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# The Daily Star



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## NEWS BRIEFS

### JS rules, procedure body meets today

The ninth meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on rules of procedure will be held at 4 pm today (Sunday) at the Speaker's chamber, reports BSS.

### Launch dacoity

JAMALPUR, Jan 14: An armed dacoity was committed in a passenger launch in the river Jamuna under Madarganj upazila recently. As the motor launch on way from Madarganj ghat to Sargakandi of Bogra reached mid-river five dacoits in the guise of passenger stopped it and looted goods worth about Tk one lakh from the passengers, reports BSS.

### One killed in Ctg road mishap

CHITTAGONG, Jan 18: One person died on the spot when a passenger bus knocked down him near custom house here today. Port police said the mishap took place because of invisibility caused by deep fog, reports BSS.

### Stolen goods seized

CHITTAGONG, Jan 18: Security personnel of Chittagong port seized 74 rolls of polyester fabric and 65 pieces of motor belts worth about Tk 10 lakh from a microbus near jetty number 10 of the port here today. The security personnel on suspicion, seized the microbus and made a thorough check and found the goods reportedly stolen from a container jetty, reports BSS.

### Salvation of wreckages

CHITTAGONG, Jan 18: Chittagong Port Authority has started salvation of wreckages of 20 small and big vessels still lying in the navigational channels of the port with a total expenditure of Tk 25 crore including Tk 20 crore Dutch assistance, reports BSS.

## Yangon steps up repression, dissident leader says Myanmar attack on BDR post bid to divert world attention

From Abdul Monayem Khan

COX'S BAZAR, Jan 18: A dissident Myanmar student leader said that the December 21 attack on the BDR outpost was made to divert world attention from the armed resistance to the ruling military junta continuing inside Myanmar.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star Friday, Mrat Kyaw, General Secretary of the Arakan Unit of the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), said that the Lunthin border guards attacked the Rejupara BDR post

December 21 in an effort to divert attention from its desperate internal situation. The attack was also a trick to create pressure on world conscience to sympathise the ongoing quest for democracy in Myanmar, he said.

A student of philosophy at Yangon University, Kyaw fled to this seaside resort town last week to escape repression by the State Law and Order Restoration Committee (SLORC).

Myanmar border security forces in a cross-border swoop

on the BDR outpost December 21 killed two Bangladeshi citizens and injured another 22. They also looted several weapons and a huge quantity of ammunition from the camp.

"The whole of Burma Myanmar is a sea of unrest and turmoil today, the morale of the democratic forces has increased hundredfold after Aung San Suu Kyi won the Nobel Peace prize last year," the ABSDF leader said describing the prevailing political situation in Myanmar.

He said that the democratic

political activities opposed to the SLORC were preparing in several parts of the country to launch an armed struggle.

"We are preparing for an armed struggle against the military junta to wrest democracy," Kyaw said adding that the recent rise in Myanmar's military activities in the frontier areas aimed at subduing the aspiration for democracy.

The ABSDF General Secretary said "in addition to the Muslim Rohingya community, Buddhist Rakhain and

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### Bishwa Ijtema begins

Hundreds of thousands of Muslim devotees from home and abroad continued surge along the banks of the river Turag throughout the day to join the Bishwa Ijtema that began in Tongi after the Fajr prayers Saturday, reports BSS.

A divine atmosphere pervaded over the entire area as thousands in total submission enthralled "Allah" and La ilaha illallah by devotees of various ages using all kinds of transport, had been pouring on into the Ijtema site on the east bank of the river, 25 kms from Dhaka, for the last few days. Many had even trekked to the Ijtema ground from remote corners of the country as well as foreign lands.

The Tablig-e-Jamat, the organiser of the three-day religious meet, the largest in the region for the world Muslims, has divided the whole Ijtema site of 700-acre into 21 equal "khittas" (divisions) to accommodate at least seven lakh devotees from nearly 50 countries. The khittas are being administered by respective leaders for the convenience of the devotees.

The organiser and other socio-religious-cultural organisations and Tongi Poursabha here made extensive arrangements providing marketing, sanitary, medicare, water, electricity and, above all, security facilities in the area. Special facilities are also provided for the foreign devotees. Eminent Islamic scholars and thinkers of renown will deliver holy "bayans", discursive, throughout the three days for the devotees.

Devotees from the United States and United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Pakistan, India, Jordan, Libya, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Sudan, Chad, Ethiopia, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Malaysia, Fiji, Australia, Yemen and Turkey already arrived to join the Ijtema, while more are expected by today.

Bangladesh Railway placed special trains for the smooth transportation of the devotees to Tongi station since Thursday last. All inter-city train services, except the Mahanagar Express, stop at Tongi railway station.

### Polytec teachers to observe strike today

By DU Correspondent

The Bangladesh Polytechnic Shikkhak Samity (BPSS) will observe a day-long strike today to press home its 10-point charter of demand.

The BPSS will go for an indefinite period strike from January 25 if their demands were not met by January 24.

The Programme was announced earlier at a teacher-representative meeting on December 24.



Amused children try to get a measure of the straw rooster, the symbol of a chairman candidate of a union in Srinagar upazila. —Star photo

## Non-govt teachers begin strike

By DU Correspondent

Teachers and employees of all non-government schools, colleges and madrasas in the country began their scheduled indefinite strike yesterday (Saturday) to press home their 15-point charter of demands.

The strike call was given by the Bangladesh Federation of Teachers' Associations (BFTAs) at a press conference at the National Press Club last Thursday.

BFTA leaders told The Daily Star that no untoward incident took place during the strike.

