

Share trading of 11 Beximco cos likely to resume today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Share trading of 11 Beximco companies may resume today as the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has decided to withdraw its suspension on the companies.

The SEC, however, instructed the bourses to obtain the two key price sensitive information on AGM and book closure dates and disseminate them to the investors before resuming trading.

The SEC came to the decision after a meeting with different institutional investors and bourse high-ups.

Sources said the investors and bourse members appreciated the SEC for its action, but it was requested to withdraw trading suspension as it would increase suffering of the investors.

"Investors will suffer because of low dividends offered by Beximco, but the suspension would further hurt investment," a meeting member told this correspondent.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting, SEC Chairman Maniruddin Ahmad said the two other companies Bangladesh Lamps and Wata Chemicals came up with satisfactory explanations and also announced AGM and book closure dates.

Meantime, the Bangladesh Association of Publicly Listed Companies yesterday denounced

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Mayors-elect take oath today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three mayors-elect of Dhaka, Khulna and Rajshahi cities will take oath today.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia will administer the oath of office to the newly-elected mayors Sadeque Hossain Khoka of Dhaka, Shaikh Taiyebur Rahman of Khulna and Mizanur Rahman Minu of Rajshahi at the International Conference Centre at 5:00 pm.

The three mayors and 201 ward commissioners including 50 women from reserved seats were elected to Dhaka, Rajshahi and Khulna city corporations on April 25. The BNP-led ruling coalition swept the city polls, boycotted by the main opposi

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Zillur murder Businessmen in Rokeya Sarani to Shewrapara continue strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 500 businessmen in Rokeya Sarani to Shewrapara continued their strike for the second day yesterday.

Protesting the killing of Zillur Rahman, a social worker at Paikpara in the city's Mirpur area on Thursday night.

They took out a procession in the area yesterday demanding resignation of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of police, Dhaka West for his 'failure' to curb criminal activities in the area.

Also last night, the businessmen submitted a memorandum to the home minister urging him to take immediate step to curb widespread violence and criminal acts in the Mirpur area.

They also expressed strong resentment at the rise of criminal incidents, including killing in the area.

Zillur Rahman, 45, General Secretary of Maddyia Paikpara Samaj Kalyan Samity, was gunned down by a gang of miscreants in front of his residence at about 10:15 PM on Thursday.

	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
May 5		6-29pm
May 6	5-21 am	

Prayer Timings		
May 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-30	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	5-00	5-15
Maghrib	6-33	6-38
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Storm kills 11, injures 500 in Rajbari, Magura dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 11 people were killed and over 500 injured as nor'wester lashed four upazilas of Rajbari and Magura districts on Friday night.

Of them, seven were killed in Rajbari and the rest four in Magura.

Our Rajbari Correspondent reports: Seven people were killed and 500 others injured as nor'wester accompanied by hailstorm swept Baliakandi and Pangsha upazilas.

In Baliakandi, five people were killed in house collapse during the storm that began at around 8 pm and lasted half an hour.

Four of the dead were identified as Hajera Begam, 48, her daughter Razina, 9, of village Amtola, Mini Begum, 20, and Rakib, 6, of village Modhupur, Abdul Latif Munshi, 60, of village Sonapur. The identity of a 70 year old woman of Mirgi village could not be known.

In Pangsha upazila, two women were killed when roofs of their thatched houses collapsed on them during the storm.

Of the two, one was identified as Selina, 40, wife of Abdul Latif Biswas of Pangsha sadar, while the identity of other could not be known.

The injured persons were admitted to Rajbari Sadar Hospital and Pangsha and Baliakandi health complexes.

The storm damaged a large number of thatched and semi pucca houses, standing Iri-Boro crops and uprooted several hundred trees. Power supply and telecommunications were also disrupted in the two upazilas.

The worst affected areas in the two upazilas are Bosontopur, Suitanpur, Rajapur, Char Shannagar, Koiguri, Dormurshi, Nababpur, Narua, Angram, Merge, Bagduli and Habaspur.

In Magura, four people were killed and 50 others injured when a nor'wester lashed Sripur upazila of Magura and Modhukhali of Faridpur district Friday night, according to UNB.

Harunur Rashid, 30, and Quamrul, 20, of Shabdulpur village in Sripur, Faruque Sheikh, 14, and Rana Sheikh of Daripar village in Modhukhali upazila died in house collapse.

Of the injured, 20 were admitted to different hospitals in Magura and Faridpur.

The worst effected unions in the two upazilas are -- Srikole, Shabdulpur, Adharkhada, Dariapur, Hazipur, Dumain, Meshaim, Raipur, Gazna, Zahapur and Nawapara.

Locals said some 1,500 kutcha houses were damaged during the 20-minute storm.

Ministers assure punishment to monk's killers

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD, Ctg

The government yesterday assured the Buddhists at Raazan of a fair probe into and trial of the Buddhist monk assassination case and urged them to extend necessary cooperation to help arrest the killers.

Home Minister Ataf Hossain Chowdhury and Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan both gave the assurance while visiting the Hingala Woara Puyan Buddha Bihar of Dabua union under Raazan thana in the district yesterday morning.

