NEWS

Restriction on cars

traffic congestion.

Indian capital. The court sug-

gested imposition of conges-

tion fee on cars entering certain

parts of the city to reduce severe

cabinet approved a proposal to

buy 255 buses to make the

He criticised the public

Meanwhile, Muhith said the

FROM PAGE 1

streets carrying less than four to five passengers. "You can impose penalties instead of stopping cars," he said. The restriction should be imposed on certain areas, not on all roads, he added.

He cited examples of public transport system more Bangkok, Singapore and the US. effective. The buses will be purchased from Korea at Tk 212 In Singapore, a car with four passengers does not have to pay crore for the state-run congestion charge while in the Bangladesh Road Transport US a car with more than two Corporation. passengers is allowed to use the carpool lane. Bangkok encour-

transport operators saying that ages carpooling too. the way they are running now He suggested that the govcannot be called public transernment introduces luxury airport. "A few people are creating conditioned bus services, like anarchy in the sector and loot-Bangkok has done, to get the ing public money," he said. wealthy more interested in

Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, has got numerous Not letting cars on Dhaka problems. But the most irritatstreets, unless it is packed with ing one is the ever-increasing travel-time due to clogging up passengers, could be a first. of roads by vehicles. Quite often, Many cities impose hefty fees on vehicles jamming up city vehicles need to wait for half an centres but they are never hour or more at a single set of lights.

In London a stiff congestion Even though the governcharge is levied on private ment assumed power promising to ease traffic congestions, the city dwellers have not seen any significant progress in two

Muhith said, "Traffic jam is the biggest allegation against this government and the other allegations raised by the opposition BNP are bogus and

Admission lottery

kept in the waiting list also

which is comprised of six

The scene was almost the same

in this school except for some

guardians alleging of not hold-

ing the lottery in a transparent

arranged the lottery with the

assistance of the Electrical and

Engineering department of

Bangladesh University of

Engineering and Technology

of the lottery was projected on a

big screen for the guardians'

class-I this year and the lottery

was held for 1,440 seats. A total

of 128 seats were kept reserved

for the children of the institu-

ship quoting telephonic con-

versation with the Somali

pirates and the captain of the

Disagreeing to give any

further detail, an official of the

Brave Royal Ship Management

yesterday said a Somali pirate

contacted them through satel-

lite phone and informed that all

the Bangladeshis are in good

health but their stock of drink-

phone made by the Somali

During contact over satellite

According to the sources in

ing is water about to finish.

tion's faculty and staff.

The entire process and draw

The school has 1,568 seats in

The school authorities

schools, will be held today.

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

VIQARUNNISA NOON

The admission for Group-B,

through lotteries.

manner.

(Buet).

convenience.

FROM PAGE 20

far more parents whose days of

"We missed the opportunity this year. Now we have to look for a comparatively expensive private school," said a parent while leaving the school premises with his son. The kid looked as if he was feeling guilty

The government has introduced the lottery system this year in all 317 public schools (that have classes between I-X) across the country. Dhaka has 24 schools, of which 13 have classes beginning from class-I This year the capital has to offer 1,500 seats against 36,301 selected aspirants. The number of primary applicants was

The authorities concerned believe that the admission system will relieve the parents and children of the psychological pressure for a seat in a

Meanwhile, for the very first

admission yesterday. The school authorities arranged the lottery at its main

branch in Bailey Road in presence of a huge number of lawmakers, education ministry and secondary and higher education directorate officials

morning shift and day shift.

pirate with the officials of the Prof Noman-ur-Rashid, firm yesterday afternoon the director general of Directorate information was revealed, they Brave Royal, the Somali pirate

Laboratory High School. on board the ship contacted The lottery of 218 candidates with a senior official of the firm was held against 240 seats in at around 5:00pm. Govt Laboratory High School

The captain of ship Farid Ahmed also talked with the official for around two minutes and informed that they were all Notes containing each of the well while their stock of drinking water was about to finish, ber were kept in a transparent they said.

> Somali pirates who hijacked the ship are in regular contact with the officials of the ship's owner and operating firm, they added.

