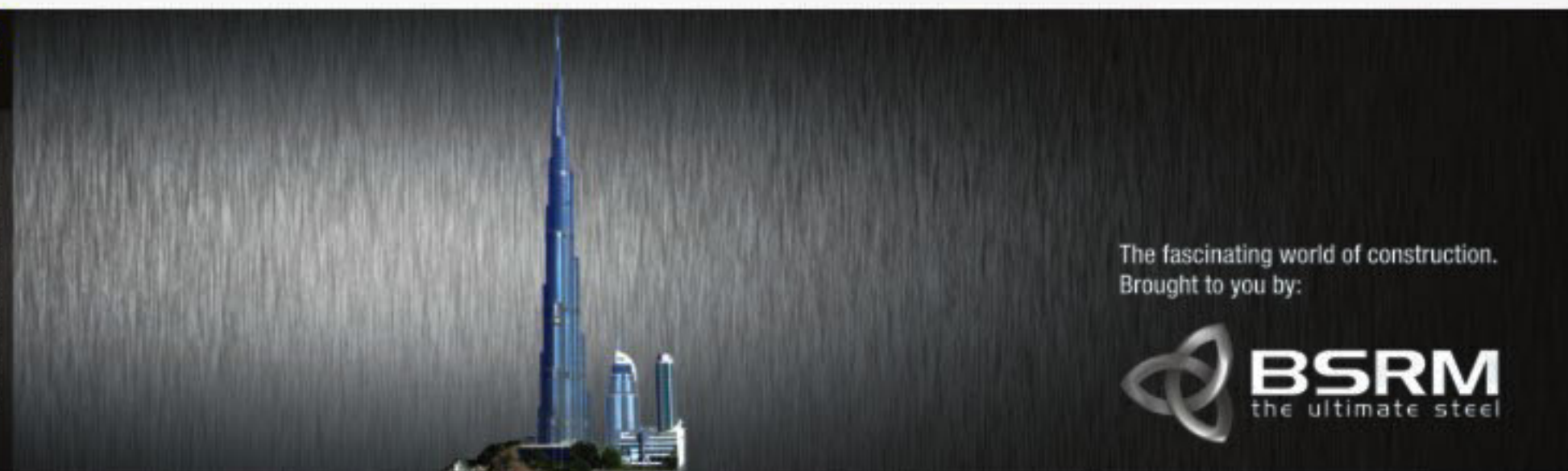


Did you know?

Burj Dubai, a supertall skyscraper under construction in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, is the tallest man-made structure ever built, at 818 meters. The tower is expected to be completed and ready for occupancy in 2010.



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# Country reels from cold, fog

Met office forecasts another cold wave this month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With the people suffering the sting of a mild cold wave for last one week, Met office predicts another bout of severe cold wave would sweep the country in the second half of January.

The poor in the cold-struck areas are in dire need of warm clothes, while many are also suffering from different cold related diseases, according to reports dispatched by our correspondents from across the country.

"There will be no respite from the mild cold wave as this may continue for a few more days," said SM Kamrul Hasan, a weatherman at the Met office, yesterday.

The mild cold wave is now sweeping over Rajshahi division and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia, Tangail, Sitakunda and Srimangal, he said, adding, "There is a possibility of severe cold wave in some parts of the country in the second half of the month."

During the second half of January temperature some regions may go down below 6 degrees Celsius.

Hasan said the temperature people are experiencing is nothing unusual in the month of January, but the shivering cold is the result of fog and northwesterly wind.

According to the Met office, the lowest temperature was recorded in Srimangal at 8 degrees Celsius yesterday, while the people of Dhaka experienced 11.2 degrees Celsius.

Among the areas with low temperature were Tangail with 9.8 degrees Celsius, Jessore 9.4 and Chuadanga with 9.2 degrees Celsius.

The Met office said the lowest temperature of the season was recorded at 6 degrees Celsius in Jessore and Ishwardi on December 26 and 29 respectively.

Thousands of people are suffering due to a lack of warm clothes in Meherpur where the government has distributed only 1,000 blankets against a huge demand, reports a correspondent from Meherpur.

Six people died of cold related diseases in the last one week, while 200 others were admitted to different health complexes and hospitals in nine upazilas, writes our Sirajganj correspondent.

Hundreds of poor people are suffering there due to a lack of warm clothes.

Deputy Commissioner Md Humayun Kabir said he has not got any information of death from cold yet. He however said they have already distributed 5,000 blankets to the poor

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5



A cold wave has been sweeping through various parts of the country for the last few days. But the labourers at Mohammadpur in the city toil for a living amid morning chill yesterday. PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

## PM not going to Kolkata for security reasons

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's planned trip to West Bengal during her four-day visit to India has been cancelled on security grounds.

A source at the foreign ministry last night confirmed that Hasina's visit to West Bengal has been cancelled upon a request from the Indian side reportedly citing security reasons.

