

Violence marks UP polls in 8 districts

By Staff Correspondent
Violence marked Union Parishad elections in eight districts, out of a total of 36, on the fourth day of the polls yesterday. Election Commission (EC) sources said.
Polling was suspended at 39 centres, out of 2565, in 41 thanas under 36 districts.
The eight districts where electoral violence broke out yesterday included Brahmanbaria, Madaripur, Sylhet, Pabna, Sirajganj, Nilphamari, Laxmipur and Kushtia.
The Presiding Officer and Polling Officer were held hostage at a polling centre in Shibchar thana under Madaripur district by supporters of a candidate. Later, the Superintendent of Police rescued them with the help of police force. Polling was suspended at the centre.
Polling was suspended at 17

Health Minister urges BNP to call off hartal

By Staff Correspondent
The major opposition BNP reportedly did not respond to a government request to defer Sunday's countrywide dawn-to-dusk hartal which coincides with the annual immunization drive.
Government leaders and donor agency officials argued that the countrywide programmes for the fourth National Immunisation Day (NID), planned long ago, would be seriously affected because of the shutdown.
The hartal, called by BNP and its allies to protest the CHT accord, was announced Wednesday.
Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf yesterday called BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, MP, to make a formal request, sources close to the minister said.
The minister pleaded that the NID programmes involved thousands of children across the country.
The health minister is also expected to make a public appeal to the opposition parties to shift their hartal programme and seek "cooperation of all concerned" for a successful NID programme at a press conference.

Tk 38 cr project to construct 4-storey SC annex bldg

By Mizan Ali
The government is taking up a project worth Tk 38 crore to construct a four-storey Supreme Court annex building, said highly-placed official sources.
A total of 34 air-conditioned court rooms will be set up in the annex building and each room will be equipped with modern technological facilities.
The four-storey annexe structure is being designed by the government engineers, taking into consideration the architectural features of the Supreme Court building, said an official of the law ministry.
The project is scheduled to start within a couple of weeks, the source said, adding that the government has already sanctioned Tk 10 crore from the

The Daily Star on the Internet

http://www.dailystarnews.com

Article

CHT Accord: Let Peace Determine Progress
Column: Beneath the Surface
by Abdul Bayes
Page 4

International

125 nations begin signing landmine ban treaty
Page 8

Supplement

Today's 16-page issue of The Daily Star contains a two-page supplement on 'National Day' Pages 14 & 15

National Wages Commission being formed Industrial workers' pay may be linked to productivity

By Toufique Imrose Khalidi
A new National Wages Commission is being formed to revise wages for industrial workers after more than six years, a move likely to fuel the old dispute between government and private employers.
The wrangling has had its roots in private employers' demand to link pay to productivity, but they are going a step further this time by questioning the Wage Commission itself. They say there cannot be any "blanket" formula for all types of businesses.
A labour ministry proposal outlining the composition and terms of reference for the Commission, to be headed by Serajuddin, a former secretary to the government, is expected to be placed before the Cabinet by this month.
Representatives from the government, trade unions and private employers will sit on the Commission, which will recommend a new wage structure for workers.
According to the proposed terms of reference, the Commission will try to link employees' wages to their productivity, an issue that had caused clamour six years ago when the last Wages Commission came up with its recommendation for a minimum pay of Tk 900 per month.
The Bangladesh Employers Association (BEA), the grouping of private employers, has long opposed the idea of imposing a pay structure by the government when it does not take into account a worker's output in fixing wages.
The BEA has reacted angrily to the move. It woke up when the labour ministry asked for two nominations as Commission members last week.
"We are objecting to it because it contradicts the ILO convention," said Rokia A Rahman, president of the BEA.
She pointed out that the ILO Convention, to which Bangladesh is a signatory, called for fixation of wages at the plant level and involvement of collective bargaining agents (CBAs).
"There should be a sector-wise review of wages now," she said, which would suit the needs

Fresh evaluation of bids Leading oil cos to be invited for talks

Star Report
Big oil companies which had been left out of the negotiations for oil and gas exploration contracts will be invited for talks as per a fresh evaluation, official sources said.
A Secretary-level Investment Committee Sunday gave this instruction to the Negotiation Committee of the Energy Ministry.
Meanwhile, Shell Oil-Cairn joint venture has given a letter to the Negotiation Committee accepting the government's latest offer of two blocks — 5 and 10. The joint venture had proposed for six blocks and was critical about government's initial offer of one block at the beginning.
Shell also hinted that it was interested in block-9 with Mobil and perhaps with Tullow.
Maerks Olie of the Netherlands, a leading European company, meanwhile completed one phase of the negotiations Monday without any conclusion. Maerks is insistent about getting two blocks instead of the one offered by the negotiators since both the blocks (19 and 20) are located in the Bay, 200 to 250 km from the shore.
The negotiators have sought more time from the Investment Committee, headed by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, to complete the process. The deadline had earlier been set for December 15.
The investment committee suggested Sunday last that the bidding consultant, Arthur Andersen, join the negotiators before further talks with the bidders. The US consultant company's representative is now in

