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# Dhaka plan pro-rich

## Say experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detailed Area Plan (Dap) of Dhaka City is biased towards the wealthy people as it proposes unequal urban facilities, speakers at a discussion said yesterday.

It proposes 20 times more residential land for the wealthy than for the low-paid people in the capital, said Mahabubul Bari, adviser to the Rwanda government on transportation.

Bangladesh Institute of Planners (BIP), Poribesh Bachao Andolon (Poba) and Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) Trust jointly organised the discussion at the Jatiya Press Club.

The plan proposes 34 percent land of the city for the 44 lakh high-income people while 0.3 percent for some 45 lakh poor and those under the poverty line.

It implies that population density in posh Gulshan, Banani and Baridhara areas will be 235 people per acre while 6,040 for the poor and slum dwellers, Bari told the discussion.

Moreover, relocation of the squatter settlements has been proposed in the non-productive fringe areas with the wealthy in the centre.

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Police stand guard as BNP activists hold a rally in front of the party's central office at Nayapaltan in the capital yesterday. The main opposition staged countrywide demonstrations yesterday to protest "government repression" and "police attacks" on its activists on Sunday. PHOTO: STAR

# BATTERED ROADS

## Strike called in Barisal region

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Transport owners and workers operating on 30 routes in and from Barisal region will enforce a strike today demanding repair of dilapidated roads.

They announced the strike from a meeting yesterday when their eight-day ultimatum for fixing the roads, highways and ferry terminals of the region exhausted without any response from the government.

On December 12, local road transport owners and workers' associations formed a human chain and issued the government the ultimatum.

Yesterday's meeting was jointly organised by

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# EXISTING GAS FIELDS

## 10 wells to be drilled with Russian help

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is going to dig 10 gas wells in the existing gas fields with assistance from Russian national company Gazprom at a cost of \$193.52 million.

The Energy and Mineral Resources Division will place a proposal to this end at a meeting of the cabinet committee on purchase today, where the division will claim the cost cited in the proposal to be lower than in the quotations of other international oil companies (IOC).

Of the 10, four wells will be dug in Titas gas field, one in Rashidpur gas field and five in gas fields under Bangladesh Petroleum Exploration and Production Company Ltd (Bapex), sources in the energy division said.

The cost of digging under Bapex has been estimated at \$18.64 million per well while it is \$20.06 million under Titas and Rashidpur gas fields.

On an average, digging a well cost \$20.41 million, the proposal stated after

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# Tribunal rejects SQ Chy's pleas for 'advantages'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Crimes Tribunal yesterday rejected six petitions of detained BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury in connection with his trial for committing war crimes during the Liberation War.

The court fixed January 15 for hearing on framing charges against the BNP leader for his alleged involvement in crimes against humanity in 1971.

Chowdhury, who faces 24 charges of crimes against humanity, submitted six petitions to the tribunal on November 30 asking for certain advantages in his trial.

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# Loots taken away on 18 boats in Pirojpur

## Witness testifies against Sayedee at war crimes trial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami stalwart Delawar Hossain Sayedee flanked by several other collaborators and some Pakistani army officers in June 1971 had taken away around 18 boats loaded with loots in Parer Haat of Pirojpur, a witness told the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday.

Mizanur Rahman Talukdar, the third prosecution witness, in his deposition said he saw them while crossing the Charkhali khal (canal) in Parer Haat area.

He was 17 years old during the Liberation War.

A resident of the same upazila, Mizanur said he had gone to a

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# Ministers don't always rely on police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

When it came to their own security, a minister and a state minister on Sunday expressed their lack of confidence in the police.

The two sought "help" from the leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League seeing a large number of pro-BNP activists at the Jatiya Press Club.

BCL sources said the duo requested the top leaders of BCL, a pro-Awami League student body, to send some of their men to the Press Club as the ministers were feeling "insecure" in front of the opposition men.

"On instructions from our high command, around 40 of our leaders and activists rushed to the spot from the Dhaka University campus," a central committee leader of BCL told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

"We cannot always rely on the police," the minister was quoted as saying by another central BCL leader who questioned him as to why he was seeking assistance from the student organisation instead of the police.

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A boy falls asleep after hours of his tiring work at a printing press in the capital yesterday. Printers are busy printing textbooks as the government will start distributing books for free in schools across the country on January 1. PHOTO: STAR

# Govt asked to trace all who disappeared

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Citizens' Movement for Democracy and Human Rights (CMDHR) yesterday demanded the government take immediate steps to trace and recover those who have disappeared recently from different parts of the country.

The government would be held responsible for secret killings and disappearances unless it can identify the perpetrators and bring them to book, members of the eminent citizens' platform told a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club.

They also urged the opposition parties to stand against the killings in and outside of parliament.

Addressing the programme, famed jurist and human rights activist Dr Shahdeen Malik said as the government is somehow involved with such incidents, citizens have nothing to do except protest and put pressure on the government to stop it.

"The secret killing is nothing but a new form of extra-judicial killing. The government was compelled to stop extra-judicial killing due to increasing pressure from

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# DIST COUNCILS Administrators set to join office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recently appointed administrators to 61 district councils will join offices in a day or two as all formalities to this end will be completed today, said a senior official of the Local Government Division (LGD) yesterday.

He said the LGD had learnt from the law ministry that the newly-appointed administrators would not have to take the oath before joining their offices.

On Sunday, the LGD wrote to the law ministry to know whether the administrators have to take the oath of office before taking over charges.

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# 5 killed in Mymensingh road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

At least five people were killed and three others injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Seed-Store area in Bhaluka upazila in the district yesterday.

Three of the deceased were identified as Robiul Islam, 26, of village Kusashpur in Gafargaoan

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# 770m Indians to get cheap rice, wheat

## Costly food subsidy bill okayed

AFP, New Delhi

The Indian cabinet has approved a landmark bill to provide subsidised food to hundreds of millions of people -- a populist but hugely costly project that critics say will strain treasury finances.

The Food Security Bill -- greenlighted late Sunday -- would provide monthly supplies of cheap rice, wheat and millet to 64 percent of India's 1.2 billion population -- or around 770 million people.

The legislation, which must still be approved by parliament, will increase the government's annual food subsidy bill by nearly 280 billion rupees (\$5.3 billion) to 950 billion rupees.

Further substantial funds will be needed to ramp up grain production to meet the subsidy requirement.

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PRAYER TIMING December 20

Azan	Jamaat
Fajr 5:25 6:00	
Zohr 12:45 1:15	
Asr 3:45 4:00	
Maghrib 5:24 5:27	
Esha 7:00 7:30	

Source: Islamic Foundation

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited ONLINE POLL

How do you find the prime minister's remarks on secret killing and disappearance that opposition parties are resorting to the criminal acts in a bid to protect the war criminals?

Ridiculous: (62.5%)

Justified: (37.5%)

TOTAL VOTES: 920

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think it was a smart plan by the BNP-led opposition to paralyse the capital with a huge gathering of opposition activists at the heart of the city?

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