

Did you know?

The CN Tower in Toronto, Canada, is a communications and observation tower standing 555 meters tall. While still under construction in 1975, it became the tallest free-standing structure on land in the world. On September 12, 2007, after holding the record for 31 years, the CN Tower was surpassed in height by the still-under-construction Burj Dubai.



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Preparations for Ijtema in full swing

WASIM BIN HABIB

The preparation for Biswa Ijtema, the second largest congregation of Muslims next to hajj, scheduled to start on January 22, is going on in full swing with thousands of volunteers working round the clock to prepare its ground on 150 acres of land to accommodate the devotees.

The three-day congregation is expected to witness around 15-20 lakh devotees from across the world, said the organisers. The Tablig-e-Jamaat has been organising the gathering since 1976.

Over 15,000 foreign devotees from different Muslim countries are likely to join the congregation on the bank of river Turag at Tongi, some 20 km north of capital Dhaka. Last year, around 20 lakh devotees including 10,500 foreign devotees from 105 Muslim countries had joined the gathering.

The event, also called the world congregation of Muslims, mainly focuses on prayers and meditation seeking divine blessing from Allah.

The three-day programme includes delivering boyans (sermons) on the fundamental issues of Tablig, prayer for



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

A large canopy has been set up on the bank of Turag at Tongi for devotees to attend Biswa Ijtema, the second largest congregation of Muslims next to hajj, scheduled to begin on January 22.

SUNDARBANS Indo-Bangla joint forum to protect eco-system

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

India is considering setting up a joint forum with Bangladesh for protecting the ecosystem of the Sundarbans and dealing with issues related to its eco-management.

After a meeting with West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee in Kolkata, Indian Environment and Forest Minister Jairam Ramesh on Wednesday said he has started a dialogue to form a joint forum to protect the biodiversity of the Sundarbans.

A master plan with estimated cost of Rs 200 crore has been placed with the World Bank for the development and integrated coastal management of the Sundarbans in five years, he said.

Ramesh said he is expecting a report from the World Bank by August-September this year.

Meanwhile, the Indian government has sanctioned Rs 9 crore as annual grant for the Sundarbans this year, he added.

The Indian minister yesterday visited the Sundarbans

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AUG 21 ATTACK CASE IDP leader Azizul to be quizzed

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Adviser of Islamic Democratic Party Kazi Azizul Haque will be questioned in connection with the grenade attacks on an Awami League rally on August 21, 2004 for maintaining close relations with some of the alleged attackers.

Azizul was arrested on December 29 and placed on three-day remand for his close relations with leaders of banned Harkatul Jihad Al Islami (Huji), some of who are accused in the August 21 carnage cases, detectives say.

Initially the Detective Branch (DB) of police did not disclose his arrest and remand.

However, documents placed in the court by DB say Azizul was detained from his Zoarsahara house in the capital under section 54 of the Criminal Procedure Code on charge of his links with banned Huji and Hizb-ut Tahir Bangladesh.

"Since he has been maintaining close relations with Huji leaders for long, we suspect he may give important clues to the attacks and perpetrators. We'll appeal to the court for permission

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Chaos at DMCH

Staff, job aspirants attack doctors, students over recruitment process; 15 hurt; treatment hampered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Following a feud over recruitment of class IV employees in Dhaka Medical College Hospital, over 200 class IV employees and job aspirants yesterday attacked some students and doctors of the hospital injuring at least 15 people.

The attacks on the doctors and students created extreme panic and hindered regular activities of the hospital causing huge sufferings to hundreds of patients.

Both the class IV employees and pro-Awami League doctors and students decided to go on strike from Saturday.

Witnesses said the employees chased the doctors' leaders out of the hospital premises.

They alleged that those doctors, who were interfering in the recruitment process, were depriving the employees' recommended aspirants of the jobs.