CID team beaten up by mob at Sankharibazar

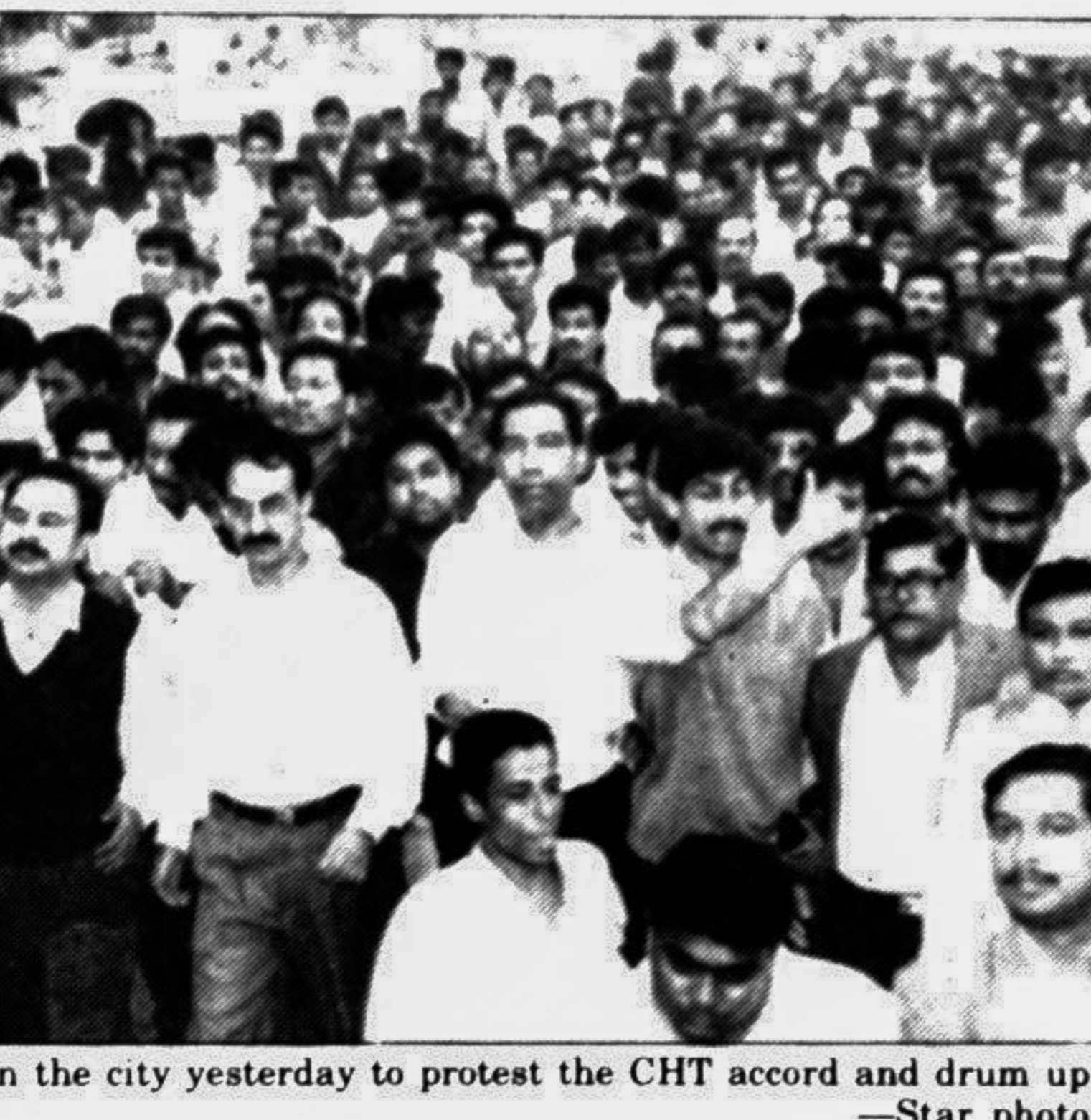
By Staff Correspondent
At least six members of a CID team were injured when a section of local people beat them up at Sankharibazar under Kotwali thana in the city yesterday.
Police said the injured were Inspectors Alamgir Kabir and Abdul Motin, Sub-Inspectors Golam Sarwar, Selim Sahnewaz, Golam Mustafa and constable Mozazzal Hossain.
They were admitted to the Razarbagh police hospital after Kotwali police rescued them from a house at Sankharibazar.
The reason behind the attack on the CID team could not be known immediately.