Buddhist monk Gyanojyoti Mohasthor was killed by armed criminals on April 21 in the Buddha Bihar, a Buddhist temple cum orphanage.

The ministers who came to visit the Buddha Bihar at the directive of the prime minister however requested the Buddhist people here not to link the brutal and heinous murder with politics in the greater

interest of the country's image.

As per demand of the local people, Home Minister Ataf Hossain Chowdhury ordered the sensational assassination case to be handed over to the CID police and to provide the Buddhist leaders and the Buddha Bihar management with the seizure list by 10pm last night.

He also assured them of measures for round-the-clock security for the temple cum orphanage.

The ministers went to the Woara Puyan Buddha Bihar founded by the slain monk at 9am after they directly flew to the Raazan Pourashabha (Municipality) ground by a chopper from Chittagong Airport.

They inspected the well-protected living room on the first floor of the orphanage where the monk was killed, went round the monastery premises and talked to

Storms kill 15 in West Bengal

AP, Kolkata

At least 15 people were killed and several others injured when thunderstorms accompanied by lightning raged through the city and other parts of West Bengal, police said yesterday.

The storms on Thursday and Friday nights damaged at least 3,000 mud huts in villages along the eastern coast and the Sunderbans delta, uprooted hundreds of trees and destroyed crops worth millions of rupees, police said.

In Kolkata, a wall collapsed in a storm that packed 100-kilometer per hour winds, killing two people and injuring 15 others on Friday night, said S. Ahmed, the city's deputy police chief.

At least 13 others were killed and seven more injured in other parts of the coastal state on Thursday night, Inspector General of Police Chayan Mukherjee said.

Thursday's storm swept through coastal villages at a speed of 70 kilometers per hour and lasted for

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Home Minister Ataf Hossain Chowdhury talking with a monk during his visit to Hingala Woara Puyan Buddha Bihar in Raazan yesterday.

India still mum on free access

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

India has not shown any intention to provide free access to Bangladesh products even about a month after the last round of trade talks, commerce ministry officials said yesterday.

"What is the problem if they accept our list of 25-category products? We had a very bitter experience with India regarding our lead acid battery export," Commerce Secretary Suhel Ahmed told a press briefing at the ministry conference room yesterday.

The commerce secretary refuted Indian claims that Bangladesh does not have the capacity to export items on its 25-category list to India because of its narrow export base.

"It's true that our export basket is narrow. Still, we export around US\$ 3 billion to the European Union and \$ 2.5 billion to the USA," he mentioned.

"We hoped that India would look at the huge trade gap it has with Bangladesh and give us a meaningful concession," the secretary added.

C K Hyder, advisor to the commerce ministry, Md Abul Kalam Azad, in-charge of the International Trade Organisation, Mostafa Abid Khan, deputy chief of the Bangladesh Tariff Commission, and other officials of the ministry were present at the briefing.

"Bangladesh handed over to India a list of 25-category products in May 2000 and again, a revised list during the joint secretary level meet in

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Malaysia to recruit foreign docs

BERNAMA, Kuala Lumpur

The Ministry of Health is looking for foreign doctors to accept its offer to serve in the rural areas, Deputy Health Minister Dr Suleiman Mohamad said Thursday.

"We hope these foreign doctors will help fill up more than 1,000 vacancies at hospitals facing shortage of doctors," he said.

Dr Suleiman said the ministry was doing its best to solve the problem of shortage of doctors and lauded the Public Services Department (JPA) for approving the posts requested.

He explained that the priority for Malaysia is to hire more medical health officers.

Malaysian doctors working overseas have also been invited to return to serve the country.

On the foreign doctors, he said the government had sent teams to India and Indonesia to seek the additional medical resources.

Nigerian plane crashes with 105 aboard

AP, Kano, Nigeria

An airliner crashed into a neighbourhood in Nigeria's northern city of Kano yesterday, with what Nigerian media said was 105 people aboard.

There was no immediate word on casualties.

The crash left Kano's Grammaja neighborhood a ruin of smashed buildings and scattered plane parts.

An Associated Press reporter saw terrified, wailing neighborhood residents combing the rubble, looking for survivors or dead.

The plane, from a private Nigerian air company, crashed about a kilometer from the city's airport.

Dawn-to-dusk hartal called in Rajshahi today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Rajshahi Nagarik Committee (RNC) will enforce a dawn-to-dusk hartal in the city today demanding cancellation of RCC election results and removal of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).

The hartal call came from a grand rally organised by RNC in Rajshahi city on Thursday.

Leaders and workers of Nagarik Committee took out procession in the city yesterday to drum up support for today's hartal.

The main opposition Awami League has extended its support to hartal.

Young man stabbed to death in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified miscreants stabbed to death an unidentified young man at Darogapara in the city's Shyampur area yesterday.

Witnesses said a gang of miscreants swooped on the man aged about 27 at Road No. 1 at about 12.30 and stabbed him mercilessly. He died on the spot.

Police recovered the body at about 1pm sent it to Mitford Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police could not unearth the motive behind the killing till 7.30 pm yesterday.

No case was filed with Shyampur thana in this connection.

