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BIMSTEC to have HQ in Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Permanent Secretariat of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) would be set up in Dhaka.

The decision came at the 13th BIMSTEC Ministerial Meeting held yesterday in Nay Pyi Taw, the Myanmar capital, says a foreign ministry message.

The location of the Permanent Secretariat
SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Private cars fill 70pc city roads

Call is for making rooms for public vehicles

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Public vehicles like bus; and cycling and walking must get priority over private vehicles to prevent perennial traffic congestion and air pollution in the capital, said environmentalists at a media briefing yesterday.

The Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) along with Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh arranged the briefing on the challenge of urban air quality and mobility management.

Anumita Roychowdhury, executive director of CSE,
SEE PAGE 19 COL 6



Devotees at Biswa Ijtema venue on the bank of Turag yesterday. The first phase of the congregation ends today.

Akheri Munajat today

Second phase of Biswa Ijtema begins Jan 28

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The first phase of Biswa Ijtema, one of the largest congregations of the Muslims, ends today with Akheri Munajat (concluding prayers) on the bank of Turag in Tongi.

Eminent Islamic scholar Moulana Jobayerul Hasan of India will lead the concluding prayers starting around 11:00am.

President Zillur Rahman, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Leader of
SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

Muggers stab 1, push him off train

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Muggers attacked two rail passengers, stabbed one of them and pushed him off a running train in the capital's Khilkhet area yesterday.

Five muggers attacked Fuad Imrul Palash, 30, a staff of Bangladesh Railway, and another passenger, who were travelling by the Turag Express from Kamalapur railway station to the Airport station at about 6:00am.

The muggers got on the train compartment
SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

ALERT CALL AT SOUTHWESTERN BORDER

Arms smuggling, trading double

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia, back from border areas

Smuggling and illegal trade of different types of local and foreign-made firearms in 2010 have almost doubled those in the previous year in the country's southwestern region, the law enforcement agencies said.

The police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) teams recovered 128 smuggled firearms in 2010, compared to 65 in 2009. They also arrested 68 suspected arms smugglers last year while the number was 45 in 2009.

The entire 275 kilometres border in Khulna division is 'sensitive', claimed a Chuadanga police official, seeking anonymity, as the smuggling had seen a significant rise last year.

According to police sources, arms smugglers are particularly active in at least 29 pockets in six bordering districts - four in Kushtia, five in Jhenaidah, four in Chuadanga, three in Meherpur, six in Satkhira and seven in Jessore.

Last year 14 smuggled firearms were recovered in Kushtia, 24 in Chuadanga, 16 in Jhenaidah, 35 in Meherpur, 16 in Jessore, 13 in Satkhira and 10 in Khulna.

A team of Rab-6 recovered 13 firearms in Meherpur and arrested five suspected arms traders on October 19 last year.

"We have concrete information about the arms smuggling network and its buyers," Sheikh Jahidul Islam, assistant superintendent of police and camp in-charge of Rab-6, told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

Doctor accused of stalking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A doctor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) was suspended yesterday following an allegation of physically harassing a teenage female patient.

Saiful Islam, junior consultant of Department of Ophthalmology, allegedly harassed the patient at the outdoor department of the hospital around 11:15am.

BSMMU Director Brig Abdul Bhuiyan said the victim had already left the hospital when the complaint was tendered. Based on the verbal
SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

Border forces to start anew

Reformed, they get going today with new name, flag, uniform

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK

Bangladesh Rifles that has a history of more than 200 years officially takes on the name Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and its flag today, nearly two years after the bloody mutiny at the Pikhana BDR headquarters.

As part of plans to radically reform the force, a law was enacted in December last year. But some changes take effect today with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hoisting the force's new flag at a ceremony at the BDR headquarters.

Reorganisation and reform of the force came to the fore after 74 people including 57 army officers were massacred in the BDR mutiny at Pikhana on February 25-26, 2009.
SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Boy drowns as trawler sinks in Buriganga

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 13-year-old boy drowned when a launch hit a trawler with 80 passengers on board in the Buriganga in Keraniganj yesterday.

Fire brigade divers recovered the body of the boy named Sajib from Telghat of South Keraniganj in the evening, police said.

Starting from the city's
SEE PAGE 19 COL 10

PRAYER TIMING January 23

Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-43	5-47
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

Direct flights to Myanmar soon

Two countries agree to amend air services deal

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and Myanmar have agreed to amend the existing air services deal as soon as possible to establish a direct link between the two countries.

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni and her Myanmar counterpart U Nyan Win made the agreement in a meeting at Nay Pyi Taw, the capital of Myanmar, on Friday.

Dipu Moni is currently in Myanmar to attend the 13th BIMSTEC (Bangladesh India Myanmar Sri Lanka Thailand Economic Cooperation) Ministerial Meeting.

At the bilateral meeting, Dipu Moni emphasised the importance of direct road, waterways and railway links between the two neighbouring countries, according to a message received here yesterday.

As per a foreign ministry press release, Myanmar and Bangladesh foreign ministers reckoned that some
SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

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TODAY'S POLL

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