



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Trucks laden with illegal rickshaws seized earlier by police in the capital as part of a drive to ease intolerable traffic congestion wait at Paltan crossing yesterday. The rickshaws will be distributed among the poor in Narsingdi.

## Foreign airlines wind up from Chittagong

AFP, Chittagong

Singapore Airlines (SIA) became the latest to pull its services to the south-eastern port city of Chittagong, airline officials said yesterday, as passenger loads fall and businesses relocate.

SIA will suspend operations between Chittagong and the city state from January 20, an airline official here said. It launched the service in March 2002.

"The head office in Singapore decided to suspend the twice-weekly operation on the Chittagong-Yangon-Singapore route ... and we don't know whether the operation will resume at all in the near future," representative Ashikul Islam Shameem told AFP.

He added: "Anything more, only the head office can say."

Business sources cited falling passenger loads and relocation of companies from Chittagong to the capital Dhaka as reasons for the decline in air services.

SIA's move follows a number of other recent service suspensions.

Phuket Air, a private airline from Thailand, halted its twice-weekly flights to Bangkok in June after just over a year, a spokesman for Nora Travels, the airline's Bangladeshi representative, said.

"We were forced to shut our operation as passenger load was very poor and it was difficult for us to survive ... its resumption is uncertain," said the spokesman.

Indian Airlines, which operated between Chittagong and Kolkata,

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## 1yr-old and already 7 months in thief's den, Bristi rescued



PHOTO: STAR

Stolen one-year-old Hasnara returns to her foster mother Anwara Begum after being rescued by police in Gazipur on Saturday.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ramna police rescued a one-year-old girl Saturday night from Gazipur about seven months after she was stolen from Shahbagh.

Bristi alias Hasnara, daughter of a vagrant Falani, was stolen at the age of three months from near a flower shop at Shahbagh on May 9 and was sold to one Bafa Mian for Tk 500. One Parveen stole Bristi and sold the baby after taking her to Abdullahpur in Uttara, police said.

On November 12, police arrested the lone suspect, Parveen, from the city's Osmani Udyan following information from the child's mother and took her on a two-day remand. During interrogation, Parveen said she stole Bristi to take revenge on

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## 1,500 accused of lynching 2 'extortionists'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

Shibchar Police filed a murder case against as many as 1500 villagers after two alleged extortionists were beaten to death and another was seriously injured by a mob at Shakhpur bazaar under Shibchar upazila Saturday night.

Shahidul Islam, chairman of

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## Saarc nations agree to rapid medical help

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Saarc countries have decided to set up a rapid response system to provide medical assistance to any member of the grouping when hit by calamities like cyclone, outbreak of disease, earth-

quake and other natural disasters.

The decision was taken at the two-day first-ever conference of health ministers of Saarc, which ended here yesterday.

The system will be modelled on the pattern of the one already devised by India which is proposed to be launched

on December 25. It envisages introduction of an emergency mobile hospital that could be airlifted to any place for extending emergency medical help. Indian Health Minister Sushma Swaraj told reporters here Saturday evening.

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### Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
21	17		5-15
22	18	4-52	5-15

### Prayer Timings

November 17		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-54	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-16	5-23
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation