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6 days to the
3rd Millennium

POUSH 11, 1406 BS

RAMADAN 16, 1420 HIJRI

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Biswa Ijtema from Jan 29

GAZIPUR, Dec 24: A number of decisions have been taken for smooth holding of the three-day Biswa Ijtema, scheduled to begin on January 29, reports UNB.

Biswa Ijtema, the annual congregation of Muslims organised by Tabligh Jamaat, will be held on the bank of river Turag.

The decisions include, construction of a footbridge at Station Road over Dhaka-Mymensingh highway, three Bailey bridges over the Turag, two temporary helipads and installation of loudhailers from Tongi College gate to Azampur in Uttara.

Besides, arrangement will be made for special train services to and from Tongi during the Ijtema to facilitate the movement of Muslim devotees.

The decisions were taken at a meeting held at the Ijtema ground Thursday with Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Ministry Advocate Rahmat Ali in the chair.

Dhaka Divisional Commissioner Mohammad Nizamuddin, Gazipur DC Shamsul Haq, SP Farrukh Ahmed, Tongi Pourashava Chairman A D V Azmatullah Khan, Ijtema organisers Kazi Mozammel Haq and Abu Taleb, among others, attended the meeting.

Govt urges CEC to defer polls to 3 hill district councils

The government has requested the Election Commission (EC) to defer elections to the three hill district councils for six months to help review and update the existing voters' list in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

"We need at least another six months to review and update the voters' list in the region for holding the elections in line with the 1997 peace agreement," CHT Affairs Minister Kalparajan Chakma told BSS.

The tenure of the existing hill district councils, constituted in 1997, would be expired on December 31 this year.

The councils were constituted in Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban districts under a new administrative system in 1989 with a three-year tenure. Since then the councils were working without any elections.

The government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina dissolved the earlier councils in 1997 and formed new ones for a two-year tenure.

Under the landmark CHT peace accord, a new voters' list is needed for holding elections to the council.

CHT Affairs Ministry officials said they sought the election commission permission following the consent of the Prime Minister's Office.

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Sehri, Iftar timings

Ramadan	Dec	Sehri	Iftar
16	25	—	5:22
17	26	5:14	5:23
18	27	5:14	5:23

Prayer Timings

December 25

Azan Jamaat

Fajr 5:14 5:22
Johar 12:45 1:15
Asr 3:42 4:00
Magrib 5:21 5:28
Tarabi 7:15 7:45

Source: Islamic Foundation

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The vandalised venue of the convention arranged for launching the Krishak Sramik Jatiya League by Kader Siddique, BU, on the premises of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh (IEB) in the city yesterday. (Right) One of the armed goons advancing towards the podium. — Star photo

Hijacked Indian plane heads for Dubai

Four of the 200 on board 'killed'

LAHORE, Pakistan, Dec 24: Four passengers were reported shot dead by five suspected Indian militants who today hijacked an Indian Airlines plane from Nepal, reports AFP.

The Airbus 300 was headed for the Gulf emirate of Dubai, Indian officials said late Friday, after refuelling stops in India and Pakistan.

The plane's captain told Indian air officials the heavily armed hijackers killed four of the nearly 200 people on board during an argument as the plane refuelled for barely five minutes in the northern Indian city of Amritsar.

Indian officials said the hijackers were armed with dynamite, AK-47 assault rifles, pistols and hand grenades.

The aircraft then flew the short distance across the Pakistan border to the city of Lahore, where it landed despite an initial refusal of permission and in the absence of runway lights.

The government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina dissolved the earlier councils in 1997 and formed new ones for a two-year tenure.

Under the landmark CHT peace accord, a new voters' list is needed for holding elections to the council.

CHT Affairs Ministry officials said they sought the election commission permission following the consent of the Prime Minister's Office.

ZIA asked to refuse landing plea

The control tower at Zia International Airport has been asked not to allow any hijacked plane to land, reports UNB.

Sources said the top level directive was issued today (Friday) receiving a news that an airbus of Indian Airlines en

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After refuelling, it again took off. Indian Civil Aviation Secretary Ravindra Gupta said shortly afterwards: "The plane is on its way to Dubai tonight."

At the same time, the Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) reported the plane had entered Afghani airspace but the ruling Taliban authorities had not given permission to land.

Kabul, where the airliner

was at one time said to be heading after taking off from Lahore in Pakistan, has no night landing facilities for wide-bodied jets.

AIP said the pilot had contacted the control tower at Kabul airport and requested permission to land. "The authorities have not yet conceded the request," it said, quoting Taliban officials.

More than six hours after the Christmas Eve flight 814 from Kathmandu was commandeered as it entered Indian airspace, there was still no word from the hijackers or details on their demands.

All communications were being made through the captain. Indian air officials reported the hijackers spoke Hindi, an official Indian language generally spoken in the north of the country.

Other official sources in Pakistan said the hijackers were believed to be Indian

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Central leaders of the four

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CHITTAGONG, Dec 24: The four-party alliance has called a two-day hartal in greater Chittagong from January 2 to resist the 'farical' election of Chittagong City Corporation, reports UNB.

The announcement came from a meeting of the alliance's liaison committee held today at the office of City Jamaat-e-Islami with City Jatiya Party President Muhammad Zahangir Alam in the chair.

Presidents of City BNP Meer Mohammad Nasiruddin, Ameer of City Jamaat Moulana Mohammad Abu Taher, secretary of Islami Oikya Jote Advocate Ahmed Sagir and general secretary of City BNP Dastagir Chowdhury attended the meeting.

The liaison committee decided to hold a mass rally at Pahartoli Alankar Square on December 31. They will bring out black-flag processions from Badarhat Square on December 29, from EPZ Square on December 30 and from Laldighi Maidan on January 1.

Central leaders of the four

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