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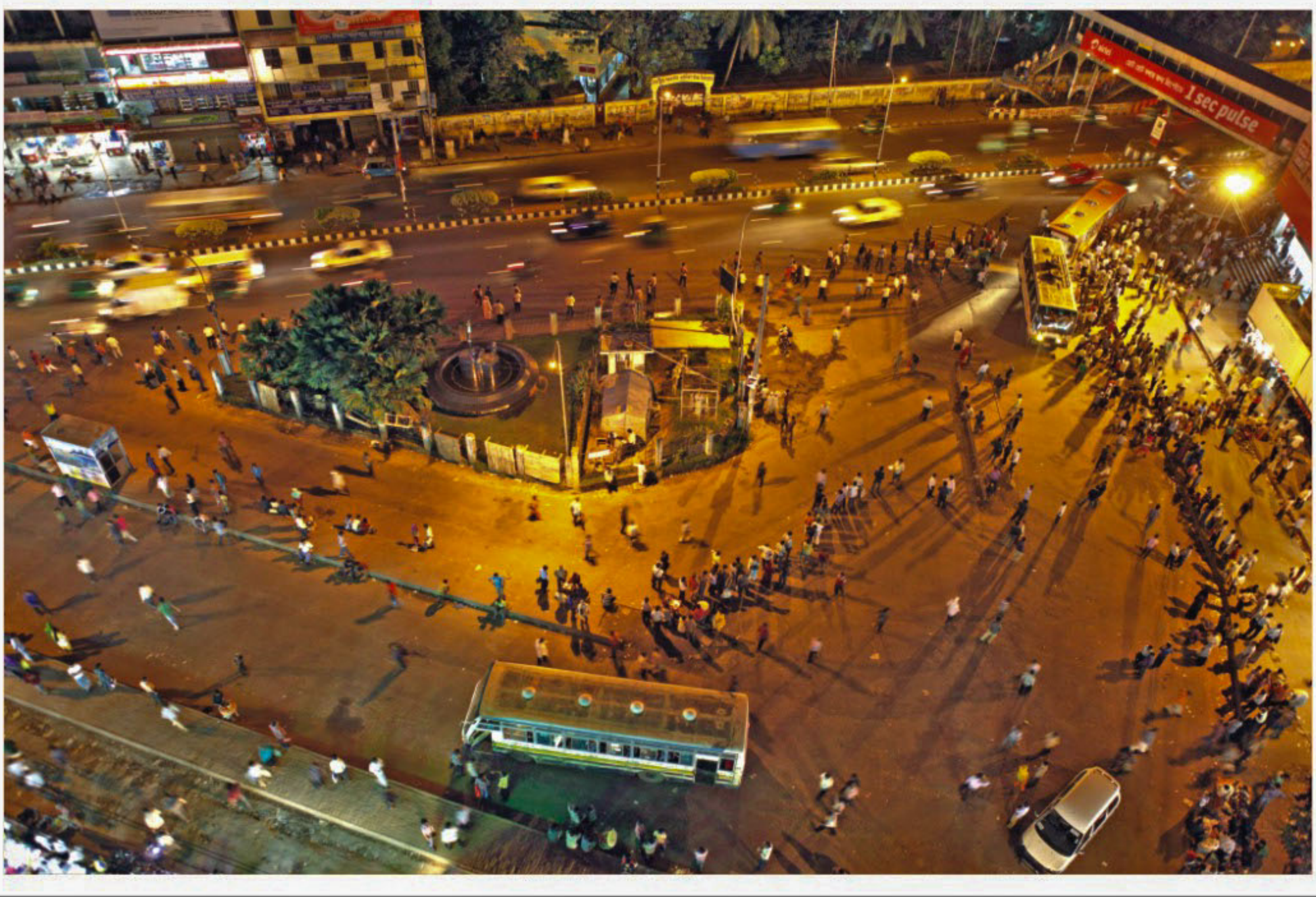
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End users prefer ready-to-eat Bangladeshi shrimps
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Metro rail cost goes up \$1b

Route changes responsible; funding faces a year's delay

TAWFIQUE ALI
Foreign funding for the metro rail project in the capital might be delayed for a year, as the government appears unable to convey to the donor agency within this month its decision on the air force-suggested route diversion.
Besides, various alterations to the route alignment already increased the project cost by one billion US dollars putting the figure at \$2.7 billion, said officials of the government and the donor agency.
The government has to officially convey its decision on the latest route realignment proposal to Japan International