The employees and aspirants chased pro-Awami League Swadhinata Chikitsok Parishad leaders Moni Lal Ice Litu and Abu Yusuf Faqir when they were entering the hospital around 10:00am.

After the incident around 25 BCL leaders and doctors went to the director's office and demanded punishment to those who attacked the doctors. But as soon as they came out of the office the employees swooped on them. On-duty police rescued the doctors and BCL leaders.

The employees also accused DMCH Director Brig Gen Bazle Quader of illegal interference in the recruitment process and demanded his removal.

Under the banner of "DMCH Doctors and DMC students Songram Parishad" pro-ruling party doctors and BCL leaders also demanded a

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MPs press for power, gas in their areas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League lawmakers in parliament yesterday expressed disappointment over ongoing power and gas crises in their constituencies.

They also demanded immediate steps from the authorities concerned to ease people's sufferings in those areas.

"One year has passed but my constituency is yet to witness any improvement in gas supply," said Akhtaruzzaman Chowdhury, AL lawmaker from Chittagong-12.

In her scripted question, AL lawmaker Sanjida Khanam from Dhaka-4 said the industries in her constituency are reeling from power shortage.

"Kadamtali and Shyampur experience power outage for eight hours every day," the parliamentarian said.

AL lawmaker Shahiduzzaman Sarker and Shaheen Manwara Haq demanded uninterrupted power supply for irrigation in

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Jyoti Basu facing multi-organ failure

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kolkata

Ailing Marxist leader Jyoti Basu is facing to multi-organ failure, said doctors attending him in hospital.

Susruth Banerjee of AMRI Hospital and Basu's personal physician AK Maity, who are in the medical board for Basu, yesterday told journalists here

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Prayer Timing		
January 15		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Juma	12-30	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-36	5-40
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

OnlinePoll ✓

Who would you blame if Bangladesh misses the international deadline to introduce machine-readable passport and machine-readable visa by April 1?

- Present government (50.3%)
- Past governments (48.3%)
- No Comments (1.4%)

Total votes: 1318

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think Bangladesh will benefit from allowing India to use the two ports?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

20 killed in Afghan market bombing

Five US, French soldiers die in attacks

AFP, Kandahar

Twenty people were killed when a suicide bomber blew himself up in a crowded market in a restive province of southern Afghanistan yesterday, an Afghan army general said.

"This was a suicide bomber on foot who detonated himself at the gate of a money exchange market," said General Abdul Hameed, the commander of the Afghan National Army in Uruzgan province.

"Up to now, 20 civilians have been killed and 13 wounded," he said of the attack in the town of Diharawud.

A police officer was also killed in a separate bombing in the province of Helmand to the south of Uruzgan, officials said.

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HC VERDICT Mechanised stone lifting from 3 rivers declared illegal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday declared illegal stone extraction by using excavators and boma machine (machine used for collecting stones) from the bed of three rivers in Sylhet.

Three rivers--Piain, Dwaki and Dhala--are flowing through Goainghat and Companiganj upazilas of the district.

The court also directed the government to immediately stop the use of excavator machines in stone quarries

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JANUARY -14-

We mourn

AB Bank family is deeply saddened by the demise of Mr. Hafizul Islam, former Managing Director of AB Bank (innalillaha.....rajiun). He breathed his last at 4:35 pm on 14th January 2010 at Ibrahim Cardiac Center. One of the senior most bankers of the country, Mr. Hafizul Islam was the first ever Managing Director of AB Bank and joined the team on April 12, 1982. We at AB Bank pray for his departed soul.

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Taliban leader escapes US drone strike

12 militants killed in attack

AFP, AP, Peshawar

Pakistani Taliban leader Hakimullah Mehsud escaped a US drone strike on a militant camp yesterday that killed 12 people, the militia said after reports he may have been among the dead.

The United States has unleashed an unprecedented number of missile attacks by unmanned drones in northwest Pakistan over the last two weeks, including one yesterday that officials said killed 12 alleged militants in what was once a religious school.

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