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**Culture of Obstruction**

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 by Shahed Latif  
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**Business**

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 Review meet told

DSE index falls in improved trading  
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**DSE MARKET**

DSE price index	2260.37
Market capital Tk.	16544.74cr
Transactions in volume	211197
Transactions in value Tk.	6.16 cr

**CSE MARKET**

CSE price index	1021.21
Market capital Tk.	13077.75 cr
Transactions in volume	20785
Transactions in value Tk.	680452

**NEWS BRIEFS**

**4 ministers call on Deve Gowda**

Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad and three other ministers separately called on the visiting Indian Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda at the state Guest House Jamuna in the city yesterday noon. They exchanged pleasantries and discussed matters of mutual interests and bilateral relations. After the Foreign Minister, Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria, Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak and Telecommunications Minister Mohammad Nasim called on the Indian Prime Minister at the Guest House, reports BSS.

**Coastguard base in Ctg**

CHITTAGONG, Jan 6: The Chittagong Base of Bangladesh Coastguards will be commissioned tomorrow. This will be the first base of the paramilitary Coastguards on the bank of the river Karnaphuli to protect the country's exclusive economic zone. The Coastguards was officially formed on December 12, 1995 with two ships, 16 officers and 175 seamen from Bangladesh Navy. It will operate 21 checkpoints in the sea area, reports UNB.

**JCD observes strike at Khulna BIT**

KHULNA, Jan 6: The Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) enforced a dawn-to-dusk strike at the Bangladesh Institute of Technology (BIT) here today protesting showcase notices issued against some of its leaders, reports UNB.

## Dhaka, Delhi discuss sub-regional grouping Accord to root out insurgency, expand bilateral trade

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh and India have agreed to further strengthen bilateral ties and forge greater understanding on crucially important issues like rooting out cross-border insurgency, including terrorist activities of Shanibahini, and expand trade, especially boosting Bangladesh's exports to the north eastern region of India.

The two countries also mooted the idea of forming a sub-regional group comprising four South Asian countries for greater cooperation to bolster trade and economic activities. The countries are Bhutan, Nepal, India and Bangladesh.

This was disclosed by Foreign Secretary Farooq Sobhan while briefing newsmen about the outcome of the official talks between Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the visiting Indian Prime Minister Deve Gowda held yesterday at the Prime Minister's office. Besides, a one to one exclusive meeting, the two leaders later sat in discussions with ministers and officials of their respective sides present. The talks lasted nearly an hour.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister was assisted in the talks by Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, Home Minister Rafiqul Islam and Chief Whip of Jatiya Sangsad Abul Hasnat

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina receiving her Indian counterpart H D Deve Gowda on his arrival at the Zia International Airport yesterday. — Star photo

## Strong ties with close neighbours: Hasina

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has pledged to continue bold and determined initiatives to find new and promising dimensions of Indo-Bangla amity and usher a new era of development by carrying forward the SAARC spirit on the threshold of the 21st century, reports UNB.

"We are confident, regional cooperation amongst us will be strengthened and we will be able to carry forward the spirit of the SAARC," Hasina said at the banquet she hosted in honour of visiting Indian Prime Minister Deve Gowda at Bangabhaban yesterday evening. The complementaries that "we have in the countries of this region" would usher in a new era of development, she said.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister recalled her December

visit to India, when historic Ganges water-sharing treaty was signed, and the warm hospitality extended to her and the members of her delegation by the government and the people of India.

The treaty on the sharing of the Ganges waters must be followed up by sharing arrangements for the remaining common rivers, she said. "Cooperation amongst us in this field is very vital."

Hasina expressed her optimism that the visit of the Indian Prime Minister would surely contribute to further consolidate and strengthen the bonds of friendship and bilateral cooperation between Bangladesh and India.

The government of Bangladesh, therefore, attaches high

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## Let rivers become our rivers of hope: Gowda

Indian Prime Minister Deve Gowda yesterday called for joint efforts to improve water management, flood control, irrigation and navigation for the benefit of both India and Bangladesh, reports UNB.

Speaking at a banquet given in his honour by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at Bangabhaban, he said "In the near future, we should mandate the experts from both our nations to work out schemes for the fuller harnessing of this crucial resource."

Terming the signing of Indo-Bangla Ganges Water Sharing Treaty as a landmark in the bilateral relations, Gowda said the treaty has also opened the doors for forward movement on all other aspects of the bilateral relations between the two neighbours.

The Indian Prime Minister

said: "It is necessary for our people to see for themselves that the path shown by the Ganga water treaty leads to practical ventures to harness our rich natural endowments."

He said future generations will then judge that we have been accurate in describing the Ganga waters treaty signed last December as a watershed in the history of our relations.

The Indian Prime Minister said the vast natural and human resources of this region need to be tapped for mutual benefit. The rivers that flow through the territories of both the countries are a rich endowment; they should become rivers of hope and opportunity.

Referring to the economic cooperation, Gowda said the potential for the cooperation of the two countries is well-known

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## Pak army to play advisory role in govt affairs

ISLAMABAD, Jan 6: Pakistani President Farooq Leghari issued a decree today giving the heads of the armed forces a formal advisory role in government affairs, reports Reuter.

The cabinet of caretaker Prime Minister Meraj Khalid met today and unanimously approved the presidential order to form a Council for Defence and National Security, a government minister told reporters.

The council will comprise the President, the Prime Minister and ministers for Defence, Foreign Interior and Finance, chairman of joint

chiefs of staff committee, and chiefs of the army, navy and air force, the order said.

The subjects on which the Council can advise include 'determination of national strategy and fixation of priorities in terms of overall national security,' formation of a defence policy and coordinating it with external and domestic policies.