BNP, six other parties continue agitation

By Staff Correspondent
BNP and six other opposition parties brought out processions in the city yesterday protesting the Chittagong Hill Tracts peace accord.
The processions were organised as part of the four-day nationwide agitation programme the BNP and its opposition partners had announced on Wednesday.
The BNP procession, brought out from its city office at Naya Bazar in afternoon, ended at the Kakrail crossing. BNP leaders including Dr Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain, MP, Mirza Abbas, Hafeez Choudhury, Goyeshwar Roy, Khairul Kabir Khokon and Fazlul Haq Milon participated in the procession.
Similar protest processions by the Jamaat-e-Islami and Jagpa paraded the city streets.



Runa Laila rendering songs at the Osmany Memorial Hall in the city on the concluding day of South Asian Music festival yesterday.



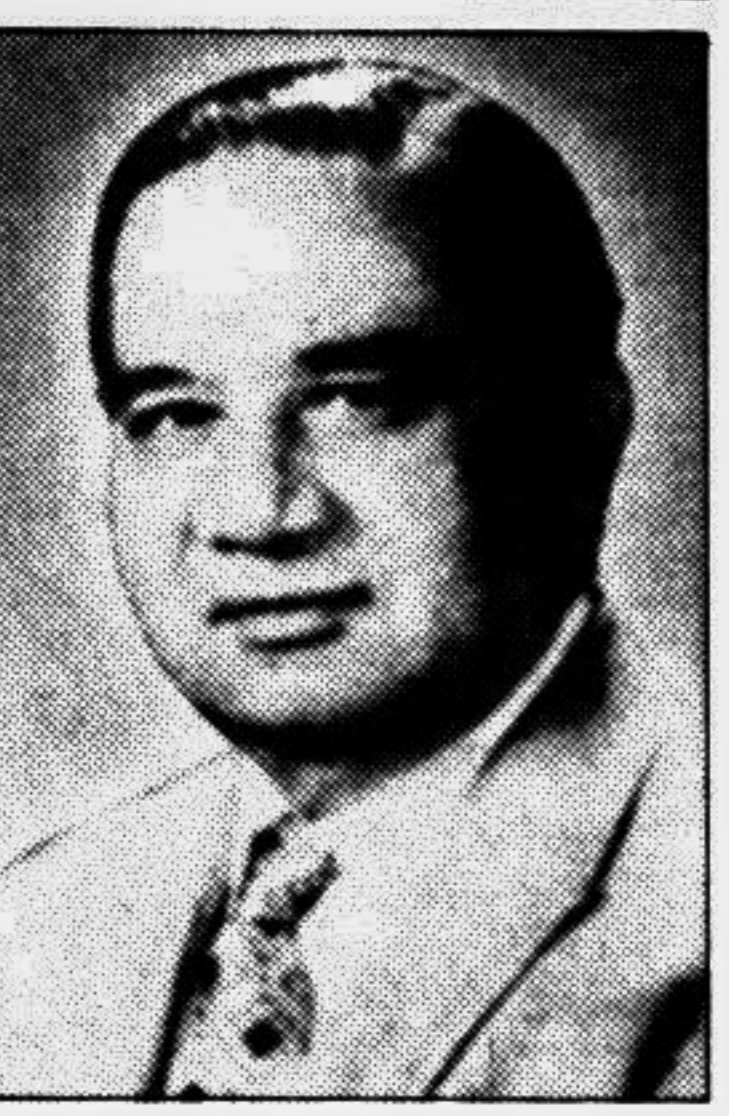
BNP brought out a procession in the city yesterday to protest the CHT accord and drum up support for Sunday's hartal.