2 made secys

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has promoted two acting secretaries to full secretaries.

According to an official notification, Secretary-in-Charge of the Ministry of Environment and Forest Sabihuddin Ahmed and Secretary-in-Charge of the Ministry of Food Abdul Latif Mandal have been promoted to the post of secretary with effect from May 2.

Official sources said Sabihuddin, who joined the service in 1971, served as first secretary at the Bangladesh High Commission in Hong Kong and was also the private

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Pvt terminal CCCI concerned at fresh move, seeks PM's intervention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) in a fax message to the Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday expressed grave concern over the reported fresh move to install private terminal at the estuary of Karnaphuli, saying that it would certainly go against the national interest as well as security of the country.

Farid Ahmad Chowdhury, president of CCCI, in the message made fervent appeal to the PM for his immediate intervention in this 'highly controversial' matter.

He said Chittagong Chamber had organised seminars, discussions, view exchange meetings and workshops with business community, professional bodies, academicians and civil society on this issue over the years.

"And, they all in similar tone and

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Parents await justice as accused goes scot-free

ABUL KALAM AZAD

On this day two years ago, miscreants killed two brothers one after another in Mohammadpur area of the city. But till date, police could not arrest the principal accused in the sensational double murder case though local people say he is seen roaming around freely in the area.

The principal accused -- Kamal Pasha-- who went into hiding after the killings returned to his house in Mohammadpur a few months ago and is staying there since then, locals said.

Allegedly backed by some ruling party men in the area, Pasha repeatedly threatened the victims' family not to try for his arrest.

Bereaved parents of the victims -- Syed Ashraf Hossain Jewel, 27 and Syed Mohammad Rivel, 24-- still await justice for the killing of their sons. Jewel and Rivel were sons of Amjad Hossain, a senior journalist and former editor of the monthly Detective, a law enforcement agency's monthly publication.

When contacted yesterday, a top police official said they could not arrest Pasha because he is 'closely linked' with ruling BNP leaders of the area. "We can arrest him only when ordered by the higher authorities," he added, requesting anonymity.

According to newspaper reports following the double murder, Kamal Pasha, who is an FIR-listed accused in many criminal cases including some for murders, went to the residence of Amjad Hossain in a hijacked private car in the morning of May 5, 2000 and called Jewel. As Rivel, an HSC student, came out, Pasha asked him to get into the car. He was taken to a nearby place and shot dead by Pasha.

Then he came back to the house again and called out Jewel, a field worker of Proshika, for an 'urgent need'. He was taken to a place at Lalmatia where Pasha gunned him down. The two killings took place within 15 minutes.

Amjad Hossain had filed a murder case with Mohammadpur thana accusing Pasha of the killing. The then Officer in Charge of Mohammadpur thana SM Newazi submitted charge sheet in the case accusing Pasha and driver of the hijacked car Mahbub. Police then arrested the driver and after interrogation, sent him to Dhaka Central Jail.

According to police, there are at least seven cases against Pasha four murder cases and three under the arms act-- filed with different thanas in the city. He is an

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Electing the president
by majority vote over two rounds

Sunday, April 21
Election by universal direct suffrage

French territory forms a single voting area

Ballot
Only the top two candidates go through to the second round (unless one or other of them withdraws from the race)

1st-round victory
Any candidate who wins an overall majority of the votes cast is elected in the 1st round

2nd round
Sunday, May 5
Elected in 2nd round

The candidate who gets the most votes is elected president

The Constitutional Council must announce the results within 10 days of the vote

Run-off presidential polls in France today

Press rallies for Chirac, Le Pen cries foul

AFP, Paris

On the last day of France's presidential election campaign, incumbent Jacques Chirac on Friday urged voters to carry him to a landslide victory and soundly reject the anti-foreigner views of his far-right opponent, Jean-Marie Le Pen.

"The programme I offer, I firmly believe, is in the interests of all French people, not the French from the right or the left," the centre-right incumbent said in an interview on France Inter radio.

But ahead of the weekend vote, Le Pen cried foul, warning of "huge electoral fraud" in Sunday's run-off and accusing some municipal authorities of refusing to distribute ballots bearing his name.

Chirac is expected to score a landslide victory, buoyed by a mass popular rejection of Le Pen's far-right platform, which is anchored in attacks on illegal immigration, the European Union and a mounting crime rate.

Left-wing parties have rallied around Chirac in a bid to deal Le Pen a crushing defeat, but hope to rebound in next month's legislative elections by taking a majority that would deprive the president of real governing power.

The French press yesterday urged voters to turn out in force to deliver an overwhelming victory for Chirac over Le Pen.

On the eve of the presidential vote, newspapers all carried banner headlines calling on the country's 41

million voters to fulfil their democratic duty in what the left-wing Liberation described as a "referendum on our republican values".

France-Soir simply emblazoned the single word "Vote!", while the right-wing Le Figaro under a headline "For France" published an editorial entitled "Chirac -- of course".

The Communist daily L'Humanite told voters to keep up the momentum of the street demonstrations against the 73-year-old National Front (FN) leader that were unleashed after his unexpected triumph over Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin in the first round two weeks ago.

There is concern that if Le Pen

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