It can also be asked to advise the government on 'definition of the task of the armed forces... in accordance with the national strategy,' economic and financial policies affecting defence and national security, and recommend on internal security and proclamation of emer-

gency. AP adds: Military dictators have ruled Pakistan for 25 of its 49 years' history. And when the army was in its barracks, civilian governments kept a watchful eye for signs of martial law.

The last military dictator, Gen. Mohammed Zia-ul-Haq, ruled Pakistan for 11 years until 1988 when he died in a mysterious plane crash.

Since then the army has unofficially pulled the strings of successive civilian governments.

Many people say the army ordered Benazir Bhutto's first dismissal from power in 1990.

## BNP gets permission to hold today's rally in city

By Staff Correspondent

BNP yesterday got the authorities' permission for holding its planned "grand rally" at the Manik Mia Avenue in the city today.

A written permission from the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) reached BNP office yesterday evening, according to party sources.

BNP chief and Leader of the Opposition in Jatiya Sangsad Begum Khaleda Zia will address the rally, the first such public meeting by the party since Awami League came to power.

Meanwhile, sources in the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) said that the DCC did not get police clearance for BNP's rally till yesterday.

BNP had applied to the DCC on December 31 seeking permission to hold its planned public meeting in this regard.

Briefing newsmen at the Minto Road official residence of the Leader of the Opposition, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said that "good sense" prevailed on the government as it finally gave permission to hold the public meeting.

He said his party's today's "grand rally" is to press its demands which include withdrawal of 'false' cases against Begum Zia and other party leaders and workers, release of

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## FFs meet today Transport strike in Tangail called off

From Mizan Ali

TANGAIL, Jan 6: Transport owners today called off their indefinite strike in the district.

An announcement to this effect came after a joint meeting of leaders of the Transport Owners' Association, district administration officials, district leaders of major political parties and elite of the town. The meeting was held at the local Circuit House this evening at the initiative of the deputy commissioner.

The strike began yesterday at the call of the association, protesting the arrest of Azad Siddiqi, a leader of the Associ-

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## '50m people at risk of arsenic poisoning'

By Staff Correspondent

More than 50 million people across the country are at a risk of 'arsenic poisoning' while tens of thousands are already showing symptoms of being 'poisoned' by this deadly substance, mainly from shallow tubewell, according to leading scientists who spoke at a seminar in the city yesterday.

Over exploitation of groundwater 'oxygenated' the natural subterranean reservoirs and the underground arsenic was rapidly being decomposed in the water, they pointed out.

The poison was then finding its way into human body cells mainly because people drink water from shallow tubewells, said Dr Dipankar Chakraborti, Director of the School of Environmental Studies, Jadavpur

University, Calcutta. He was presenting a special report at the seminar on Arsenic Disaster in Bangladesh Environment organised jointly by the Dhaka Community Hospital Trust and the Disaster Forum at the BMDC auditorium.

Dr Chakraborti said that during his stay in Bangladesh this time, he surveyed 45 villages in 16 districts and found 'hundreds of people poisoned by arsenic'. He showed a number of photographs of patients of all age groups and said that the magnitude of the 'calamity' in Bangladesh was greater than in West Bengal.

There are villages where up to 90 per cent of the population has been suffering from 'arsenic

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## Kerb marketmen clash near DSE

By Staff Correspondent

Two rival groups of kerb market traders chased each other yesterday near the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) building during a protest organised by one faction to express its concern over falling share prices.

Police said the trouble began when the Outmarket Share Traders Association brought out a procession around noon from their office at Gopibagh near the DSE building. Some kerb market traders who were reportedly supporters of the other faction, the Small Investors Forum were engaged in business near the ALICO building there. The processionists urged them to stop business and join the protest, witnesses said. A brawl erupted when some

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## JCD calls hartal in Sylhet today

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 6: The Sylhet district unit of Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) has called an 8-hour hartal here tomorrow to press the demand for the arrest of killers of its activist Ruhul Amin.

The JCD also brought out a torch procession and held a rally this afternoon to drum up support for the strike. A second year student of the Madan Mohan College, Ruhul Amin, died from injuries allegedly received during a clash with the activists of the Bangladesh Chhatra League on December 30.



Mohammedans' Nigerian striker Makino (R) blasts the ball past a diving East Bengal custodian Hemanta Dura in their last group league match of the Bangabandhu Cup invitational football tournament at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

## Dhaka MSC, Malaysia move into semis

Sports Reporter

Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club and Malaysia Red moved into the semifinals of the Bangabandhu Cup invitational football tournament after winning their respective group matches at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The spirited Mohammedans recorded an impressive 3-1 win over East Bengal Club of India in their last Group B match.

Mohammedans' Nigerian striker Makino put the local giants ahead in the 17th minute. Latching onto a through from defender Ruhul Amin, the speedy Nigerian overtook an East Bengal off-side trap before placing the ball home past custodian Hemanta Dura.

Alfaz doubled the margin in the 50th minute stabbing home a right side corner from Arman while captain Jewel Rana added the third in the 68th minute converting a penalty. For East Bengal, forward

Raman Vijayan scored the consolation goal in the 59th minute.

With yesterday's win, Mohammedans, who had earlier defeated Friends Club 2-0 in their Group B opener, became the only outfit in the 12-team meet to keep their all-win record intact collecting a possible six points from two matches, while East Bengal, who lost their first match to Friends Club 0-1, returned empty handed conceding their second successive defeat. Mohammedans will face Ujung Pandang Football Club of Indonesia in the second semifinal at the same venue tomorrow.

Earlier, in the day's first match, Malaysia Red earned the Group D championship with a solitary goal victory over Muktiyodha Sangsad Krira Chakra.

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**ঢাকা সিটি করপোরেশন, ঢাকা**

আপনার পরিবেশ সুন্দর ও পরিচ্ছন্ন রাখুন  
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