rallies at all thana headquarters on January 5, in the district headquarters on January 6 and in the capital on January 7.

The decision was taken at a BNP standing committee meeting held with party chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair at her Cantonment residence.

The meeting which was adjourned Friday night resumed yesterday afternoon and took several resolutions regarding the party's next action programme.

The programmes were announced protesting filing of case against Begum Khaleda Zia, signing Ganges water sharing agreement with India, killing inmates in Jessore central jail, canceling public holiday on November 7 and unleashing police attack on BNP procession on December 24.

The standing committee meeting demanded immediate release of all arrested BNP leaders and workers charged with false cases.

Meanwhile, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday visited Dhaka Medical College Hospital to see the condition of Jatlyatabadi Sehchasebak Dal leader Ali Akbar Babul who was injured in police attack on a party procession on December 24.

He stayed there for some time and enquired about his treatment. Babul was injured with bullets, said a party press release.

Party leaders including Maj (ret'd) Shajahan Omar, Fazlur Rahman Patal, Khurshid Jahan Huq and Mojibor Rahman Sarwar accompanied the BNP secretary general.

38 listed cos in capital market to form assoc

Representatives of 38 listed companies at a meeting yesterday unanimously decided to form an association of listed companies, reports BSS.

All companies listed on the Dhaka and Chittagong Stock Exchange will be eligible to become members of the proposed association.

The meeting discussed the recent events in the capital market and felt that the present situation prevailing in the market, especially the increase in forged share certificates and unruly behaviour at annual general meeting was a cause of great concern to the listed companies. The meeting felt that the proposed association could address such and other concerns.

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One shot dead, another beaten to death in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: A businessman was shot dead by terrorists at Firingbazar in the city this evening. Another person was also beaten to death at Chandgaon early in the morning by a mob, police said.

Some mastsans fired on Haji Amir Ali, 50, at 7 pm when he was standing in front of his residence. He died on the spot, police said. None has been arrested so far.

The cause of the killing was not known.

One Md Ali, 28, traveling along with his friend, are mercilessly beaten by some people suspecting him to be a dacot.

He died shortly afterwards. His friend who was also injured is now in hospital.

Ship sinks : 23 Bangladeshi crew missing

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: Family members of 23 Bangladeshi crew of a ship, who were reportedly missing in the Atlantic, are making frantic telephone calls to the shipping agent's office and the mercantile marine department here to enquire about their fate.

See Page 12 Col 3

NEWS BRIEFS

Shopowner stabbed to death
A shopowner was stabbed to death by a group of alleged miscreants inside his shop at Roshipur Bazar under Keraniganj thana on Friday night. According to police, Khudiram Chandra Saha, 62, died on the spot when a group of miscreants stabbed him, reports BSS.

Gang leader arrested
Detective Branch of Police yesterday arrested a ringleader of an organised gang of cheats from Jatrabari Area. Jafar Ullah alias Salauddin was arrested from the area on charge of his alleged involvement in cheating innocent people of Demra area. Police said the arrested person along with his accomplices is cheating land buyers showing forged documents of lands to the customers, reports BSS.

One robbed of Tk 1.35 lakh
Muggers snatched Tk 1.35,000 from a businessman in broad daylight on Friday noon. Police said the businessman, Jamal Uddin, was traveling by a rickshaw when the muggers intercepted him at about 2 pm near Notre Dame College in the city, reports UNB.

Commentary

Stem this shameful slide in political rhetoric

By Mahfuz Anam

Political rhetoric, as we have been seeing lately, is bad enough. But when it becomes vulgar and full of invectives, it becomes disgusting. This dangerous slide must at once be stopped if we are to retain even a semblance of decency in our political parlance.

What had happened at the Bangla Academy premises on Friday was shameful. What happened there yesterday is sad. In the first instance a member of the Academy, BSS journalist Aminul Islam Bedu passed a most insulting, uncivil and vulgar remark about late President Ziaur Rahman.

In retaliation to that insulting remark, supporters of BNP attacked the institution damaging the building, some furniture and a parked van. This happened in spite of a written apology from Islam, which was extracted at the insistence of Academy Chairman Poet Shamzur Rahman.

BNP's anger at the insulting remarks on its founding leader was perfectly legitimate.

However, the expression of it was not. Under no circumstances should Bangla Academy be used as a place to shower insults at anybody, leave alone national leaders. Equally, it should never be used as a stage for a show of strength between political parties. It is an institution of immense prestige and unrivaled pride which nobody dare vandalize.

