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**Lovers on a stroll end up in lockup**

18 nabbed in Dhanmondi just for walking the streets during hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Aklina (not her real name) was utterly dumbstricken being suddenly seized and shoved into a police van without any apparent reason. "They [police] dragged me onto the van before I could even grasp of what was happening and why," she said depicting the absurdity of the incident.

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**JS SESSION Stormy debate on price hike likely today**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Parliament is likely to witness today a stormy debate on the price hike of essentials as the BNP-led ruling coalition and the opposition parties

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Sehri-Iftar			
Ramadan	Nov	Sehri	Iftar
20	4		5-21
21	5	4-45	5-21

Prayer Timing		
November 4		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-45	4-51
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-21	5-27
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation



A police van whisks away pedestrians as they were strolling on the streets near Dhanmondi Lake in the capital during yesterday's eight-hour countrywide shutdown.

PHOTO: STAR

**Bid to reintroduce lottery in tender bidding rejected**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday shot down a proposal by some ministries, including the communications ministry, for reintroduction of the options of lottery and negotiations in tender bidding in the proposed amendment to the Public Procurement Regulations.

The rejection came at a high-level meeting on bringing changes to the regulations in a bid to expedite implementation of different projects.

Meeting sources said the finance minister cited corruption in the lottery and negotiations system in

the past that led to sub-standard work as the reason for the rejection.

The meeting, however, decided in principle that the timelimit in cases of multiple dropping of tenders could be relaxed. It also decided on some other amendments pending the prime minister's approval and the donors' consent.

"Ministers were having trouble accelerating implementation of [the projects in compliance with the regulations]. We have decided to

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PHOTO: STAR

Workers sift through the rubble after a blaze at Mayakatra Wholesale Readymade Garments Market near Sadarghat launch terminal in Dhaka burnt down some 20 shops early yesterday.

**Quorum crisis hits JS session again**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday had a dull workday dogged by quorum crises and absence of the main opposition Awami League (AL) lawmakers.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, also the leader of the House, and most of her cabinet colleagues skipped the day's proceedings and the weekly question-answer session for the prime minister was postponed without prior announcement.

The AL lawmakers preferred enforcing an eight-hour hartal and participating in the Jail Killing Day

programmes to attending the legislative business, said Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdul Hamid.

He said the party deputies would join today's proceedings starting at 1:30pm.

The House was scheduled to sit at 1:30pm but sat at 1:55pm with Speaker Jamir Uddin Sircar in the chair. It had 54 members at the time, needing five more to make a quorum.

The parliament suffered quorum crises on several occasions during the two-hour sitting, as some lawmakers left the House after being

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**Ahmadiyyas ask govt to protect mosques from bigots' capture**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat, Bangladesh (AMJB) yesterday appealed to the government to protect its mosques and complexes across the country, as religious bigots threatened to capture three mosques in Dhaka, Narayanganj and Brahmanbaria tomorrow.

It also urged the government to free four of their mosques in Brahmanbaria from anti-

Ahmadiyya captors.

The AMJB leaders reiterated their demand of rescinding a ban on the Ahmadiyya publications, which they said, encouraged the bigots to mount torture on the Ahmadiyya community across the country.

"Return us the mosques we built with our hard-earned money and let us practice our religion in peace," Abdul Awal Khan Chowdhury, Ahmadiyya missionary, pleaded at a

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**CHEHLUM**



Relatives and friends of our beloved mother, late Begum Razia Ahmad, wife of late Ambassador Mirza Rashid Ahmad, are requested to attend a Milad Mehfil at her residence on Friday November 5th at 2:30 pm (between Zohr and Asr prayers).

Prayers are requested for her departed soul.

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