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Beautified Hatirjheel attracts visitors

It's now a recreation spot

SUSHMITA S PREETHA

Hatirjheel seems to be a picture of Dhaka we could dream of. It is indeed a small piece of the capital that stood aloof from the rest. The sight of its jam-free express roads, uncluttered foot-paths, modern bridges, walkways along a lake stretching as far as our eyes can see would compel us to forget the city we hear, see and experience every day.

The irony is that the place could have been well described as the dumping zone of Dhaka before the government took up the project. The lake used to be a ditch carrying household and industrial waste.

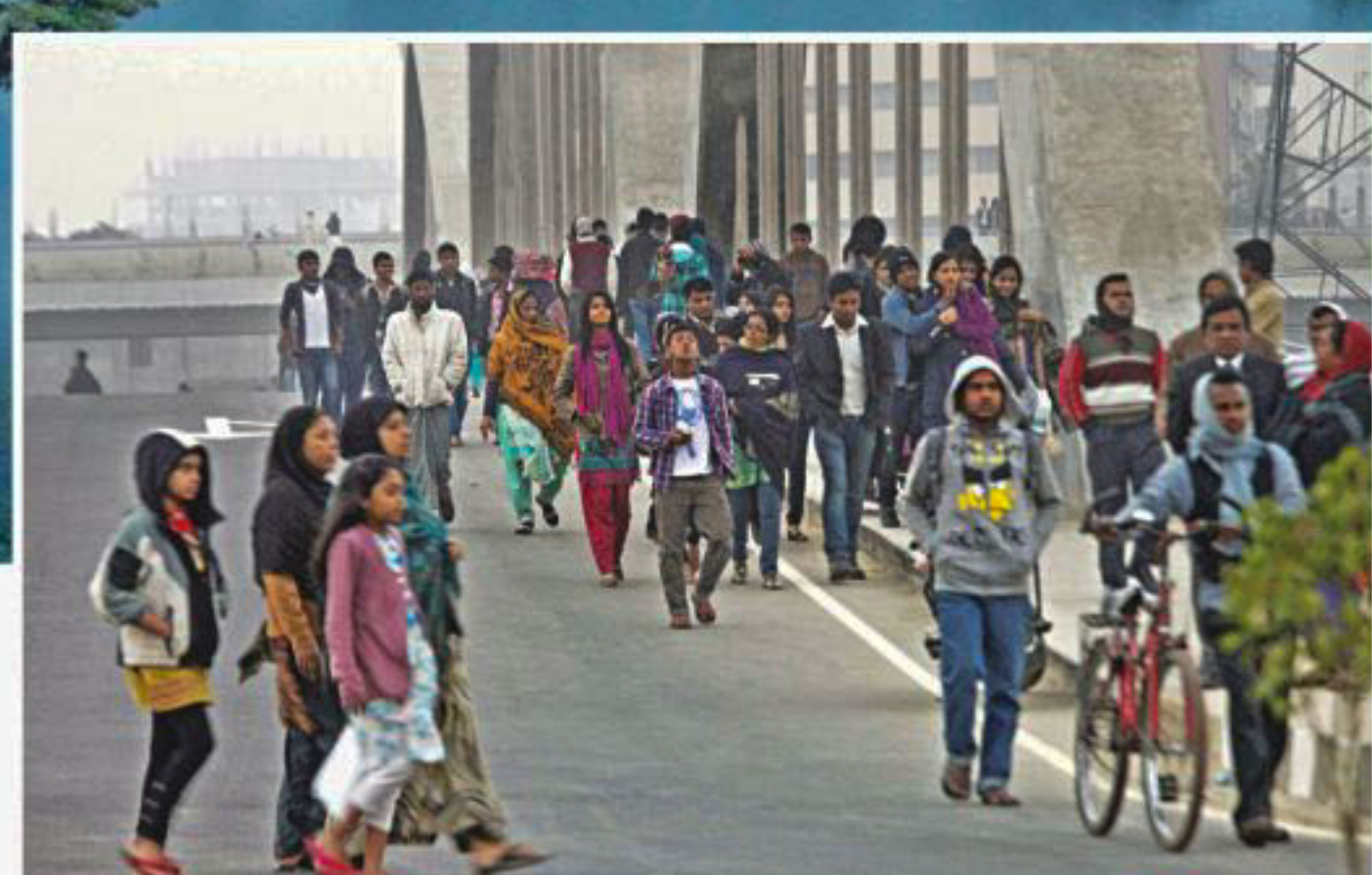
And now Hatirjheel covering 320 acres is transformed into a place of festivity at night but with serenity settling down.

