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Bourses likely to remain open on Saturday from next month

By Rafiq Hasan
The two stock exchanges in the country are likely to remain open for trading on Saturday from next month, sources in the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) said.
The SEC has approved this and authorities of Dhaka and Chittagong stock exchanges have agreed in principle to keep the bourses open on Saturday.
However, the DSE Council is yet to officially approve the proposal, said a council member. Final decision will be taken in the next Board meeting of the bourse.
Authorities of the Chittagong Stock Exchange earlier communicated to the DSE expressing their willingness to keep the bourse open on Saturday, the sources said.
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Khaleda may meet President again, convey BNP suggestions

By Nazmul Ashraf
BNP chief Begum Khaleda Zia is likely to meet President Shahabuddin Ahmed again in a day or two to have further discussion on the mayor's disputed decision of banning public rallies on the city streets.
Begum Zia is expected to lead a BNP delegation to Bangabhaban to convey the President her party's suggestion for venues for holding public rallies in the capital, sources close to her said.
Besides, the sources added, the Leader of the Opposition in parliament is also likely to reiterate the BNP demands for postponement of the mayor's decision on the public meeting venues and release of all party leaders arrested while holding street rallies defying the ban.
Contacted by telephone last night, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, confirmed his party's plan to meet the President again but said the schedule for the programme was not yet finalised. It is likely to take place shortly, he added without elaborating.
The BNP chief and other top leaders of the party met the President on September 21 and complained against the government for obstructing the party from holding public rallies.
BNP now to stage demonstrations in city Oct 1
By Staff Correspondent
BNP will now stage demonstrations in the capital on October 1 instead of September 30 announced earlier, said a press release.
BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia at a public meeting on September 15 had announced programme of demonstrations in the capital and at divisional, district and thana headquarters to protest government 'repression' on the Opposition, and increase in the prices of petroleum products, electricity and fertiliser.
The press release said the programme for demonstrations at divisional and district headquarters on September 30, at the thana headquarters today and a countrywide rail-road blockade on October 5 is unchanged.
Meanwhile, BNP secretary general Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP in a statement last night urged all the units of the party and its front organisations in the city and in districts and thanas to carry out the agitation programmes.

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Bhola, adjacent isles bear the brunt: 800 fishermen missing Cyclone claims 36 so far

By Special Correspondent
The cyclonic storm that lashed the Meghna estuary and its neighbourhood early yesterday left a trail of devastation in the southern districts, including Bhola and smaller islands, killing at least 36 people and wounding hundreds of others.
Twenty-four people were killed in Bhola, three in Noakhali and one each in Barguna, Chandpur and Patuakhali, according to reports from our correspondents and officials in Barisal, Bhola, Barguna and Cox's Bazar. They said the casualties may rise further when the full extent of damages will be available.
Official news agency BSS said six people were killed in Laxmipur.
At least 800 fishermen remained unaccounted for in the estuary and in the Bay until last night, the reports said.
Before turning into a land depression, hovering over northern part of Chittagong division and north-eastern India yesterday evening, the storm packing up to 150 kmph winds, flattened thousands of homes, leaving several lakhs of people homeless.
Tidal surges ripped through embankments in a number of places along the coast, flooding a vast area damaging standing crops in thousands of hectares of land.
The casualties were low because the tide ebbed and people were evacuated to cyclone shelters and safer places, they said. Early warnings relayed through the Radio and TV broadcast, red flags and lanterns flashing the danger and warning messages announced by Red Crescent volunteers and officials over megaphones made the people move to shelters.
The Radio and TV broadcast latest reports on the cyclone throughout Friday night under the guidance of State Minister for Information Abu Sayeed.
Mohammad Abdul Mannan, deputy commissioner of Bhola told The Daily Star yesterday evening that nine foreign vessels including a cement carrying barge ran aground in chars at Daulatkhani in the storm. A passenger vessel of the BIWTC also ran aground.
Police have been despatched to protect the vessels from pirates when the Meghna calmed after the storm, the DC said.
Weather officials at the Meteorological Department said the tip of the storm grazing down Bhola and its adjoining areas, including a number of islands on the Meghna estuary, ripped through at a speed of 140 kmph.
Lashing at about 3 am the tongue of the storm, howling down the huge corridor of



People returning home from a cyclone shelter in South Patenga after the storm subsided yesterday. —Star photo

Beximco's overdue loans stand at Tk 127 cr Banks gave wrong statements to CIB, law ministry: BB