The BFTA leaders added that scattered procession were brought out and rallies held in different parts of the country in support of the strike.

No classes were held in any non-government schools, colleges and madrasas, the BFTA mentioned.

However, presence of students at the government institutions was thin.

The government institutions were open as their teachers demands were fulfilled, the BFTA said.

The BFTA leaders also added that the government teachers and employees supported their indefinite strike.

The Bangladesh Teachers' Association (BTA), the Bangladesh University College Teachers' Association (BUCTA), Bangladesh Assistant Teachers' Association also expressed their solidarity with the BFTA strike.

However, the BFTA press conference mentioned that admissions and election duties.

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## 'Authorities should set up handloom bank'

By Sohel Manzur

The Bangladesh Handloom Board has suggested that the government set up a handloom bank to salvage the handloom industry employing about 60 lakh people from the deep crisis, a highly placed source of the board said.

The Handloom Board had recently prepared a report on the problems of the industry with some recommendations.

The report identified the abnormal price hike of the yarn, non-availability of working capital and the problem of marketing as the most serious problems for the weavers and the handloom industry as well.

Other problems include non-availability dyes chemicals and weaving materials, alleged sale of duty-free clothes by the garment industry owners, ex-

ploitation of the weavers by the middlemen in various phases of production frequent smuggling of Indian yarns and clothes, organisational weakness of the weavers, lack of adequate service to weavers by the handloom board and limitations of the handloom board in providing suggestions, information, and financial and technical assistance.

The report also suggests the setting up of five more cotton mills to meet the needs of yarns, the marketing of which will be vested with the weavers' association, fixation of 50 per cent of total yarn produced by the Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTC) for the Bangladesh Handloom Board (BHB) as sale  
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## Local Left leans towards NGOs

By Nurul Kabir

A joint committee of some NGO (non government organisation) personalities and left leaning political leaders is likely to be formed soon to combat different state policies which they consider go against people's interest, NGO sources said.

According to the sources, this committee will launch social movements at both the regional and national levels to make majority of the people aware of the inherent limitations of the traditional government policies concerning development in agriculture and industrial sectors as well as in the fields of empowerment of women and environment protection.

Apart from this, the committee will present policies alternative to the government ones, sources added.

The initiators of this move are known to be, among others, Ali Ahmed Ziauddin of Ojka Prakaria, Saiful Haque of Workers Party, Majid Malik of ACFOOD (Asian Cultural Forum on Development), and Mahiuddin of CDL (Community Development Library).

According to sources, they have already communicated their ideas to a number of left leaning political parties especially the components of five party combined and the Patriotic Democratic Front

(PDF). Most of them are learnt to have, meanwhile, entertained the concept.

A full-fledged committee is expected to be announced by the third week of the next month.

The committee will work out its objectives in the light of the Minamata Declaration, adopted by the international conference of more than one hundred anti-imperialist social and political organisations held in Japan in 1989.

The Minamata Declaration maintained that although the slogan at the beginning of the 20th century had been 'progress but the cry at the end of 20th century is survival'. It also maintained that, for the poor of the Third World, both development and democracy had become 'dirty words' because, 'in reality they have come to mean impoverishment and disempowerment'.

The declaration said that all sorts of decisions were made by 'fewer and fewer', adding, 'economic decisions are made by big conglomerates, political decisions by the powerful in the capitals of the big powers'.

Small communities and even small and poor nations have become less autonomous at the end of the 20th century and they are subordinated by world markets, World Bank  
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## Textiles our thrust sector: Khaleda

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Saturday declared the textile industry as the "thrust sector" of the economy, saying its modernisation and expansion would get priority over others, reports BSS.

Inaugurating the textiles exhibition, 1992 at Bijoy Sharani in city, Begum Zia said "all-out efforts will be undertaken to upgrade the quality of local fabrics for supplying the same to the ready-made garment sub-sector."

She said foreign investment would be encouraged in this sector.

State Minister for Textiles, Major (Retd) Abdul Mannan attended the function as the special guest.

The inaugural function was

also addressed, among others, by AZM Shamsul Alam, Secretary Textiles Ministry and Anwarul Islam, Joint Secretary of the Textiles Ministry.

Ministers, members of parliament, senior officials and the elite of the city were also present.

Referring to the export in the garment sub-sector, the Prime Minister said the growth rate of this sub-sector was well above 600 per cent. Quoting foreign economists and industrial experts, Begum Zia said Bangladesh would be converted into the economic power-house of the South Asia if it could attain the same growth rate in all other sectors.  
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### Hamidul Huq Chowdhury dead

By Staff Correspondent

Hamidul Huq Chowdhury, a pioneer in the Bangladesh newspaper industry and an eminent lawyer and politician, died at the Combined Military Hospital (CMH) at 8:30 am Saturday. He was 92.

Chairman of the Al-Helal Printing and Publishing Company Limited, publishers of the Bangladesh Observer and the Weekly Chitral, he was admitted to hospital January 5 following an attack of bronchial pneumonia and other old age ailments.

His body was taken to his residence, Nirala Bhuvan, at Green Road around 11:30 am.  
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### Riyadh keen to recruit workers

RIYADH, Jan 18: Saudi Arabia has expressed keenness to recruit more Bangladeshi workers to the Kingdom, reports BSS.

It was stated by the Saudi Minister for Labour and Social Welfare, Mohammad Ali Al-Fayez, at a meeting here today.  
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### Gunshots on DU campus

By Staff Correspondent

Several gunshots were heard on the Dhaka University campus last midnight, students told The Daily Star over telephone.

Sounds of gunshots came from Surjansen-Jasimuddin hall area, they said.