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The Hatirjheel project area is open to public since January 2 and with just a handful of parks and recreation centres in the capital, people brave the chilly weather, *inset*, and visit the beautiful bridges and streets.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN/ RASHED SHUMON



It's arson

Says home minister on Tazreen fire

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The last year's deadly fire at Tazreen Fashions was an act of arson, Home Minister Muihuddin Khan Alamgir yesterday said, reviewing his ministry's investigation report.

He mentioned three possible causes, explaining why the arson had been committed.

Despite many obstacles in its way, the garment industry went ahead,

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Left parties call hartal for Jan 16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several leftist parties yesterday called a nationwide six-hour hartal for January 16, protesting against the recent hike in electricity and fuel prices.

Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) and Gonotantrik Bam Morcha called on the people to enforce the hartal.

Bam Morcha, an

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3 power plants get nod

Total capacity 1,000MW; to be set up by 2015; 13km expressway from city's Shantinagar to Mawa road also okayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet purchase committee yesterday approved three public sector power projects, including one to be awarded to controversial Chinese company Harbin, with a total capacity of 1,000 megawatt.

In addition, the committee at a meeting chaired by Finance Minister

AMA Muhith approved extending the contract for a 40 megawatt diesel-fired rental power project by a year until September this year.

The three power projects are Shahjibazar 300 MW gas-fired combined cycle plant (to be awarded to Guangdong Power Engineering Corp & Guangdong Electric Power Design Institute, China), Barapukuria 250

MW unit-3 coal-fired thermal power plant (to Harbin), and the 450 MW combined cycle gas-fired plant in Ghorashal (to CMC-CNTIC, China).

Shahjibazar project was approved for a price of total \$279 million, Barapukuria project for \$248 m and Ghorashal project for \$231 m. These would come into operation after 2015.

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REFUSAL TO PERFORM POLLS DUTIES EC for tougher rules

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The Election Commission seeks introduction of punitive measures against individuals and all executive authorities for refusing to perform tasks or give assistance as per the EC's requirements during parliamentary polls.

In the light of its bad experiences in the past, the EC has drafted a proposal to bring amendment to the Representation of the People Order (RPO) to this effect to enforce a constitutional provision that

empowers it to seek any assistance from executive authorities.

According to the proposal, an individual -- any government official or private citizen -- will be guilty of an offence for which he may be sentenced to jail up to three years or fined Tk 50,000 or both for refusing to abide by the EC's directive.

In case of refusal to comply with the EC's directive, the chairman, director general, inspector general, managing

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AI asks govt not to harass Mahmudur

STAR REPORT

The Bangladeshi authorities must refrain from harassing and prosecuting Bangla daily Amar Desh Editor Mahmudur Rahman, said Amnesty International.

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Police fire teargas canisters on demonstrating teachers demanding their schools be included in the monthly pay order. The photo was taken in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

NEW JOBS IN MALAYSIA Workers to join in 2 months

Registration begins Jan 13

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government may start sending selected workers to Malaysia for plantation sector from late February or early March, said Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday.

"We hope the first batch of workers will go to Malaysia within two months on completion of selection process," he said at a press briefing at the ministry's conference room.

Lifting a four-year ban, Malaysia has recently decided to recruit 10,000 male workers from Bangladesh for its plantation sector.

The ministry on December 29 last year received a formal request in this regard through the Malaysian High Commission.

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Tremor jolts country

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A tremor measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale jolted some parts of the country including Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet yesterday.

The earthquake was felt at 7:41am. No casualties or damage have been reported.

The epicentre of the quake was in Myanmar-India border, some 495

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PM visits Russia on Jan 14-16

Loan deal for nuke power plant likely

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will pay a three-day visit to Russia on January 14-16 to sign several deals including setting up of a 1,000MW nuclear power plant and in areas of defence, education and culture.

In an official announcement, the foreign ministry yesterday said the premier would visit the Russian Federation at the

invitation of the Russian leadership.

During the visit, among others, the prime minister will be holding talks with the Russian Federation, led by Vladimir Putin, and discuss entire gamut of relations as also a number of possible sectoral engagements.

Sources said Hasina would lead a big delegation, which included Foreign

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL Counsel for Mollah places arguments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The defence of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Abdur Quader Mollah yesterday claimed that most of the prosecution witnesses were hearsay witnesses, who could not name sources of their information.

Abdur Razzaq, chief of

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Integral Energy Limited ONLINE POLL

Do you think having no statutory power of implementation, the proposed river protection commission could be able to save the country's rivers from encroachment and pollution?

Yes (14%)
No (85%)
No Comments (2%)

TOTAL VOTES: 220

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with the prime minister that the next general election would be free and fair?

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YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT [facebook.com/dailystarnews](https://www.facebook.com/dailystarnews)

PRAYER TIMING January 10

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5:30	6:05
Zohr	12:45	1:15
Asr	4:00	4:15
Maghrib	5:36	5:40
Esha	7:00	7:30

Source: Islamic Foundation