Accord signed within ambit of Constitution, says PM

By Staff Correspondent
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said she intends to place the CHT accord before the Jatiya Sangsad.
"We have already forwarded a copy of the agreement to the President. If he asks us, we will discuss it in the House. However, considering the importance of the issue I now intend to take steps, according to rules, to have a discussion on the floor of the Sangsad on the accord."
Sheikh Hasina was exchanging views with the editors of national dailies and news agencies yesterday afternoon on the CHT accord signed on December 2 at the International Conference Centre.
She welcomed healthy debate on the accord and said, "Everyone has the right to criticise. But I would urge both the media and opposition parties not to criticise merely for criticism's sake."
"You must consider the perspective and background in which the accord was signed. There has been a conflicting situation in the area for over two decades. Precious lives have been lost. Development work, peace and stability had eluded the region for a long time."
"There have been negotiations for reaching peace in the CHT for a long time during which previous governments tried to reach a settlement. A law was also passed earlier. In this accord, the CHT will enjoy some special elements of local governance. Even in the British days, it was considered a special area. The region had its own regulations", Hasina said.
"A window of stability, development and opportunity for the people of the entire country has opened up with the signing of the accord. It is now possible to go ahead with gainful economic and development activities."
"If an unstable and chaotic situation prevailed there, it would not only hinder progress and development, it would jeopardise the lives of people."

Accord going to work, hopes Shantu Larma

From Shehab Ahmed
KHAGRACHHARI, Dec 4: Jyotirindriya Bodhipriya Larma, Chairwoman of the PCJSS, left for his headquarters, believed to be somewhere in southern Tripura, after holding talks with his top lieutenants and tribal leaders today.
Sources close to the PCJSS chief said he left Dudukchhara, the tiny frontier hamlet, 40 KM off here early today. But other sources said he had gone underground.
The top brass of the PCJSS including commanders of its armed wing Shantibahini, is also leaving tomorrow, back to their lairs.
They are going back to prepare the final list of their armed cadres, militias and political cadres and the inventory of their weaponry which are to be submitted to the government within 45 days of the signing of the accord on December 2.
After the list is submitted, the final surrender ceremony will be scheduled following consultation between the two sides via the liaison man, Hansadhaja Chakma.
Chakma is going to the capital on Saturday for a check up on his heart and blood pressure as well as for taking up one important issue left out of the agreement.
The vital issue of extension of the ceasefire, holding between the two sides since August 10, 1992, beyond the December 31 deadline had been omitted in the accord.
"I am going to Dhaka to talk about it," Hansadhaja, a Chakma told The Daily Star at his residence at Khagrachhari today. He had extensive talks with Jyotirindriya Bodhipriya Larma yesterday at Dudukchhara.
"He is hopeful that the agreement is going to work," Chakma quoted Larma as saying when they discussed the accord.
Some tidbits including the ceasefire extension are likely to be sorted out soon, Hansadhaja Chakma said. He also defended the accord and said, it has been received well by the PCJSS rank and file and dismissed any possibility of militants in its front organisations posing any threat to the accord.
He was commenting on PCJSS dissidents expressing their anger, dubbing the accord as a sell out among staging protests in Dhaka Wednesday.
"They have no footing



Anniversary of Suhrawardy's death today

The 34th anniversary of death of Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy will be observed in the country today, reports UNB.
To mark the day, different political and socio-cultural organisations have drawn up elaborate programmes.
On the occasion, President Shahaabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have given separate messages.
As part of the day's programme, Awami League Presi-

PM asks secys to help implement peace accord

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked the secretaries to extend their sincere cooperation in implementing the peace agreement on Chittagong Hill Tracts, reports BSS.
Addressing the secretaries of all the ministries at the International Conference Centre, Hasina said the solution to this long-standing national issue became possible due to the sincere efforts of the government and other concerned. She urged them to remain vigil against any conspiracy against the peace process.
Sheikh Hasina also asked them to ensure best utilisation of foreign aid so that the thrust

Donors' help sought for CHT development

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria sought financial support from the development partners for implementation of the short-term and long-term measures to be taken for the development of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), reports UNB.
Kibria was briefing the heads of missions and representatives of various donor countries and agencies about the CHT accord at the NEC conference room in the city yesterday.
The request followed the landmark agreement signed Tuesday between the government and tribal leaders for restoring peace in the troubled Hill Tracts, an economically promising region.
The donors responded positively, but asked the government side to inform them about the specific requirement of assistance for the CHT region.
The finance minister said additional resources would be required to support the resettlement programme, and for the development and rehabilitation of different infrastructure projects, and various uplift schemes in the area.
Highlighting the salient features of the agreement, Kibria expressed the optimism that all tribal people would come back, lead normal life and contribute to the progress and prosperity of the country.
He said the government has given special attention to the hill area and some special facilities will be created there.
In this connection, he stressed the need for immediate construction of infrastructure like schools, clinics, rural feeder roads and village markets which are necessary for development of the area.
The finance minister said the campaign launched by the

US welcomes CHT accord

The United States yesterday welcomed the peace agreement between the Bangladesh Government and tribal leaders in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, reports UNB.
"We recognise that there are a range of opinions in Bangladesh about the terms of the agreement and the process for its approval and implementation," said a spokesman of the US Embassy in Dhaka.
He said "we are hopeful that, with goodwill on all sides, a peace agreement can be implemented that will put an end to a long-standing conflict that has claimed many lives over more than two decades."

