



Hundreds of vehicles stranded at two ferryghats

By Staff Correspondent

Traffic congestion at Aricha and Kazirhat ferry ghats has severely disrupted movement of vehicles for the last two days.

The congestion was created following an indefinite strike called a few days ago by transport owners in protest against alleged illegal toll collection on the Tangail-Jamuna Bridge route. As a result, vehicles from capital Dhaka have been using Aricha-Kazirhat route to reach northern districts.

Although the strike was called off at around 3pm yesterday, about 600 vehicles, mostly trucks with perishables, have been stranded at Aricha ferry ghat while about 300 trucks at Kazirhat ferry ghat last night. However, there was no traffic congestion at Daulatdia ferry ghat.

When contacted, officials of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC)

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Opposition to observe Protest Day Mar 13

By Staff Correspondent

The BNP-led opposition alliance will observe countrywide "Protest and Demonstration Day" on March 13 because of what they said indiscriminate arrest of its leaders and activists across the country, including Jessor.

It was announced at a meeting of the liaison committee yesterday with BNP vice chairman M Shamsul Islam in the chair. The meeting also demanded immediate release of arrested leaders and activists and withdrawal of "false" cases. The meeting was held at 29

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March 11

Azan	Jamaat
Fajr 5:30	5:35
Zohr 12:45	1:15
Asr 4:30	4:35
Magrib 6:10	6:13
Esha 7:25	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation

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Paris meet to take note of situation

## Donors deeply disturbed by political intolerance, violence

The donor countries and agencies have expressed grave concern over the "increasing political confrontation and polarisation that is jeopardizing prospects for the country's economic growth and development," reports UNB.

A statement of Bangladesh's Development Partners, delivered Tuesday to the President, the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, called for resolving political differences peacefully in forums like Parliament, "not through hartals and violent confrontation."

Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, USA, Asian Development Bank, Commission of the European Communities and the World Bank are grouped in the Bangladesh Development Partners.

The statement released to the press yesterday said:

"Bangladesh's development partners are deeply disturbed by the increasing political confrontation and polarisation that is jeopardizing prospects for the country's economic growth and development.

"Political instability in Bangladesh is inflicting a serious cost on the nation. It has slowed down the economy, disrupted the flow of Bangladesh exports, and prevented Bangladeshis from earning a livelihood for their families and themselves. It exacerbates law and order problems. It discourages domestic and foreign investors.

"The real challenge to Bangladesh is the elimination of poverty. This requires a whole range of reforms in areas such as the financial and legal sectors, the public sector, state-

operated enterprises and in the development of broad-based and effective healthcare and education facilities. With such reform and developments, Bangladesh will move forward.

"Continuing political instability slows reform and seriously diminishes prospects for reducing poverty. It also adversely offsets aid flows aimed at poverty alleviation. These issues, and many others, will be examined at the Bangladesh Development Forum meeting in Paris April 19-20.

"Good governance depends

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Asma and her mother are all smiles at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University hospital. — Star photo

## A new lease of life for Asma

By Naimul Haq

Eighteen-year-old Asma, who was once counting her days at a city hospital, is now looking forward to start a new life.

"I never imagined this day would ever come in my life," the all smiles young girl told this correspondent at the Bangabandhu Medical University Hospital (BMUH) yesterday, noting that she might be released today.

"Isn't it wonderful? I will be back home and return to normal life again," she said in excitement, her face no longer looking pale as before.

"I am sick and tired of hospital life. At one stage, I feared that I might not survive. But now all those apprehensions are gone. I am looking forward with hope. The long ordeal is over. I am cured. I am comforted by the thought that I shall be,

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