

Did you know? The Sydney Opera House, a multi-venue performing arts centre in Sydney, Australia, was conceived and largely built by Danish architect Jørn Utzon, who, in 2003, received the Pritzker Prize, architecture's highest honor. It is one of the 20th century's most distinctive buildings and one of the most famous performing arts centers in the world.



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AL leaders unhappy over essential prices

PM keen on power import, addresses nation tomorrow; AL sits with allies today

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Awami League leaders yesterday expressed disappointment over high price of essentials and asked the commerce minister to take immediate steps.

They criticised Commerce Minister Faruk Khan for failing to do enough to tackle the price hike of essentials, especially rice prices.

At a meeting of the AL Central Working Committee, the highest decision-making body of the party, the AL leaders appreciated Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury and Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

They lauded Matia, also AL presidium member, for reducing the prices of agricultural inputs and making fertiliser available to farmers and Nahid for distributing textbooks among students of the country on time.

On price hike of essentials, a number of leaders suggested that the commerce minister should strengthen market monitoring to keep prices of essentials within the reach of people, which the AL pledged before the elections.

The meeting was held at Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's official residence Jamuna with her in the chair.

The prime minister asked the commerce minister to make sure that price of coarse rice does not rise under any circumstances.

Expressing satisfaction over current law and order, AL leaders suggested that the home minister should further improve the situation.

They also laid emphasis on ending the power crisis.

They urged ministers not to say anything contrary to the AL's stance on crossfire. The AL leaders observed that contradictory statements from different ministers about crossfire-related deaths tarnished the image of the government and the party.

They suggested that the ministers concerned avoid being vague and speak the truth and launch an enquiry against any extrajudicial killing.

They also asked the cabinet members to talk to the media cautiously so that the government does not have to take the back foot.

The AL Central Working Committee members pointed out that if the government failed to address price hike of essentials, power and law and order issues properly then people would lose confidence in the government.

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A homeless child endures severe chill under open sky amid cold wave in the city yesterday morning. The photo was taken in front of the Shiksha Bhaban, Dhaka around 8:00am. PHOTO: SHAFIQU ALAM

BURIGANGA CLEANING TOMORROW Dumping poses a big problem

MORSHED ALI KHAN

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority is planning to remove 3 lakh cubic metres of sludge and solid waste from the Buriganga riverbed through its engineers do not know how they would dispose of this huge volume of rubbish.

Moreover, questions have been raised about the equipment and methods to be used for this unprecedented cleaning operation and indeed what the benefit of this project would be when tonnes of waste are dumped into the river every day.

The cleaning of the Buriganga riverbed starts January 6 to continue for an unspecified period over an area of one kilometre on both sides of the Second Buriganga Bridge. The river is on an average 30 feet deep in this area. BIWTA sources said they have already selected, through tender, a number of private companies to undertake the job. The estimated cost of the cleaning operation under this pilot project stands at around Tk 6 crore.

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CTG ARMS HAUL Probe gets further extension

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Criminal Investigation Department yesterday got the time extended further to continue the investigation into the sensational Chittagong 10-truck arms haul case till March 22.

CID has to submit a report on the findings on March 22 after the 78-day extension.

Chittagong Metropolitan Sessions Judge Bhabani Prasad Singha passed the order upon a prayer for 90 days' extension by CID on Sunday, a day before the end of the previously extended time.

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Unite on climate issues, at least Khaleda pledges 11 steps to protect environment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday urged the government to create a national consensus on protecting the environment, and demanded enactment of relevant laws and stringent neutral implementation of those.

"Environment is not any party's unilateral agenda, rather it is linked to our national existence. So I am urging to form national unity at least on this issue. We are ready to provide all sorts of cooperation," she said while addressing the closing session of the 3rd International Environmental Conference in Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

She declared a charter of 11-point pledges including banning of hill cutting, reclamation of the rivers Buriganga, Turag, Balu, and Shitalakkhya by removal of illegal structures, and establishment of an effective circular river way around the capital, if her

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Khaleda's birthday case sent to CJ

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday sent a case to the chief justice for a decision regarding celebration of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's birth anniversary on August 15.

The HC bench of Justice Md Momtajuddin Ahmed, however, rejected a petition filed by Khaleda apprehending that she will not get justice from the bench and sent the case to the chief justice for a decision.

Advocate Md Sohrwardy had filed a case on August 20, 1997, with an assistant judge's

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Dense fog disrupts communications

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A blanket of dense fog and sharp fall in temperatures in most parts of the country disrupted road, river and air communications yesterday.

Thousands of passengers waited hours to travel on ferry and launch services on Paturia-Doulatdia, Mawa-Kewrakandi and Chandpur-Shariatpur routes.

Seven flights at Zia International Airport were delayed by 60 to 90 minutes yesterday morning due to a lack of visibility caused by the fog, said ZIA sources.

According to the Met Office, Jessore experienced the lowest nation-wide temperature of 8.6 degrees Celsius yesterday while Dhaka experienced a low of 11 degrees.

Temperatures below ten degrees were recorded by the Met Office in Chuadanga, Dinajpur, Saidpur, Rangpur, Ishwardi, Srimangal and Tangail.

Assistant Meteorologist Rasheduzzaman said that from tomorrow temperatures in Dhaka would begin to rise and the fog would start clearing.

However it is predicted that dense fog will cover most other parts of the country for the next four to five days.

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Bangladesh Chhatra League brings out massive processions to celebrate its 62nd founding anniversary causing huge gridlocks in the capital yesterday. The photo was taken near Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh around 1:30pm. PHOTO: STAR

OnlinePoll

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?

Yes (58.5%)
No (37.3%)
No Comments (4.2%)

Total votes: 742

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the authorities concerned will follow up on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's statement that there will be no more unplanned housing in Dhaka?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

More checks on US-bound flights Bangladesh not among 14 'terror-linked' nations

AFF, AP, Washington/ London

Passengers flying to the United States faced tougher security measures yesterday after the US government announced that people travelling from or via 14 "terror-linked" nations will now have to undergo mandatory enhanced screening.

Airline passengers bound for the United States faced a hodgepodge of heightened security measures across Europe Monday, but airports did not appear to be following a US request for increased screening of passengers from 14 countries.

US officials in Washington said the new security measures would be implemented Monday but there were few visible changes on the ground in Europe, which has thousands of passengers on hundreds of daily flights to the United States.

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Jam worsens for 3 reasons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Movement of a large number of VIPs, Chhatra League processions and absence of adequate police officials across the city yesterday caused the worst traffic condition of the last few days.

Hundreds of vehicles had to remain stranded in the jam-packed condition for hours as

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Prayer Timing

January 5

| | 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

CONGRATULATIONS



Heartiest congratulations to Sir Fazle Hasan Abed on being honored with Knighthood by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for his services in tackling poverty and empowering the poor.

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