Gold, medicine worth Tk 15 lakh seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent
Customs authorities at the Zia International Airport recovered gold ornaments worth about Tk 5.47 lakh and banned medicines worth about Tk 10 lakh from two passengers yesterday.
Airport sources said customs officials on suspicion, challenged a female passenger of a Biman flight while she was passing through the green channel. The customs officials found gold ornaments inside two rechargeable lights while

Indian parliament dissolved

NEW DELHI, Dec 4: India's President dissolved Parliament and called for early elections today after none of the country's parties could cobble together a government to replace the coalition that fell last week, reports AP.
The President has by presidential order dissolved the 11th Lok Sabha, said a statement released this afternoon by President KR Narayanan's office. The Lok Sabha, the lower house, is the only chamber of Parliament that is directly elected by voters.
In the statement, Narayanan called for elections to be held by March 15, the deadline for presenting the annual budget. The last elections in May 1996 left no party with a parliamentary majority, and a new vote was expected to produce a similarly stymied house.
As the nation's head of state, it was up to Narayanan to decide whether to call elections or give another party or group a chance to form a government.

Snap polls in February

His decision came after a week of infighting among India's fractious political parties following the resignation of Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral's government on Friday.
In his statement, Narayanan said he had found no party able to form a government that would be lawful, viable and enjoy a reasonable prospect of stability.
It will now be up to election officials to set a date for new elections, which are expected to be held in early February, three years ahead of schedule. It will be the second vote in less than two years for India.
The election commissioner has said it will take at least two months to organise balloting in the world's most populous democracy.
Narayanan had met earlier today with Gujral, who is serving as caretaker prime minister, and other officials to determine whether Parliament should meet once more before being dissolved to consider an expenditure bill that provides for 50 per cent salary raises for 3.9 million federal employees.
He decided instead to resort to a constitutional clause allowing the caretaker Cabinet and the President to issue an emergency spending order, according to a statement by the government spokesman.

Woman's body found inside suitcase at Gulshan

By Staff Correspondent
The body of a middle-aged woman was found in a suitcase lying beside a road at Gulshan in the city yesterday morning.
Police said they seized the large suitcase and found the unidentified body with several wound marks in it. Earlier, some local people informed Gulshan police about it at around 7 am.
The woman, wearing a green saree, had a deep scar around the neck. The body also bore several marks of injuries caused by sharp weapons, police said.
None was arrested in this connection till filing of this report last night. Gulshan police

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শেয়ার বাজারে বিনিয়োগকারীদের জ্ঞাতব্য বিষয়
১। শুজব বা কানকথার উপর ভিত্তি করে শেয়ার ক্রয়-বিক্রয়ের সিদ্ধান্ত নিবেন না। এ ধরনের সিদ্ধান্ত নেয়ার আগে - (ক) সংশ্লিষ্ট কোম্পানীর বার্ষিক/অর্ধবার্ষিক হিসাব বিবরণী বিবেচনা করবেন; (খ) সংশ্লিষ্ট কোম্পানীর অর্থিক অবস্থা, ব্যবসা পরিস্থিতি, ব্যবস্থাপনা দক্ষতা তথা উহার ফান্ডামেন্টালস (fundamentals) সম্পর্কে অবগত হবেন। প্রয়োজনে এ ব্যাপারে অভিজ্ঞ ও নির্ভরযোগ্য বিনিয়োগ উপদেষ্টার পরামর্শ নেয়া যেতে পারে।
২। শেয়ার বিনিয়োগে যেমন লাভের সম্ভাবনা আছে তেমনি লোকসানের ঝুঁকিও রয়েছে। তবে শুজব বা কানকথার উপর ভিত্তি করে তথা ভীত সন্ত্রস্ত হয়ে হঠাৎ শেয়ার বিক্রয়ের সিদ্ধান্ত নেয়া সমীচীন হবে না। এ ধরনের বিক্রয় সিদ্ধান্ত নেয়ার আগে ষ্টক মার্কেটে সংশ্লিষ্ট কোম্পানীর ইতিপূর্বেকার শেয়ার মূল্যের ধারা, কোম্পানীর কর্তৃক বিগত বছরগুলোতে অর্জিত লাভ, ডিভিডেন্ড প্রদান, বোনাস ও রাইট শেয়ার ইস্যু ইত্যাদি বিবেচনা করা যুক্তিযুক্ত হবে।
GD-391