Star Report
The Bangladesh Bank, in a fresh inquiry following the Law Ministry's recent report on the loan status of Beximco Group, has alleged that contrary to the ministry's findings, the group's total defaulting loans stood at Tk 126.83 cr as of December 31, 1996.
The Bank sent its findings to the Prime Minister on September 18. The Prime Minister had earlier instructed the Law Ministry to investigate Beximco's loan status, according to sources at the PM's office. The investigation found only Tk 1.24 cr in overdue loans of Beximco against the BB's Central Information Bureau (CIB) report of Tk 57.36 cr on December 31, 1996.
The central bank inquiry has also alleged that the commercial banks had given wrong statements to CIB and later to the law ministry about the defaulting loans of Beximco group. In certain cases, the truth about overdue loans was totally suppressed and not reported to CIB at all, the BB alleged.
The CIB report which is prepared quarterly had earlier quoted Beximco's defaulting loan amount at Tk 57.36 cr.
Meanwhile, the BB has initiated proceedings under Bangladesh Bank Order, 1972 and Bank Company Act, 1991, against those bank officials who had given 'wrong information' to the CIB and to the law ministry.
The BB further observed that the law ministry's report was not 'objective' and not based on 'records', but was rather 'biased'. The law secretary had prepared it 'hastily without at all examining the records of the banks concerned', it alleged.
The central bank investigation from August 19 to September 8 also revealed a fresh case of defaulting by the Beximco Group which was not reported earlier. This new defaulting loan amounting to Tk 9.93 cr is with the Motijheel branch of IFIC Bank.
According to BB investigation, Beximco had defaulting loans to the tune of Tk 121.98 cr with AB Bank on December 31, 1996, in four accounts — Pharmatek Chemicals Ltd., Satkhira Fisheries Ltd., Khulna Fisheries Ltd. and Mrittika Ltd. But AB Bank had earlier sent a figure of only Tk 27.64 cr as defaulting loan for preparation of the CIB report. AB Bank officials later told the law secretary that this was also incorrect as there had been no defaulting loans of Beximco.
But the BB's new investigation found that Pharmatek has

'Client service' at jail gate

By Morshed Ali Khan
Hundreds of visitors keep arriving at the Dhaka Central Jail in the old part of the city everyday. They have only one objective — meeting their relatives inside the hundred-year-old prison.
The procedure is simple. On arrival at the jail gate, a relative writes down the name of the prisoner, his father's name and that of his police station on two small pieces of paper. Then he hands the papers over to one of the eager prison guards with a carefully folded fifty or hundred taka note.
The guards, numbering about half a dozen, constantly shuttle inside and outside the large iron gate of the prison. Once a khaki uniformed guard takes up a 'case', he quickly disappears inside the prison and gives the paper to one of the senior prisoners standing by to rush to the cell to inform the prisoner. Here, the senior prisoner does the job for a minimal share of the amount received by the guard earlier for the service. After passing the paper, the guard emerges from inside the gate to find more clients waiting outside. The process continues from morning till evening.
The visitor then makes his way to the meeting room further down the narrow road. His relative is summoned there within a very short time.
The meeting room is a spectacle of crowd, noise and pungent smell of human sweat.
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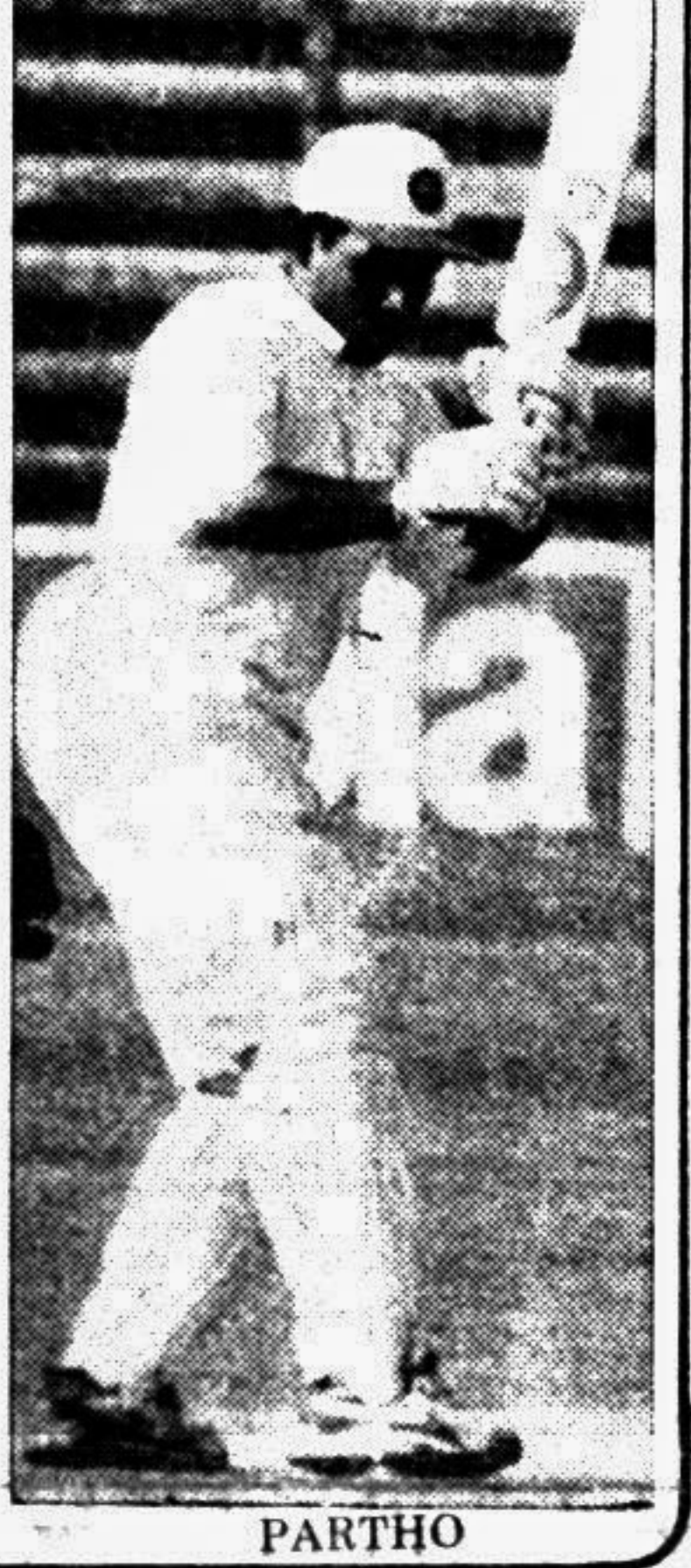
Relatives of prisoners crowding the visitors' room at the Dhaka Central Jail. —Star photo