General Manager of Brave Royal Meherul Karim while talking to The Daily Star yesterday confirmed about the latest

He, however, disagreed to give any detail about the conversation with the pirates.

Meanwhile, the Foreign Ministry held a meeting on Monday night to discuss the latest situation where the owner of the ships and officials of the Ministry of Shipping were

present. In a release, the foreign ministry reiterated its assurance to all concerned especially the members of the family of hostage crews. The government is doing all it can to resolve the crisis and ensure the release and safe return of the hostages as

early as possible. The Foreign Ministry called on the family members of the crew to a meeting scheduled to be held at the ministry in Dhaka at around 11.00am today, said the sources.

Greece bound MV Jahan Moni was hijacked from the Arabian sea 1,300 nautical miles off Somali coast on December 5 and later the pirates took the ship to the Somali coast and are asking for ransoms keeping 25 Bangladeshi crew and wife of the chief engineer aboard as

hostage.

Fire at DEPZ factory

5 injured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A devastating fire at a foam manufacturing factory at Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) in Savar yesterday left at least five persons, including a fire-fighter, injured.

The injured persons, including fire-fighter Ali Hossain of Savar station, who sustained severe burn wounds, were admitted to a local hospital.

Fire brigade sources said the fire originated at around 3:00am in Swan Loon Company Limited's overheated machinery at one-storey tin-shed unit.

The flames soon engulfed the whole unit and burned the synthetic foam and machinery.

On information, 11 firefighting units from Dhaka headquarters, DEPZ, Savar, Mirpur, Kaliakoir and Dhamrai rushed to the spot and put out the flame after an effort of four hours.

guish the fire as there were chemical materials," said Sirajul Islam, Officer-in-Charge of Ashulia Police Station. He also said no work was

"It took a long time to extin-

going on at the factory and only 15-20 workers were there at the Bangladesh Export

Processing Zone Authority chairman Brig Gen Zamil Ahmed Khan visited the scene soon after the incident. Machinery and foam worth

Tk 2 crore were gutted in the fire, claimed the fire brigade A week earlier, another

devastating fire at a garment factory of Ha-Meem Group near Savar DEPZ, killed at least 26 workers and injured over 100 others.

BCL men clash FROM PAGE 1

The administrative office, however, will remain open to continue the admission procedure.

The clash ensued around 1:30pm between the support ers of BCL JNU unit president Kamrul Hasan Ripon and its general secretary Kazi Abu Sayeed over establishing supremacy on the campus, said Gazi Ataur Rahman, operation officer of Kotwali Police Station.

JNU sources said about 30 to 40 supporters of Ripon were staying inside the campus when another group of BCL activists entered carrying sticks and other weapons. The feuding groups started throwing brickbats at each other.

Informed, police came to the spot and fired seven rounds of tear gas canisters.

They also charged baton or the activists and finally took control of the situation around 3:00pm.

Eight policemen received minor injuries during the clash, said Mohammad Salahuddin, officer-in-charge of Kotwali PS

Police picked up two students from the spot and

released them later. Mohiuddin Ahmed, president of JNU Correspondents Association, told The Daily star that five university correspondents were injured in police action and glasses of the window of the association's office room were dam-

Protesting the clash and police action, the association formed a human chain in front of the Shaheed Minar on the

campus around 3:30pm. Seeking anonymity a police official said when the law enforcers chased the unruly activists, some of them took shelter in the association's

office room. Police were unaware of the fact that correspondents were there and some of them got

injured when the law enforcers clubbed the trouble mongers. This correspondent failed to reach BCL JNU unit president and secretary over phone as they did not receive the

University sources said the groups fought several times since the Awami League government assumed power in January

THREEARRESTED

Meanwhile, police last night said they detained three Shibir members from a mess beside the university campus and seized some "Jihadi publications" and two computers from them.

The detainees are Mohiuddin, Amzad Hossain and Rifat -- all Jagannath University students.

Gazi Ataur Rahman, subinspector of Kotwali Police Station, said they have information that the Shibir men in guise of Bangladesh Chhatra League attack the lawenforcers often leading to violent clashes.