The above, however, are only the symptoms. The disease lies deeper in our degenerate political culture of divisiveness, acrimony, mean-mindedness, corruption and always putting the interest of the self and the party above that of the people and the country. It lies in considering a political opponent to be an enemy and not just a competitor. It lies in thinking that the only way to bring credit to one's own party is by showing how bad the other party is, and not by doing good work ourselves. Most importantly, it lies in our incapacity to see the future and learn from the past.

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Youths ransack Bangla Academy

By Staff Correspondent

A group of unidentified youths yesterday ransacked a number of rooms, including the museum, seminar hall and office of the director general of the Bangla Academy.

The youths reportedly entered the academy at about 1 PM, carrying hammers and lathis. They went first to the building housing the Academy's press on the second floor and began smashing glass panes of doors and windows.

Later they ransacked the director general's office, museum seminar room, strewn the files and papers around and left after smashing glasses of a microbus parked at the Academy porch.

They allegedly took away a wall clock from the conference room before disappearing towards the TSC area of the Dhaka University on some rickshaws.

Academy officials filed a case with Ramna police saying that property worth several lakh taka were damaged but they did not name anyone in this connection.

Police were posted afterwards at the Academy premises.

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15 killed, 20 injured in Trishal road accident

MYMENSINGH, Dec 28: At least 15 people were killed and 20 injured when a truck ramed a roadside tree and skidded off the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Kanhar in Trishal thana early today, reports UNB.

Fourteen of the victims, including the driver, died on the spot while another expired at the Mymensingh Medical College Hospital. Police said the bodies were kept in the MMCH morgue.

Twelve of the dead were identified as Abdul Jalil, 30, Shahid, 30, Omar, 34, Hakim, 50, Asad, 35, Tara Mian, 34, Mofazzal, 18, Shahjahan, 29, Ripon, 18, Abdul Kader, 22, Chan Mian, 17, and the 25-year-old driver of the vehicle. The rest could not be identified.

The injured were also admitted to the medical college hospital after the pre-dawn catastrophic road accident.

Ten of them were in critical condition. They are Halim Uddin, Mojibor, Harunur Rashid, Fazlu, Taher, Amjad, Sultan, Keramat Ali, Julhah, Afsar and Raichuddin.

Police said the accident occurred at 3 am amidst thick fog that blanketed the way. The sand-laden truck hit a tree and fell into a roadside ditch as the driver lost control.

The victims — small traders and labourers — were travelling by the Jamalpur-bound vehicle.

BSS adds: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed her profound grief at the loss of lives in the truck accident.

The Prime Minister prayed for peace of the departed souls.

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SAARC jurists on separation of judiciary

Transparency in appointment of judges a pre-requisite

By Staff Correspondent

Some leading jurists of SAARC countries have stressed the need for more transparency in appointment and promotion of chief justice and higher court judges.

This is a pre-requisite for separation of the judiciary from the executive, they observed.

The judges and law practitioners were discussing yesterday on the topic — 'Independence and the Separation of the Judiciary as Part of the Constitutional Check and Balance: Country Perspective' — held at a city hotel as part of the three-day Fifth SAARC Law Conference, which began here on Friday.

Former Chief Justice of India, PN Bhagwati came up with an idea of setting up of 'national judicial council', in the SAARC countries for recommending appointment of the chief justice and judges of higher courts.

Responding to queries from the audience, Justice Bhagwati explained that each country could form a national judicial council of its own with the Chief Justice as its head and Law Minister, Attorney General, Leader of the Opposition and some leading jurists on members.

An eminent retired judge from Pakistan, Nasim Hasan Khan, who was chairing the session supported Justice Bhagwati's concept saying such councils are there in Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan but their functioning are a bit different from what Justice Bhagwati suggested.

Justice Nayeemuddin of Bangladesh, Syedur Rahman Rizvi, Additional Advocate General of Punjab, Pakistan and Abrar Hasan and another leading jurist from Pakistan also took part in the discussion.

State Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs, Abdul Matin Khasru, Chairman of SAARC LAW of Bangladesh chapter, M Amir-Ul Islam and over 50 other distinguished jurists and law practitioners were present.

The discussants laid special emphasis on removing the obstacles that bar separation and independence of judiciary through constitutions of the countries have guaranteed such independence. They also pointed out that removal of racial and religious discriminations, restoration of social

Police drive to trace 'rape' victims in Ctg
From Staff Correspondent
CHITTAGONG, Dec 28: Police launched a drive today in Nandankamon area of the city to trace the reported victims of rape which created a sensation following a front-page story in a vernacular daily.

The Additional Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) ordered detective branch personnel to search for the victims.

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