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DSE MARKET

DSE price index: 1900.63 (-5.68)
Market capital Tk: 13777.85 cr
Transactions in volume: 155040
Transactions in value Tk: 434 cr

CSE MARKET

CSE price index: 899.77 (-2.72%)
Market capital Tk: 11522.55 cr
Transactions in volume: 24825
Transactions in value Tk: 6333090

NEWS BRIEFS

PM to exchange views with editors

By Staff Correspondent
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will exchange views with editors of the national dailies tomorrow at 4 pm. The meeting will take place at the Tejgaon office of the Prime Minister.

Kerb market trader robbed

By Staff Correspondent
Muggers snatched Tk 75,000 from a kerb market trader in the city's Swamibagh area on Saturday night. A gang of about four people waylaid Dewjar Hossain and snatched the money at gunpoint when he was returning home by a rickshaw, police said. A case has been filed with Sutrapur thana.

IU admission tests postponed

From Our Correspondent
KUSHTIA, Jan 12: Admission tests for the 1996-97 session in the Islamic University (IU) have been postponed following a tense situation on the campus and its adjoining areas. In an emergency meeting on Saturday, the admission committee postponed all admission tests for the honours courses, sources said.

5 shops gutted at Tongi bazar

Five shops were gutted in a fire at Tongi bazar near the city yesterday. The fire, originated from an oven of a roadside restaurant spread to adjacent shops at about 2 pm. The fire fighters brought the blaze under control after two hours. The extent of damage could not be known, reports UNB.

Hartal observed at Bhola

From Staff Correspondent
BARISAL, Jan 12: A half-day hartal was observed in Bhola town today at the call of the Bhola district BNP protesting the killing of a Jubo Dal activist.

Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Jan	Sehri	Iftar
3	13	5:20	5:35
4	14	5:20	5:35
5	15	5:20	5:36

Dhaka's knitwear export to EU in jeopardy

By Inam Ahmed

Bangladeshi knitwear export faces an uncertain future in Europe after an investigation by the European Union (EU) revealed 'widespread abuse' in issuing certificate of origin allegedly by the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) to avail the Generalised System of Preference (GSP).

Knitwear fetches about 35 per cent of the total export earning of the country's garments sector. EU is the major importer of Bangladeshi knitwear, mainly T-shirts. Bangladesh enjoys a fully duty-free entry of products without any quota in EU under the GSP facility provided it makes its own year, knits fabrics and makes apparel.

According to commerce ministry and garments industry sources, EU member states are now asking Bangladesh to withdraw issued GSPs which did not adhere to the rules of origin to make claims of the duty waived at their respective countries.

If this is withdrawn, credibility of the EPB as well as exporters would be tarnished and put importers in financial jeopardy, the sources said. Exporters fear a big chunk of the market may be lost because of the situation.

Surprisingly, the three-stage transformation of knit products to be eligible for GSP had been in force since the beginning of the system. But a lenient attitude of the exporters and the EPB had created this crisis, the sources added.

Minister for Industry and Commerce Tofael Ahmed is expected to fly to the European Commission headquarters in Brussels on January 26 to find a way out as the issue has reached a crisis point.

Between November 16 and December 1 last year an EC mission came with 25,000 certificates and carried out a joint enquiry into the allegations to establish the validity of particular certificates of origin Form A (GSP).

The EC has categorised the findings in three groupings — Schedule A, B and C. Schedule A contains 367 certificates of origin which it had found to be fictitious. Schedule B contains about 6,000 certificates that it claims to be wrongly issued. Schedule C contains about 8,000 certificates which it suspected to be fake but has asked the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) to investigate and report within six months to the EC, the sources said.

Using the GSP facility Bangladesh has become the top T-shirt exporter to the EU, exporting more than 152 million pieces in 1994. Turkey was the second largest exporter with 81 million pieces during that year.

Out of 367 detected fraud cases, EPB has cancelled 160 certificates. The rest are in the process of cancellation. But the Commerce Ministry has requested the EC to reinvestigate into the Schedule B

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Joint press confce with Hasina at airport

Visit to provide fresh impetus to bilateral ties: Major

By Staff Correspondent



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina seeing her British counterpart John Major and his wife Norma Major off at Zia International Airport in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her British counterpart John Major said yesterday that a new chapter of 'intensified cooperation' in trade and investment had opened between the two countries.

Addressing a joint press conference at the Zia International Airport prior to the departure of John Major on conclusion of a three-day visit, the two premiers expressed optimism that bilateral ties would see new avenues of interaction in the coming days.

John Major expressed the hope that his visit would 'work as a catalyst' to intensify relationship in terms of trade and politics as well.