"Suspicion about them heightened as we found a large photograph of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman at the entrance of their room," he told The Daily

BDR set to turn BGB

of the above.

FROM PAGE 1

Upon getting the signed copy of the bill, the home ministry would sent it to the BG Press for the gazette notification and the law will be effective once the gazette is notified, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikder toldThe Daily Star.

As part of reforms of the paramilitary force, the new act was passed in parliament on December 8 keeping provisions of capital punishment for mutiny instead of seven-year imprisonment and changing its name BGB with new logo and uniform.

Once the act comes into effect, any border guard committing any crime will face trial under the new law.

BDR Director General Rafiqul Islam told The Daily Star that major changes have been brought into the new act. "From now on activities of

border guards will be decentralised. The entire force will be divided into and operated underfourzones," he said. The government moved to

enact the new law after the bloody BDR mutiny at its Pilkhana headquarters on February 25-26 last year that killed over 74 people including 57 army officers. The current Bangladesh

Rifles (BDR) Order, 1972 and Bangladesh Rifles (Special Provision) Ordinance, 1976 have already been annulled with the passage of the new law. But the trial on charge of last year's mutiny will be conducted under the BDR order, 1972.

The new law defines mutiny as two or more people disobeying valid orders from the authorities, challenging or obstructing them, expressing their legal or illegal dissatisfactions to the authorities or making any attempts to commit any

"If the BDR personnel currently facing trial attempt to launch any mutiny during the trial proceedings, they will be tried under the new law," Lt Col Shamsur Rahman, prosecutor of the Special Court-7, said after trial proceedings of the 24 Rifle Battalion at Pilkhana Darbar Hall yesterday.

Earlier, the Special Court-7 headed by the BDR DG resumed the trial proceedings at around 9:00 am which continued for about four hours. Thirty-seven accused of the

24 Rifle Battalion crossexamined two witnesses, while one pleaded himself guilty before the court. Sepoy Ahasanullah, who pleaded himself guilty, was

charged for carrying arms and leaving Darbar Hall defying the order of the then DG. "I was not aware that leaving the Darbar would count as an act of mutiny. I was compelled

to carry the firearms," said

Ahasanullah seeking mercy from the court that noted his Among the 667 accused of 24 Rifle Battalion, 31 have so far pleaded guilty before the court

The trial proceedings were adjourned till 9:00am today.

since the trial began on March

Oil spill'

FROM PAGE 1

correspondent he had tried to reach the spot on Monday but failed due to navigational hazard

"Today [yesterday] I despatched a smaller boat to the area but my men reported that they could not trace the spillage. It must have been drifted away by strong current."

BNP to tell UN

minister [Khaleda Zia], it does not seem that the country has democracy," he said after visiting Salauddin's family members at their Dhanmondi residence. Salauddin, a standing

committee member, was arrested on December 16 on charges of planning and financing an arson attack on a car in Moghbazar on June 26 that left one person dead. On December 19, he was

shown arrested for his alleged involvement in committing crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation

Meanwhile, BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain alleged the ruling party wants to win next month's municipal elections by any means, even by using police and civil administra-

The government wants to take the election result in its favour to prove its popularity, and therefore it will not reflect people's aspiration," he claimed at a press briefing at the party's Naya Paltan office yesterday. He also urged people to resist it.

The polls will be held on January 12, 13, 17 and 18 in more than 250 of 310 municipalities across the country. Almost all the political parties including BNP are contesting the polls. Criticising the government

due Dhaka City Corporation election, Delwar said the government is not holding this election fearing defeat, as it lost popularity. The BNP leader said even the general public are now against the government. "It

for not holding the long over-

power through a movement if it does not quit," he warned. On party's organisational strength, Delwar said the party is not weak but it will take

[the govt] will be ousted from

some time to be reorganised. He also protested the "police torture" on Salauddin Quader and filing of cases against party leaders includ-

ing Amanullah Aman. BNP will hold a human chain in front of the Jatiya Sangsad on Thursday protesting his arrest, Farroque said adding, the party will continue movement until Salauddin is released.

Check misuse of Islam

Islamic Foundation at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC).