Cooperation Agency (Jica), the lone financier of the project, by September 30 to avail the funding, said a Jica official on Monday, preferring anonymity.
Otherwise the fund allocation cannot be endorsed in the current fiscal year of Japan, causing deferment for a year.
Bangladesh Air Force objected to Bijoy Sarani portion of the metro rail route on the plea that it will hinder operations of Tejgaon airfield, and suggested its diversion along Sangsad Avenue through Khamarbari, occupying a stretch of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex.
Experts on the project's technical
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Usually packed with buses, Farmgate seems almost deserted during yesterday evening rush as public transports stayed off the streets fearing vandalism by opposition activists ahead of today's hartal. The result was Dhaka streets almost traffic-jam free, but city dwellers having a hard time getting home. Story on page 20.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

AL warns of counter action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Ruling Awami League vowed to resist BNP's today's hartal and follow-up anti-government agitation programmes, labelling those as "BNP's attempt to create anarchy".
Following today's 11-hour hartal, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia
SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Hartal now for 11 hours today

One hour relaxation due to 'cultural show, reception'; opposition, govt trade warnings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The countrywide 11-hour hartal called by BNP and its allies starts at 6:00am today to protest price hike of fuel, share market scam and repression on opposition leaders and workers.
On Tuesday, BNP declared the hartal

from 6:00am to 6:00pm today but yesterday it said the hartal has been reduced by an hour. "A decision was made to observe the hartal from 6:00am to 5:00pm, reduced by one hour due to unavoidable circumstances," said a party press release signed by Joint Secretary General Ruhul
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Businesses unhappy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Top business bodies yesterday urged the opposition party to call off its daylong hartal in the best interests of the country.
Expressing deep concern over the hartal, Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), the apex trade body, said in a written statement that it would not support the protest programmes for the sake of the economy.
The business community believes the hartal would have a negative effect on foreign investment and the prices of essentials, says the press release. It also

said that the zero-tariff facility that India extended to 46 Bangladeshi clothing items has opened a new window of opportunity for exports. Besides, a delegation of Wales-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, UK, will visit on September 26 to discuss investment prospects.
The association also says all political debates should be sorted in parliament to strengthen democracy as well as the economy.
The Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) in a press
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Clarification

Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) yesterday explained part of a news item titled "Fuel Prices Hiked" published in The Daily Star on September 19.
In a statement, BERC Chairman Syed Yustuf Hossain said he did not say that BERC was bypassed in the decision on the price increase for the petroleum products.
"I also did not mention that public hearing was
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UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses the 66th UN General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters in New York yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

UN chief pleads to break ME stalemate

There is no short cut says Obama; 66th General Assembly begins

AFP, United Nations
UN leader Ban Ki-moon yesterday pleaded for a new international effort to break the Middle East "stalemate" amid a looming diplomatic showdown between Palestinians and Israelis.
Frantic diplomacy from the world's leading powers went on to forestall a Palestinian drive for UN statehood recognition as the 66th UN General assembly began in New York.
Speaking at the start of the UN General

Assembly summit of world leaders, Ban vowed "unrelenting" UN efforts to push forward the peace process.
"In the Middle East, we must break the stalemate," Ban told world leaders including Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas and US President Barack Obama.
"We have long agreed that Palestinians deserve a state. Israel needs security. Both want peace."
"We pledge our unrelenting efforts to help achieve that peace through a
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Vehicle fumes raise 'heart attack' risk

BBC Online
Breathing in heavy traffic fumes can trigger a heart attack, say UK experts.
Heart attack risk is raised for about six hours post-exposure and goes down again after that.
Pollution probably hastens rather than directly cause attacks, researchers say in the British Medical Journal.
But repeated exposure is still bad for health, substantially shortening life expectancy, and so the advice to people remains the same--avoid as far as is possible.
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PM vows zero tolerance to graft, terror

UNB, New York
Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has said her government will continue to show zero tolerance to terrorism and corruption.
She made the remark during question-answer hour at the US Chamber and Asia Society-sponsored luncheon held at the Asia Society Auditorium Tuesday night.
Since taking the office, Hasina said, her government is giving no room to any terrorist or militant group.
"We will never allow our land to be used for terrorist activities," said the premier who is now in New York to attend the 66th UN General Assembly that began yesterday.
Hasina will address the assembly on Saturday.
The prime minister at Tuesday's luncheon said Bangladesh was known as a country of corruption and militancy during the previous government. "At that time, Bangladesh was known as a safe haven for militants and terrorists. But now the country is free of this stigma as the government is rooting out the menace."
Hasina also urged the international institutions and
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