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BULLISH STOCKMARKET

It's time to be cautious

Investors' confidence rises but some analysts remind them of past shock

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY

The stockmarket is getting back its rhythm missing for almost six years since the inevitable crash in early 2011, which left thousands of investors penniless. And the latest bullish run continuing for months has evoked the fear of bubble waiting to burst.

The premier bourse's key index reached 5,500-point mark with the turnover crossing Tk 2,000 crore for the first time in more than six years. The index jumped around 9 percent last year.

The escalation of turnover and index -- the two most important indicators of the market -- in general suggests that the investors' confidence in the market is coming back. But fears run deep among investors, as the stockmarket witnessed debacles twice -- first in 1996 and then in early 2011.

However, it is now being forecast by many, including government high-ups, that the market, which passed a decent year in 2016, will go from strength to strength this year, given the promising market fundamentals and increasing participation of investors.

On different occasions, the finance minister and the

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina speaks in the plenary session titled "Leading the Fight against Climate Change" of the 47th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos of Switzerland on Wednesday as former US vice-president Al Gore, HSBC CEO Stuart Gulliver, and Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg listen on stage.

WEF SESSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Hasina defends Rampal plant

Slams those who oppose the project after Al Gore raises the issue

UNB, Davos, Switzerland

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina once again strongly defended the construction of Rampal power plant in Bagerhat when former US vice-president Al Gore raised the issue in a plenary session of the 47th Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum.

She invited Al Gore, an environmentalist, to visit Bangladesh and see for himself what is happening in Rampal.

Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg, HSBC CEO Stuart Gulliver and Cofco Agri CEO Jingtao Chi also took part in the plenary session titled "Leading the Fight against Climate Change" at the Congress Hall in Davos on Wednesday evening.

Briefing reporters after the event, PM's Deputy Press Secretary Md Nazrul Islam said the premier blasted those waging a movement over the Rampal power plant.

"I don't know exactly what they want and what their intention is... they might have a different intention," she said.

Those opposing the Rampal plant could not provide the government with any logic as to why and how it would affect the environment, the PM said, adding that she urged them to see the power plant site, but they did not respond.

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A calmer Simrail truck stand

People of Narayanganj now stand firm against remnants of Nur Hossain's gang

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and AKRAM HOSEN, back from Narayanganj

The dominance of Nur Hossain's gang in Narayanganj was waning since his arrest in 2015 and the "drug empire" he had built got a significant blow when the seven-murder case verdict was delivered on Monday.

Nur's Simrail Truck Stand office in Siddhirganj, from where he ran everything, has become almost defunct, said locals.

The remnants of his gang still try to exert influence but the city dwellers have found hope in the verdict and are now standing their ground.

In this very spot, an "obscene and degrading" dance show was held every night, locals told The Daily Star correspondents when they visited the truck stand yesterday.

People gambled here and drug peddling -- Phensidyle and Yaba -- was going on in broad daylight, they said, adding that things have become significantly quieter.

"We installed eight security cameras in the truck stand area and teams patrol

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N'ganj teacher didn't hurt religious belief

Finds judicial probe; report submitted to HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A judicial probe has not found any authentication of the allegation brought against Narayanganj school teacher Shyamal Kanti Bhakta of making derogatory comments about religion in May last year.

The chief metropolitan magistrate of Dhaka, who conducted the inquiry, however, said in the report that Shyamal was forced to

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SPECIAL OIC MEETING ON ROHINGYA CRISIS

Dhaka calls for urgent steps to find solution

Malaysian PM urges Myanmar to stop atrocities, violence

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Urging the OIC for a durable solution to the Rohingya crisis, Bangladesh yesterday demanded Myanmar bring back normalcy in Rakhine state immediately and take urgent steps for repatriation and rehabilitation of its Muslim minority people who took shelter in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh also called for ensuring basic rights of Rakhine Muslims and return of refugees and displaced Rohingyas to their homeland as well as restoring their citizenship through necessary review of the existing exclusionary citizenship law.

The call was made by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam, who led the Bangladesh delegation to the extraordinary session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers on the Situation of the Rohingya Muslim Minority in Myanmar.

Security forces in Buddhist-majority Myanmar were accused of widespread abuse against Rohingyas, including killing, rape and torching of thousands of homes, that forced an estimated 65,000 Rohingyas to flee across the border into Bangladesh in the last three months.

Inaugurating the OIC session in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak said the international community cannot remain silent at the continued suffering of the Rohingya Muslims. He demanded Myanmar put an end to the denial of basic rights of Rohingyas and atrocities and violence inflicted on them.

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'We're going to be okay'

Obama tells supporters as he warns about Trump policy issues in his last press meet

AFP, Washington

Barack Obama vowed to speak up if Donald Trump threatens core US values and reassured Americans "we'll be okay" Wednesday, in a political swansong after eight years as president.

During his final press conference and public appearance before Trump's inauguration on Friday, the 55-year-old said he was stepping back but would return to the political breach in extremis.

"I want to do some writing, I want to be quiet a little bit and not hear myself talk so darn much. I want to spend precious time with my girls," he said.

But, he added, any effort to enforce systematic discrimination, erode voting rights, muzzle the press or round up young immigrants, would cause him to speak out.

"There's a difference between that normal functioning of politics and certain issues or certain moments where I think our core values may be at stake."

During the campaign Trump vowed to ban Muslims from entering the United States and deport millions of illegal immigrants, many of them Latin Americans long-settled in the country.

His strident tone since winning election and the contrast with eight years of Obama's liberal agenda has given the country something akin to political whiplash.

Trump's supporters are euphoric that political business as usual may be over, while his detractors are fearful of a mercurial and untested leader.

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A youth holding two shol (snakehead) fish caught from an almost dried up waterbody in Sreenagar area beside the Dhaka-Mawa highway. Inset, other locals catching fish with bare hands at the same place. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN