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Build consensus for peace and prosperity

President urges in his address to first JS session of new year

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



President Abdul Hamid yesterday urged concerted efforts to build a national consensus regarding the fundamental issues of continuity of democracy, the rule of law, and the country's uninterrupted socioeconomic development.

"Peace and prosperity cannot take a permanent shape without national consensus," he said while addressing the first session of the new year at the House, which is also the sixth session of the 11th parliament.

According to the constitution, the president is scheduled to address before the first session of new year.

His speech was earlier approved by the cabinet.

Terming the Jatiya Sangsad the centre of the nation's hopes and aspirations, the head of the state said the ruling party and the opposition should also play a constructive role side by side to successfully fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the nation, consolidate transparency, accountability, tolerance, human rights, and the rule of law.

"Irrespective of the treasury bench and the opposition, I request all concerned to play appropriate roles in this House, which is the ultimate resort to fulfilling of people's expectations."

He added that the ruling party and the opposition would also have to play a constructive role in strengthening

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A boat carrying devotees heads to the Ijtima ground on the bank of the Turag river. The two-day first phase of the Biswa Ijtima, the second largest congregation of Muslims after Hajj, will begin today. The photo was taken in Tongi of Gazipur yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Biswa Ijtima begins today

STAR REPORT

Muslim devotees of home and abroad have started gathering on the bank of the Turag river in Tongi to attend the first phase of Biswa Ijtima set to start today.

The first phase of the Ijtima, the largest Islamic congregation after Hajj, will end on January 12. The second phase will be held from January 17 to 19.

Both the phases will end with separate Akheri Monajats (concluding prayers) on the last days.

Tabligh Jamaat leaders Maulana Zubair and Maulana Saad Kandhalvi with their followers will take part in the phases.

To accommodate thousands of devotees, numerous tinned-roof houses were built in the area, while several small bridges and culverts were also constructed for swift commuting in the area.

The Ijtima media affairs Coordinator Mufti Zahir Ibn Muslim said they prepared rooms for around 10,000 foreign guests on the north-western side of the

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Tk 1.85cr found in civil servant's possession

ACC raids his home, office in Parbatipur; detains him

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A government official was detained in Dinajpur yesterday after the Anti-Corruption Commission recovered more than Tk 1.85 crore from his possession, said ACC officials.

The detainee is Tajul Islam, project implementation officer (PIO) of Parbatipur upazila.

Although there was no official comment on how the 40-year-old man accumulated the money, an ACC official said it was stolen from different government project funds.

Abu Hena Ashiqur Rahman, deputy director of the anti-graft watchdog in the district, said acting on a tip-off received on ACC hotline 106, a seven-member team raided Tajul's office at Parbatipur Upazila Complex around 5:30pm.

The team, accompanied by policemen, found Tk 55,000 at the office, he said, adding that they later found more money stashed in four travel bags at Tajul's residence at the complex.

He said the bags were hidden under the

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Small incision, big result

Doctors at NICVD perform minimally invasive procedure on elderly heart patient; the new surgery in Bangladesh gives hope to people with aortic valve stenosis

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Surgeons at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease (NICVD), for the first time, have successfully replaced the aortic valve in an elderly woman's heart using a minimally invasive procedure.

The surgery known as transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) was performed on Archana Rani Deb, 55, on January 5. She had been suffering from a medical condition called aortic valve stenosis.

The condition occurs when the heart's aortic valve narrows and does not open fully, obstructing blood flow from heart into the aorta, the main artery of the body, said Pradip Kumar Karmakar, who led the operation.

Eminent Indian interventional cardiologist Ashok Seth and NICVD Director Mir Jamal Uddin supervised the surgery.

"This non-surgical intervention is much safer than the open-heart surgery, especially for old people," Ashok told The Daily Star.

Archana's husband Ratan Sarkar said, "My wife came home two days ago and she is doing the household chores. I offer the heartiest thanks to the doctors."

Open-heart surgery was the only way of treating such patients in Bangladesh, surgeon Pradip said, adding that the major beneficiary of new

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Ashok Seth

Woman, her son found dead at home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Police recovered the bodies of a woman and her six-year-old son at their home in Manikganj's Satura upazila yesterday.

The dead are Parveen Akter, 26, wife of Dubai expatriate Mojnu Mia of North Kaunarara in the upazila, and her son Noor Mohammad, said police.

Seeing the door of their room open around 8:15am, Parveen's father-in-law Abdur Rahman went there and found the blood-stained bodies on the bed, said Motiar Rahman, officer-in-charge of Satura Police Station.

Being informed by the family members, police went there and recovered the bodies. Parveen had her throat slit, and the child had multiple stab wounds, said the OC.

Police detained six of Parveen's relatives for interrogation, said

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Viking parents feared climate change



MAIL ONLINE

A famed Viking relic known as the runestone tells of a heart-broken parent's crippling fear that the cold-weather that robbed their child of life may return, experts claim.

Fresh analysis of the mysterious runic inscription claims it speaks of an enduring battle against extreme cold weather in the sixth century.

It is known that, during the sixth and seventh century, more than half of all Scandinavians perished as frigid temperatures caused widespread devastation.

Experts have long been stumped by the 8.5ft tall stone, with most theories claiming it is a dedication to the legendary Ostrogoth king, Theodore the Great.

More than 700 runes cover its five sides and its true meaning has eluded experts as chunks of the rock are missing or worn away.

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Motorcyclist shot dead in Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Criminals shot an indigenous man dead in Rangamati's Kaptai upazila on Wednesday afternoon.

The deceased Basi Mong Marma, 30, of remote Gobachhari area in the upazila, used to transport people on motorcycle as a profession, police said.