The source said newly appointed Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## Law Commission left out of focus Govt yet to respond to its 2-year reform plan

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

Although the law commission has not received any government response to its two-year scheme for legal and judicial reforms, it started working as per the plan from yesterday.

Commission Chairman Justice MA Rashid told The Daily Star that despite some shortcomings the commission has started working according to the work plan with a view to modernising the legal system and updating some old laws.

The reconstituted body of the commission drew up the 15-point work plan on December 17 last year. The plan includes some reforms of the laws on the family affairs, the police, the prisons and the contempt of courts.

Earlier in September 13, the commission sent a draft of

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## SSC exams start Feb 1

PM opens website with textbook contents today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations will begin simultaneously from February 1 across the country with the participation of about 12 lakh examinees.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid made the announcement yesterday at a press briefing at the secretariat.

The minister also warned against resorting to copying during the exams, saying zero

SEE PAGE 7 COL 1

## Upazila chairmen warn of agitation

UNB, Dhaka

Upazila chairmen and vice-chairmen yesterday asked the government to meet their 10-point demand by January 20 and otherwise threatened to announce tough action programme from a rally on January 21.

Saturia upazila Chairman Adv Abdul Majid Fotu announced the decision at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity. The 10-point demand includes establishment of Upazila Parishad as autonomous body by amending relevant rules, filling up of one-third reserved posts for women immediately to make the Upazila Parishad effective, and removal of obstacles to exercising responsibility and power of upazila chairman as chief executive and exercising power by vice-chairman in absence of chairman.

Abdul Majid said the ministers had assured them that the Upazila Parishad would be made effective by December last year but the circular issued on December 30 was nothing but a jugglery of facts.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## AL allies feeling unimportant

14-party meet tomorrow first time after polls victory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Awami League sits with its allies in 14-party grand alliance tomorrow for the first time since the alliance assumed power early January last year.

Sources said the AL had no meetings with its allies in between and this has allowed rifts to appear among the alliance partners.

The AL will also hold its Central Working Committee meeting today to discuss the latest socio-political situation in the country. Both the meetings will be held at the prime minister's official residence Jamuna with her in the chair.

The state of the government, its performance and the role of the alliance partners in the government would be discussed at the 14-party alliance meeting. The meeting is going to be held a

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7



## UK minister arrives today

UNB, Dhaka

John Denham MP, secretary of state for communities and local government of UK, arrives here today on a three-day visit.

During his visit, the UK minister is expected to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and the ministers for Local

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Zardari at odds with army chief

Move on to remove differences

ANI, Islamabad/Karachi

In a bid to remove 'misunderstanding' between President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and Defence Minister Chaudhry Ahmad Mukhtar are likely to arrange a meeting between the two.

According to insiders, Gilani and Mukhtar are working together to resolve issues before the expected visit of top US officials, General Stanley McChrystal and Defence Secretary Robert Gates.

Both the American officials are expected to visit Pakistan later this month.

Gilani has informed Zardari that there are "no more misunderstandings between the civil and military leadership on the Kerry-Lugar Bill" and all the concerns expressed by the Pakistan Army in October last on the Bill will be addressed by the US.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## AUG 21 FURTHER PROBE CID seeks 4 more months for report

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday filed an application with a Dhaka court seeking four more months to submit the probe report on one of the two August 21 grenade attack cases.

ANM Bashir Ullah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court set January 4 for hearing the appeal. Investigation officer (IO) of the case filed the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

**OnlinePoll** ✓  
Do you support induction of Salam Pintu who is accused in August 21 grenade attack case, in BNP's central executive committee?

Yes (15.8%)  
 No (81.1%)  
 No Comments (3.1%)

**Total votes: 855**

**TODAY'S POLL**  
Do you think empowering all officers-in-charge and sub-inspectors of 42 police stations in the capital to file cases against traffic rule violators will help control the huge number of vehicles?

Please cast your vote at [www.thedailystar.net](http://www.thedailystar.net)

**Prayer Timing**

| January 4 |       |        |
|-----------|-------|--------|
|           | Azan  | Jamaat |
| Fajr      | 5-30  | 6-05   |
| Zohr      | 12-45 | 1-15   |
| Asr       | 4-00  | 4-15   |
| Maghrib   | 5-30  | 5-35   |
| Esha      | 7-00  | 7-30   |

Source: Islamic Foundation

## WE MOURN



The Chairman, Board of Directors and all Colleagues of Spectra Group of Companies mourn the premature sad demise of Company's Director Major (Retd.) S.A.S. Sahel due to massive cardiac arrest on Sunday at 11.30am, 3rd January 2010 at CMH, Dhaka. (Innalillah.....rajeun)

Spectra Group will always recall the highest dedication, meritorious services provided by late Maj. (Retd.) Sahel to the development of the company.

Spectra Group announces 3-day mourning as mark of respect to Major (Retd.) Sahel's departed soul. A doa mahfil has been arranged at Group's corporate office (House # 17, Road # 106, Gulshan-2, opposite to Manarat International University) after Asar prayer on Friday, 08 January 2010.

All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to attend the doa mahfil.



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