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CNG station shutdown cut to 4 hours

Strike called off

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The owners of CNG refueling stations yesterday called off the strike scheduled for tomorrow as the closing time of the stations has been reduced by two hours from today.

The decision came after a meeting at the power and energy ministry in the afternoon.

Finance Secretary Al Mamun of CNG Filling Station and Conversion Workshop Owners' Association told The Daily Star that State Minister for Power and Energy Enamul Huq assured them the six-hour closing time of CNG

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It's time to act

PM asks ministers, says 'honeymoon period' over, people now judging govt's performance

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed all ministries to expedite their work, saying that her government's "honeymoon period is over after being in power for nearly two years".

She said the people will want to see output, and will evaluate the government critically in the remaining three years of its tenure.

Chairing a weekly cabinet meeting in Bangladesh Secretariat, the premier also cautioned all her cabinet colleagues about possible subversive acts in the country, and asked them to remain actively alert, rather than depending only on intelligence agencies for information.

Sheikh Hasina, who is also the president of ruling Awami League (AL), expressed dissatisfaction over poor performance of some minis-



tries, and directed them to pay more attention to work, according to cabinet sources.

She said she has information that some ministries are not performing as expected. Expressing her disappointment she added that the government's development works are not being reviewed on a monthly basis by some ministries.

"It must not go on, as the government will have to be accountable to the people for every step in the coming years. People will judge the government very critically, and will want output in every step. So I urge all of you to expedite development works," she was quoted by a minister as saying to her cabinet colleagues.

"The time for getting easy praise is over. Now we will have to face difficulties in every step of

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AFGHANISTAN Kidnappers release 2 Bangladeshis

5 still hostage

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Afgan kidnappers yesterday freed two of the seven Bangladeshi workers abducted near the Mazar-I-Sharif town in Afghanistan on Friday night.

Meanwhile, the government is "vigorously" trying to rescue others and bring back the body of the Bangladeshi killed in an attack by Afghan gunmen on the same night, said officials at the foreign ministry's consular and welfare cell.

Deceased Kazi Altaf Hossain of Pabna was a Diploma Engineer and had

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SQ Chy now booked for war crimes

Tribunal asks authorities to produce him on Dec 30

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detained BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury was shown arrested for crimes against humanity during the Liberation War, following an arrest warrant issued by the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday.

A three-member judges' panel headed by Justice Nizamul Huq directed the authorities concerned to produce Salauddin before the court on December 30 on the charges.

The tribunal also comprised Justice ATM Fazle Kabir and Justice AKM Zaheer Ahmed.

It passed the order after hearing a petition filed on December 15 by war crimes investigation agency for Salauddin's arrest.

Chief Prosecutor of the tribunal Ghulam Arief Tipoo later told reporters Salauddin would be held in detention until the agency completes probing the war crimes allegations

against the lawmaker.

The prosecutor during the hearing prayed to the court to serve arrest warrant on Salauddin for the killings of Nutan Chandra Singh at Raozan in Chittagong on April 13, 1971 and 104 others.

He said the investigators and prosecutors gathered evidence of Salauddin's involvement in killing and torturing innocent people particularly the Hindus in 1971.

Salauddin was allegedly involved in the killings of Nutan Singh, founder of herbal medicine factory Kundeshwari Oushadhalaya, and 35 people at Jagatmallo Para and 69 others at Unasattar Para in Chittagong during the War of Independence, he said.

Primary investigation shows Salauddin with the help of Pakistan occupation forces led the murders and tortures near his Goods Hill

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Record stock fall sparks protests

DSE down 551 points, biggest slide in history

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY

Angry investors took to the streets in Motijheel for a second time in less than two weeks after the Dhaka Stock Exchange suffered the biggest crash yesterday in its 55-year history.

The DSE General Index nosedived by 551 points or 6.72 percent to 7,654 points at the close of a four-hour trading session.

Market capitalisation dropped by 5.5 percent to Tk 3,26,087 crore from Wednesday's Tk 3,44,958 crore, as all securities suffered a combined loss of Tk 18,871 crore in value.

Aggrieved investors set fire to wood and paper in front of the DSE building and blocked the road from Shapla Chattar to Ittefaq Moor. They chanted slogans against the top bosses of the premier bourse and market regulators, and demanded resignation of the central bank governor.

They pelted law enforcers with bricks bats leaving a person injured.

Yesterday's fall in share prices was even greater than the market crash in 1996 when the

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MORE STORIES IN STAR BUSINESS

HIJACKED SHIP Helpless crew families seek PM's intervention

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of crew of hijacked Bangladeshi ship MV Jahan Moni yesterday urged the prime minister to take initiatives for rescuing the sailors from the Somalia coast.

They also expressed concerns about their dear ones, who remained hostages by pirates, at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club.

In a written statement they

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PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Family members of one of the crew held hostage aboard hijacked ship MV Jahan Moni break down in tears during a press conference at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

POWER PROJECTS Summit assured of \$2b financing

SHARIER KHAN

Different financial institutions have pledged around \$ 2 billion financing for the Summit Group of Companies that has recently been awarded contracts for six power projects.

Dispelling doubts whether a local company could handle so many contracts for generating 1,274 megawatts of power within three years, Summit chief Muhammad Aziz Khan told The Daily Star that his group of companies has been assured of financing from International Finance Corporation, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, Infrastructure Development Company Ltd, Germany-based DEG and FMO and Bangladesh Bank.

And some of these have already approved financing for the power projects.

Besides, Summit looks forward to the local capital market

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আমি এত যে তোমায় -----

ভালবাসা ছাড়া অসম্পূর্ণ সবই