Hong Kong Sixes Bangladesh beat India, Australia

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh hogged the limelight when they floored former world champions Australia and India en route to the next round of the Hong Kong International Sixes yesterday.
In a different ball game, normally considered as a ball bashing five-over-a-side match, the national cricket team surprised all and sundry with a five-wicket thrashing of Australia and then went on to beat India by three wickets to stamp an epoch-making success in the annals of country's cricket.
The historic wins against two Test titans propelled Bangladesh into the second round as champions in one of the three groups of the nine-nation meet, which features seven Test playing nations.
Bangladesh will now play in the elite Bradman group alongside defending champions West Indies and England. While Australia, who defeated India, have been pencilled in the 'sobers Group along with world champions Sri Lanka and Pakistan.
Bangladesh will meet England in their second round opener at 10.15 am (BST) before pitting against the mighty West Indies at 2.15 pm (BST) today.
The top finisher of the group will play in the Cup final, billed at 4.20 pm (BST), against the winners of Sobers Group. While the runners-up of each group will feature in the Plate final, to be held at 3.50 pm (BST).
But on Saturday in the bustling commercial hub of Asia, what Bangladesh had done was nothing but a fairytale run one of the two non-Test playing nation in the two-day meet.
It all started when Akram's men, chasing a not-so-impressive Australian total of 49, rattled up 50 for the loss of Rakhe's wicket.
Although, the left-arm spinner returned for a duck against both Australia and India, it was the left-right combination of



BULBUL



PARTHO

DCC seeks suggestions for more venues

By Staff Correspondent
The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) will not withdraw its selection of seven venues for holding of public meetings in the city but welcomes suggestions from any party for other suitable sites.
Mayor Mohammad Hanif said this to delegations from eight political parties during a three-hour meeting with them at the DCC conference room yesterday.
The meeting was the first of a two-day meeting programme that the Mayor initiated in a bid to have suggestions from various political parties on holding of public meetings.
Delegates representing Awami League, Jatiya Party, JSD (Rob), Ganatantri Party, Janadala, NAP (Bhasani), Jatiya Janata Party and Bangladesh Republican Party had talks with the Mayor yesterday while leaders of Left Democratic Front (LDF) and Gano Forum are scheduled to meet him today.
The major opposition party BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and Jatiya Party (Z-M), did not participate in yesterday's meeting despite being invited. BNP and Jamaat had earlier demanded of the government to meet certain preconditions for their participation.
Hanif said he had hoped BNP would attend the meeting and give suggestions on the issue.
Delegates from Jatiya Party and NAP (Bhasani) suggested the Mayor yesterday to 'suspend' the earlier decision on holding of rallies 'for the time being' and take a fresh decision after exchanging views with different political parties.
The Mayor, however, told them that the decision could not be suspended but selection of more venues could be considered.
City AL General Secretary Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya said the DCC decision would help ease traffic jam in the city.
Mentioning that all major