The present government would show zero tolerance against those who are smearing the name of Islam, the

religion of peace, Hasina said. The government will continue its drive against terrorism and extremism in the country, she added.

Bangladesh is a moderate democratic state and recognised as a model of religious harmony and peaceful coexistence of people of all faiths, the premier said.

She also said, "The genuine Olama-Mashayekh of the country had never been involved in terrorism and extremism, nor engaged now and will never allow such activities on the soil of Bangladesh as Islam does not permit it."

Criticising the previous governments for their anti-Islamic activities, Hasina said that they came to power using Islam as a tool, but allowed such notorious activities, which are not permitted in Islam. She advised the children to

build themselves as the worthy citizens of the country acquiring knowledge about thousand years of cultural traditions of Bangladesh, its great leaders and also the true history of the liberation war.

In this regard, she asked the guardians and teachers to keep close watch on the children so that they do not go astray and indulge in drugs and other anti-social and

harmful activities.

Referring to the new education policy of the country, the PM said it has made religious education compulsory alongside acquiring other worldly knowledge.

Mentioning that there is no scope of discrimination in Islam, she said that her government is working tirelessly to reduce the gap between the rich and poor, providing facilities of education and food for poor students and monetary support to their parents.

The government would create such an environment where the children would be allowed to grow up properly in congenial atmosphere Hasina said.

She said the government is implementing a number of development programmes through the Islamic Foundation, which will create massive employment opportunities for the Imams and Olama-Mashayekh.

The premier said Bangabandhu was pious man and he had founded the Islamic Foundation soon after the independence of the country and it was under his leadership that Bangladesh became a member of the OIC. Later, the PM distributed gold medals and certificates

Paltan police produced among the children and juveniles who won in the cultural competition. State Minister for Religious Affairs advocate Md Shahjahan Miah presided over

the function while Religious on February 13. Affairs Secretary Quazi Habibul Awal and Director General of Islamic Foundation Shamim Md Afzal Hossain, among others, addressed. on bails in all cases.

in 'shootout' OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

leader killed

Janajudhha

A regional leader of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (PBČP) Janajudhha faction was killed in a 'shootout' between his cohorts and the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) at Varara village of Pabna Sadar upazila yesterday.

He was identified as Anisur Rahman alias Anis Master, 45, son of Gafur Amin Biswas of the

Captain SM Nadim Arefin Sumon, assistant director of Pabna Rab camp, said acting on a tip off Rab raided Varara Shahi mosque area as two criminal groups were locked in a 'gunfight' over supremacy in the area. Rab opened fire to disperse the criminals.

Criminals then left the place by firing. Later, Rab recovered the body of Anis from the spot.

Rab recovered a rifle, one revolver, an LG, 10 bullets and some sharp weapons from the spot.

Anis' body was sent to Pabna General Hospital morgue for autopsy. He was accused in a number of cases including two for murder.

According to Rab, though villagers called him Master Anis as he joined in a local madrasa, he belonged to PBCP Janajudhha and operated living in Pabna town.

Health policy

FROM PAGE 20 Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed

cancelled the policy by dint of his presidential power. In 1991, BNP came to

power and pledged to formulate a health policy afresh. But it failed to come up with any such document. Awami League government started working on a policy in 1998 and had it approved in parliament in 2000. But the BNP-led four-party alliance, which formed gov-

ernment in 2001, did not implement that policy; it rather prepared another draft, said Prof Rashid E Mahbub, former president of BMA and member of the present working committee.

DRAFT POLICY 2010 --FEATURES AND CRITICISMS

The draft National Health Policy 2010, which was distributed among different stakeholders for their feedback earlier this year, lacks vision, say experts.

The policy should have a time limit for achieving different targets and draw a picture of future health service system, the experts add.

Health Minister Ruhal Haque, however, said the main purpose of the health policy is to increase access to health services for people and shape up a sustainable quality service system.

The government wants to give a complete and perfect health policy to the nation and that is why it is taking some more time, the minister added.

A crime

Sub-Inspector Mohammed Mizanur Rahman of Motijheel Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case, vesterday prayed for a sevenday remand to interrogate him in this connection.