While Basi was transporting a former Parbatya Chattogram Jono Sanghati Samiti (PCJSS) member Kya Ching Mong Marma around 3:00pm

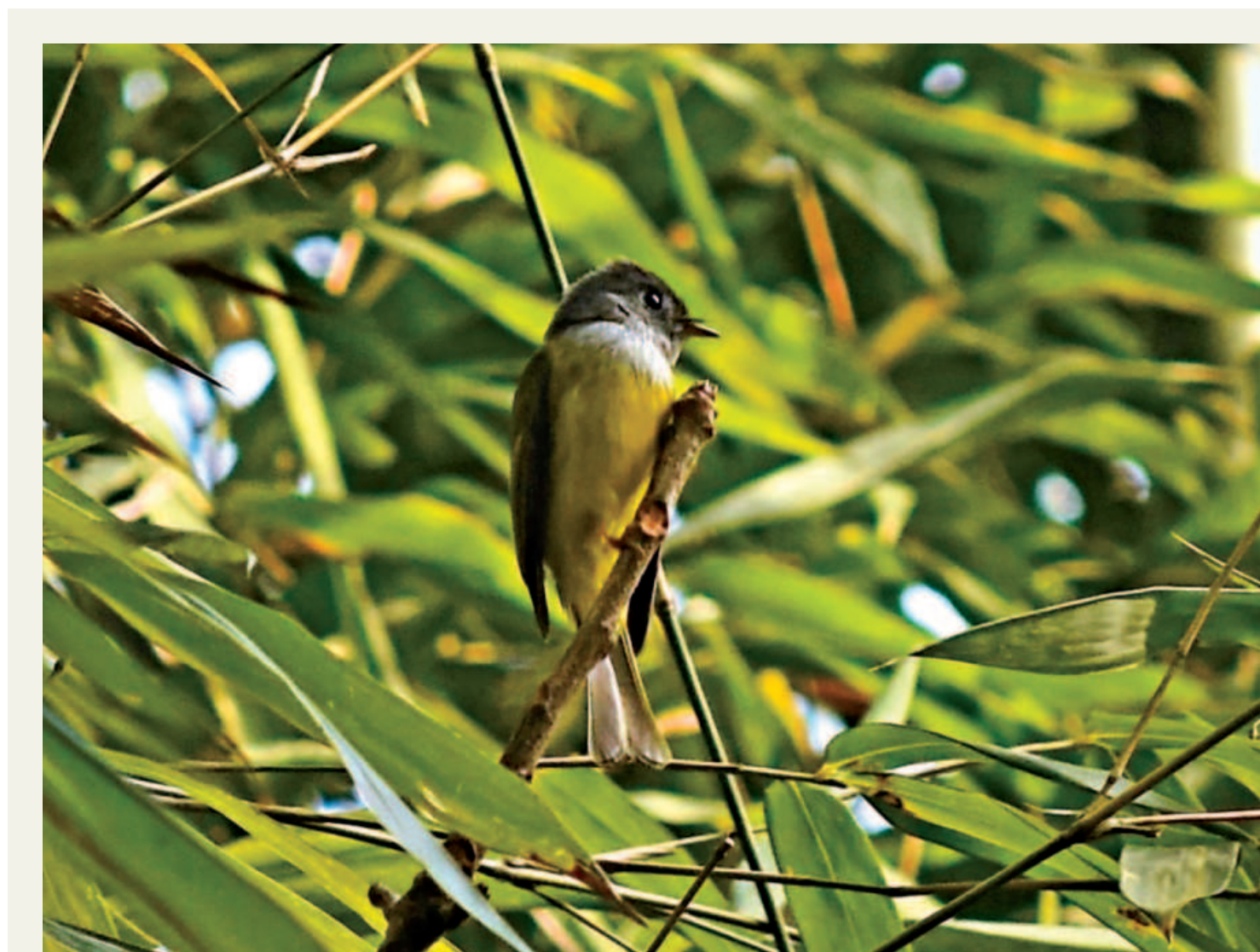
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PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 10

Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5:30 12:30 4:00 5:30 7:00
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



A HOODED HUNTER

A grey-headed canary-flycatcher spotted in Gandagram village of Bogura's Shajahanpur upazila. This bird with a square crest, a grey hood and yellow underparts is found in tropical Asia. They forage for insects by making flycatcher-like sallies and calling aloud. The photo was taken a couple of days ago.

PHOTO: MOSTAFA SHABUJ

HUGE BUSHFIRES Australia urges another mass evacuation

AGENCIES

Australian authorities urged another mass evacuation across the heavily populated southeast yesterday as a return of hot weather fanned huge bushfires threatening several towns and communities.

Victoria state Premier Daniel Andrews urged communities to be on alert ahead of the extreme conditions.

"If you receive instructions to leave, then you must leave," Andrews said in a televised briefing. "That is the only way to guarantee your safety."

Parts of Kangaroo Island, a wildlife-rich tourist spot off the southeast coast where Prime Minister Scott Morrison on Wednesday made a plea for foreign tourists not to be deterred by the fires, were again evacuated yesterday.

"I urge everyone to heed warnings, follow advice, and to head to the east part of the island, which is deemed safe at this point," South Australia Fire Chief Mark Jones said in a separate briefing in Adelaide.

A third of the island has been destroyed. Twenty-seven people have been killed this fire season, according to the federal government, as the monster fires have scorched through more than 10.3 million hectares (25.5 million acres) of land, an area the size of South Korea.

Thousands have been made homeless and thousands have had to evacuate repeatedly because of the volatility of the fires.

Residents of the coastal town of Mallacoota, where

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