The British Prime Minister termed the visit a 'remarkable one' and noted that although it was a short visit, it would provide a fresh impetus to British-Bangladesh ties.

Major said, his visit, which coincided with Bangladesh's silver jubilee celebrations, 'was an appropriate time to look at the bilateral relationship afresh and develop it'. He said that his talks with Sheikh

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Impasse: Speaker, 4 BNP leaders hold talks

By Nazmul Ashraf and Reaz Ahmed

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury last night held a meeting with four top leaders of opposition BNP to resolve the stalemate in the Jatiya Sangsad.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the JS Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, Opposition Chief whip Khandaker Dewar Hossain, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan and party

Bridge linking Zia's mazar removed for 'repair'

By Staff Correspondent

A floating bridge, linking the mazar of president Ziaur Rahman at the Chandrima Uddyan with the Crescent Lake Road, has been removed by the Roads and Highways Department for what a notice said "urgent repairs".

Newsmen visiting the site across the North Plaza of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan said workmen from the R&H de-

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legislator MK Anwar joined the talks over a working dinner at the Speaker's Dhamondi residence. Saifur Rahman was also scheduled to join the talks but he could not come in time from Moulvibazar.

The meeting was held in a free and cordial atmosphere and I don't see much difficulty in sorting out the unresolved issues," the Speaker told The Daily Star and two Bengali dailies after a nearly two and a half hours meeting.

The meeting is expected to lead to a "government-Opposition dialogue to resolve the impasse," the Speaker said.

BNP has been abstaining from attending the Parliament session since November 10 last year after submitting to the Speaker 10-point demand including "neutral role" of the Speaker, "impartial" coverage of the JS proceedings by the BT and release of detained BNP leaders and workers.

"I hope I will be able to mediate a fruitful dialogue between the two sides within 24 or 48 hours," the Speaker said in a tone full of optimism.

The Speaker said he will cer-

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Shahbazpur gas field Move for accord with US co without bidding

By Sharier Khan

A move is underway to sign an agreement with a US oil company for exploration and development of the Shahbazpur gas field without open bidding, sources concerned alleged.

An influential quarter is trying to sign an agreement with Unocal on unsolicited terms bypassing open bidding, the sources said. The Shahbazpur gas field has a proven reserve of 0.40 trillion cubic feet of gas, the sources added.

The government's procedure for negotiation and signing of agreement for exploration and development of gas field does not allow such unsolicited negotiations or agreements, the sources said. All fresh negotia-

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Rupsha Bridge proposal, 13 projects okayed

The Executive Committee of National Economic Council yesterday approved the proposal for construction of road-rail bridge over the river Rupsha in Khulna, reports UNB.

Apart from the Rupsha bridge project, the ECNEC also approved 13 development projects with an involvement of Tk 614.32 crore, including Tk 223.06 crore in project aid. The approvals were given at a meeting held with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair in the conference room of the National Economic Council Bhavan in the capital.

Projects include Non-formal Education Project-2 at a cost of Tk 160 crore; Non-formal Education project-3 (basic education) for hard-to-reach urban children at a cost of Tk 74.30 crore; including Tk 71.80 crore project aid; Rural Development Project-8; Infrastructure in greater Rangpur at a cost of Tk

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APSU-Shibir clash at RU: 15 injured

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 12: At least 15 persons including six policemen and two journalists were injured in a clash between the All-Party Students Unity (APSU) and the Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) here today.

The clash started when police tried to disperse a rally of Chhatra Oikya Parishad near Kajlagate this morning. The students pelted bricks on the police who lobbed tear gas shells and made baton charges to disperse the students and pedestrians to bring the situation under control, police and eyewitnesses said.

Police Sub-Inspectors — Mozharul Islam and Shamsul Alam and two Rajshahi University correspondents of Dhaka dailies were injured among others in the clash, eyewitnesses said.

Earlier, Islami Chhatra Shibir activists ransacked the post office on the campus. Meanwhile, all activities, including holding of regular

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No bus service in Barisal Divn

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 12: Bus services in six districts of Barisal division have come to a halt due to a conflict between the bus owners association of Barisal and Jhalakathi districts.

Buses stopped plying in the six routes between Barisal and Barguna while suspension of the services in four other routes in Barisal, Jhalakathi, Pirojpur and Patuakhali districts entered the third day today.

Suspension of bus services has caused immense sufferings to the people of the whole division.

Added to this, ferry service from Dapdapia ferry ghat to different routes has also been stopped as four ferries are out of order, according to BIWTC sources.

Jubo Dal leader gunned down in N'ganj

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Jan 12: A young man was shot dead and a Jubo Dal leader of the town was injured when some unidentified gunmen attacked them near the Narayanganj Pourashabha office today.

Nurul Afsar alias Raju, 22, a resident of Laxminarayan Akhra road in the town, was shot in the belly. He died at the Narayanganj Hospital, police and hospital sources said.

BNP claimed that Raju was an activist of its youth front, Jatiyatadabul Jubo Dal.

Md Boduzzaman alias Bodu, 32, joint convener of Narayanganj town Jubo Dal who was injured in the attack was admitted to Narayanganj Hospital.

Protesting the incident, Jubo Dal brought out a procession.

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We were 'A' team, will remain so: Ershad

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 12: "We were always 'A' team and will remain the same in future," said Jatiya Party chairman and former president Hossain Mohammad Ershad.

Ershad was replying in a question of a newsmen at the VIP lounge of Osmani Airport on his arrival here today.

The JP chairman who was freed on bail Thursday came to Sylhet on a short visit for offering *fateha* at the mazars of great saints Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) and Hajrat Shahparan (RA).

The former president talked to the newsmen for a few minutes. Expressing his heartfelt gratitude to the people of Sylhet as well as of the whole country, Ershad said, "I have come here only to seek blessings from the

great saints." Waiting to the several hundreds party workers of JP and its front organisations who gathered at the airport to welcome their leader, Ershad said, "I will come again and meet with you all soon," adding "our first task will be to reorganise the party."

When asked about the BNP's allegation that his release was outcome of an *entente* with the Awami League since 1982, the former president said "I got release from the court, nobody else, there is no scope for *entente* with the court."

Replying to a question on the recently signed water treaty with India, Ershad said, "at least a treaty had been signed, let us wait and see." However,

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Guardians anxiously waiting outside the Motijheel Govt Girls High School in the city as their children appeared in the admission test yesterday. — Star photo

Cabinet meets today

Incentives for investment of 'black money' likely

By Staff Correspondent

The cabinet is likely to discuss a set of proposals to attract 'black money' into the mainstream economy at its weekly meeting today, Cabinet Division sources said.

The cabinet members are expected to consider a proposal that if invested in the productive sector, the source of any amount of undeclared money would not be questioned for the next three years starting from the first of January this year, the sources added.

In this connection, the cabinet may also consider a proposal for tax-free investment in the industrial sector.

At the meeting the items on the agenda for discussion also include the country's power conservation policy, a proposed amendment to the Building Construction Act, 1952 and briefing about the Aid Club meeting scheduled to be held in Dhaka next month.

Ataul Haq made Cabinet Secy

By Staff Correspondent

Government has made some changes in the upper level of the administration, said a PID handout last night.

Ataul Haq, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, has been appointed Cabinet Secretary. Dr Syed Abdus Samad, Secretary, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, has been appointed Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

Dr Tawfiq Elahi Chowdhury, Bir Bikram, chairman of the Board of Investment (BOI), has been transferred to the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources as secretary.

Additional Secretary, Industries Ministry, Syed Yusuf Hossain has been transferred to the Ministry of Cultural Affairs as acting secretary.

Khondaker Tajuddin Ahmed, Director General in the Prime Minister's secretariat, has been appointed Joint Secre-

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Kerb marketmen go on rampage, damage vehicles

By Staff Correspondent

Police picked up 12 kerb market share traders from the front of the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) building yesterday as they went on a rampage hearing the news of massive share price fall on the floor of the stock exchange.

According to the police, hundreds of young people who were engaged in share trading outside the DSE building started damaging vehicles in the area at around noon.

They brought out processions protesting the price fall and damaged a number of private cars and minibuses smashing.

Meanwhile, the DSE All Share Price Index recorded a massive 114.47 point fall at the end of yesterday's trading.

The DSE price index de-

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Warrant for arrest of Rakibul Huda

CHITTAGONG, Jan 12: The CMM Court here today issued a warrant of arrest against former Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police Rakibul Huda in connection with killings at a public meeting in the port city in 1988, reports UNB.

Twenty-four people were killed and about 100 injured as police and BDR opened fire to disperse a meeting of Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina on January 24, 1988.

The investigation officer of the case, which was revived after assumption of power by the Awami League government, had earlier submitted a 30-page report to the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AKM Kamaluddin.

Lawyers of plaintiff advocate Shahidul Huda said the court that as per the investigation report, the killings had

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Jewellery shop looted in Ctg

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 12: Terrorists looted 20 tolas of gold ornaments from a jewellery shop at Hazari Lane here this evening, police said.

They exploded cocktails while fleeing, witnesses said. According to police, three armed terrorists broke open the jewellery shop and looted the ornaments.

Police later arrested one Saiful Islam in connection with the robbery and recovered a revolver from his possession. A case was filed with Kotwali thana.