In the forwarding report, Mizanur Rahman said Rafigul was directly involved in the arson and he needs to be quizzed to learn the whereabouts of others responsible for the crime.

Meanwhile, defence lawyers submitted a petition asking for bail and cancellation of the remand prayer saying their client was in custody then.

Third Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Ali Hussain rejected the bail petition and the remand prayer.

He had asked for documents that proved Rafigul was in fact in police custody. Metropolitan Public

Prosecutor Abdullah Abu told The Daily Star that a vested quarter was conspiring to tarnish the image of the government. This attempt to show him arrested is a part of that conspiracy. He urged the government to take an initiative for action against the police officials for trying to show Rafiqul arrested in such a way.

Rafigul Islam before it on completion of his three-day remand in connection with a case filed for torching vehicles in the city's Bijoy Nagar area

Earlier, Rafigul was shown arrested in eight cases and he was rearrested at jail gate on December 3 after his release

BARISAL PLANE CRASH

BAF probe team collects evidence



A probe team yesterday visited the spot of an aircraft crash near Barisal Airport and collected evidence to ascertain the cause of

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

the accident that killed two pilots of Bangladesh Air Force (BAF). Habibur Rahman, senior warrant officer of BAF, lodged a case of unnatural deaths with Barisal Airport Police Station on Monday night, said Abul Khair, sub-inspector (SI) of the station.

The team, led by BAF Wing Commander Shariful Islam, col-

lected scraps of the plane, added the SI. Law enforcers cordoned off the spot until the probe team left the area around 3:00pm, he also mentioned.

Local fire brigade sources said there was no trace of fire in the The two-seater PT-6 training plane circled twice over the airport, apparently to land, before it swooped and crashed on a

tree in Manikkathi village outside the Barisal Airport around 2:20pm on Monday, witnesses said. The two pilots, squadron leaders Ashraf Ibne Ahmed and Mohammad Mahmudul Haque, died on the spot.

Meanwhile, the namaz-e-janaza of the two deceased was held yesterday at BAF Base Bashar at 2:00pm. Top ranking military officials, including the chiefs of Bangladesh Army, Navy and Air Force and Bangabhaban officials joined the prayers, an Inter-Service Public Relations press

Mahmudul was buried at his village home in Gazipur, while Ashraf was laid to eternal rest at the Air Force Shaheen Graveyard in the city. According to press reports, at least 13 planes and two choppers of BAF and the Army Aviation Corps crashed in last 17 years,

killing 17 pilots, co-pilots, navigators and passengers and injuring 10 others. Most of the planes that crashed were of FT-7, PT-6, and F-

7MB models and were manufactured in China. The helicopters were an MI-17, manufactured in Russia, and a Bell-206, built in the United States.

Russia-India

FROM PAGE 20

release said.

on defence and nuclear mat-

India has long been a major

market for Russian weaponry,

and this represents very much the traditional face of Russia-Indian ties. But even here there are important changes. A possible final deal on the joint production by Russia and

India of a so-called fifth generation warplane shows defence ties remain close. But it also highlights that India now expects not just to buy weaponry off the shelf, but

also to share in the technology that it contains. An agreement on the supply of more Russian nuclear reactors is also expected; the civil nuclear industry is a sector where the US and Russia are

both competing for their share of India's business. In an increasingly multipolar world, both Russia and India see themselves as voices that should be heard. But the growing Indian tilt towards

Washington must cause some

unease in Moscow. The setpiece was a longawaited deal for the joint production of a fifth-generation fighter. India reportedly plans to take as many as 300 of the air-

On the nuclear front, Medvedev agreed to provide another two civilian nuclear energy reactors in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu where Russia is already setting

Energy-hungry India is one

of the world's biggest nuclear power markets, with plans to expand its capacity nearly 15fold to 63,000 megawatts by

The Russan president, who was joined by about 100 business leaders, is also meeting ruling Congress party president

Sonia Gandhi in Delhi. Today, he will tour the Taj Mahal in Agra and India's financial capital, Mumbai (Bombay).

voiced its support for India "as a deserving and strong candidate" for a permanent seat in an expanded UN Security Council. US President Barack Obama

In a joint statement, Russia

voiced similar backing for India's hopes of a place at the UN's top table during his visit in November.