CHT to be opened for tourists after accord

By Govinda Shil
The government is formulating various programmes to attract tourists to Chittagong Hill Tracts region and the Sunderbans.
Under the programmes, foreign tourists will be allowed to visit Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban districts of CHT and remote hilly areas in the region.
The CHT terrain has been restricted to the foreigners for long due to tribal insurgency there. A peace accord ending the insurgency is likely to be signed next month.
"Soon after the peace treaty is signed, we will go for various programmes to develop tourism facilities in the Hill Tracts," said Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, State Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism.
The artificial lake in Rangamati and deep forests in Bandarban and Khagrachhari are major tourist attractions of the region. Besides, 13 distinctive tribal and ethnic population with diversified culture live in the region.
The tourism development programme for CHT includes building hotels and motels in Khagrachhari, Bandarban and in Rangamati and expansion of other tourism facilities there. Rangamati presently has a motel on the bank of the artificial lake.
Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC) has few speedboats in the lake. The government may procure more such boats and water game items, BPC sources said.
Alamgir said the ministry also has a plan for organising 'eco-tourism' in the Sunderbans area, the largest mangrove forest in the world.
BPC will open its newly built motel at Kuakata sea beach under Patuakhali district late this year. Kuakata is a spot beach where both the sunrise and sunset are viewed in the Bay of Bengal.
BPC will also construct a

Two mugged at Farmgate

By Staff Correspondent
A group of muggers snatched gold ornaments and cash worth about Tk 75,000 from two rickshaw passengers at Farmgate area in the city yesterday.
Four unidentified armed men riding on an auto-rickshaw intercepted the rickshaw on which S M Sajal and Mallik Tahmidul Islam, both residents of Dhanmondi area, were traveling in Indira Road at about 12 pm, police said.
The gang robbed a gold ring, two chains of gold and Tk 47,000 in cash from them and fled away.
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The Daily Star on the Internet

http://www.dailystartnews.com
3 mistaken for outlawed party men, beaten to death

From Our Correspondent
CHUADANGA, Sept 27: Three Workers Party members were mistaken to be members of the outlawed Purbabanga Communist Party and beaten to death by people at Pirojkhal village under the Sadar thana today, police said.
The victims are: Al-Amin, 30, and Akbar Sattar, 27, of Nandabur village under Alamdanga thana and Hasibul, 26, of Mominpur village under Chuadanga Sadar thana.
The three along with some 60 people went to Pirojkhal village to apprehend members of the outlawed party, after getting an information that some members of the party were hiding there. But the villagers mistook them as members of the outlawed party. The villagers caught three of them and beat them to death. The others fled away.
On September 22, six members of the outlawed party were beaten to death by villagers at Nilmaniganj village under Chuadanga Sadar thana.

Gujral confirms visit to Dhaka in November

From Neeman A Sobhan
ROME, Sept 27: Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral has said he would visit Bangladesh sometime in November.
The Indian premier confirmed the visit while talking to this correspondent at a reception hosted by the Indian embassy here on Thursday last.
Gujral made a one-day stopover in Rome on his way back from New York where he attended the United Nations General Assembly session. He was accompanied by his wife and a large delegation including Indian Finance Minister P Chidambaram.
Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is also expected to

PM's directive to look into dist AL leaders' problems

Leaders and workers of the Awami League from various districts including Khulna, Panchagarh, Gopalganj, Narail, Bagerhat and Narayanjan met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her official residence at Ganabhaban yesterday, reports BSS.
The Prime Minister listened to their problems. The Prime Minister directed the officials concerned to look into those problems.
Awami League president member Abdul Jalil, Sheikh Helal Uddin MP, and Awami League executive committee member Nuh Alam Lenin were present.

Call to make AL's Sept 30 public meeting a success

A meeting of the presidents and general secretaries of the Awami League unit of Dhaka and its adjacent districts was held at the central office of the party yesterday to make the Awami League called public meeting at Outer Stadium on September 30 a success, reports BSS.
Presided over by M A Jalil, president member of the Awami League, the meeting was also attended by the leaders of different front organisations of the party in Dhaka and adjacent districts.
Among others, Abed Ali, Azizur Rahman, Mostafa Jalil Mhiuddin, Ivy Rahman, Nurul Faza Bulbul, Mirza Sultan Faza, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Mayan, Shamim Osman, Enamul Haq Shamim attended it.
Jalil called upon all to make the coming meeting a success to demonstrate the will of the people that they are determined under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to reject the designs of destructive forces to create anarchy in the country, a press release said.

Young man shot dead in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, Sept 27: A young man was shot dead by some miscreants at Jaotala Sweeper Colony here today, reports BSS.
The victim Hasmat Ali, 20, was forcibly taken out from a tea-stall to the Sweeper Colony where he was shot, police said. He later succumbed to his injuries at Chittagong Medical College Hospital.
Police arrested two persons in this connection.
Meanwhile, the Chhatra League claimed that the victim was their activist and was killed by the rival groups.