Hailing what he described as

a "special and privileged" stra-

tegic partnership, Singh said Russia was a "time-tested friend... that has stood by us in our times of need in the past". On Monday, Delhi and

Moscow agreed to double bilateral trade from the current \$10bn over the next five years. British Prime Minister David Cameron visited India in July, and President Obama, French President Nicolas Sarkozy and

have passed through over the past six weeks. Each was also accompanied by a large business delegation, and each has gone home boasting of billions of dollars of extra

trade with one of the world's

tion and thereby life cycle of

plants and animals, said Ainun

varieties are reaching the farm-

ers at a limited scale. This pro-

cess should be sped up, he said,

adding a crucial factor for agri-

culture is management of water

through effective embankment

enhancement of relevant min-

istries to tackle the climate

Environment and Forest Hasan

He suggested capacity

State Minister for

and improved irrigation.

change impacts.

The stress-tolerant crop

fastest growing economies.

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao

Climate change

Nishat.

Farmers do not get adequate rain in the rainy season while winter is more intense and depression in the Bay of Bengal is frequent, said Mahabub Hossain, also executive director

Scientists have already

developed some submergence and saline-tolerant rice varieties, which however are not enough, he said emphasising more improvement of the stress-tolerant crop varieties. As there is a forecast that 17 percent of the coastal area will

go under water in 100 years with one meter rise in the sea level, the government should think of high cluster housing in coastal areas and growing fish in the brackish water, he said. Ainun Nishat, vice chancel-

lor of Brac University, said the global community has agreed to keep the planet's average temperature at 17 degrees Celsius, which is 2 degrees Celsius higher than the pre-industrial era. The agriculture would be seriously affected even with this effort, he noted.

Mahmud said Bangladesh now produces three times more food than it did in 1972, but the evergrowing population and loss of arable land is alarming. With the help of agriculturists, farmers and policymakers

the country is sure to prosper, said the state minister. Professor Anisul Islam of a US university, Syngenta

Bangladesh's Managing Director Sarwar Ahmed and FIDA General Secretary Khwaza Main Uddin also spoke at the Abrupt rains, frequent floods programme chaired by FIDA and cyclones will affect pollina-President Kawser Rahman.

vehicles for using roads in certain parts of the British capital. Almost all major cities in Europe, the US and Asia apply some kind of similar restric-The Delhi High Court in early 2010 made a decisive

using public transport.

prevented from plying.

intervention into regulating movement of vehicles in the

worry is not yet over.

much larger.

school. time Viqarunnisa Noon School and College, one of the reputed and most sought-after schools in the country, held lottery for

female guardians; school managing committee, its teachers

and the media. LOTTERY IN GOVT SCHOOLS The lottery in public schools was held in two phases--for

of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), inaugurated the lottery at Govt

while 109 candidates each in Tejgaon Govt High School and Khilgaon Govt High School. candidates name and roll num-

oox for the draw. Three children pulled the lucky names from the box. All the three schools folowed the same process.

The same number of candi-

Foreign ministry officials

said the Afghan authorities have

also taken necessary steps to

send back the body of

dates as the vacant seats was Afghan police FROM PAGE 20

on Friday night.

Bangladeshi engineer Kazi Altaf Hossain, who was killed during the abduction. Altaf was killed and seven workers held hostage on December 17 when Afghan gunmen stormed a remote road-building camp run by a South Korean construction firm

provinces of Balkh and Samangan. Two of the workers were freed on Sunday.

at Mazar-I-Sharif, which lies

between the northern Afghan

According to the foreign ministry, the Afghanistan government, in response to a formal request, has assured Dhaka that they would extend full cooperation with regard to the release of the five Bangladeshi citizens and expedite the process to send home the body of the deceased engineer. Bangladesh Ambassador in

Tashkent, Mohammad Imran Alam, is in touch with the Afghan authorities and doing everything necessary to ensure safe release of the hostages, said the ministry officials.