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## LATE HANDOVER OF LAND

# Kuril flyover work delayed

3 more months given to complete job

HELEMUL ALAM

Failing to meet the December 31 deadline to open the Kuril Flyover to traffic, Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) has extended the time frame by three months.

Rajuk Chairman Nurul Huda attributed the delay to late handover of some land by the railway and roads and highways departments.

About 11 months were spent to get the possession of the land and end a legal dispute with a CNG refuelling station in the area.

He said 75 percent of the project has been completed so far and hoped to open the 3.1-kilometre flyover by March.

Besides, digging of a lake under the flyover and construction of two footbridges and connecting roads are also underway and will be completed duly.

The one-way flyover will be 8.9 metre wide and 14.6 metre high. It will have two Y and as many U loops, mentioned a Rajuk official.

Vehicles from different directions will use the loops to cross the fly-over.

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Participants, mostly youths, flying kites of various colours and varieties during a kite festival on Cox's Bazar sea beach yesterday. The two-day festival was organised by Bangladesh Kite Federation.

PHOTO: STAR

## AL wants return of 1/11: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government was plotting to bring back the 1/11 by snatching people's rights to vote, BNP Standing Committee Member Tariqul Islam alleged yesterday.

He called upon people to remain alert so that the government does not get the scope for bringing back such state of emergency and create anarchy in the country.

Tariqul said this before launching the 18-party alliance's Black Day procession in front of BNP central office in the capital's Nayapaltan area in the afternoon, apparently countering Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's statement

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## Water transport strike called off

Workers assured of 20pc wage hike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Water transport workers last night called off their indefinite work abstention following an assurance of 20 percent pay hike by transport owners.

The new pay scale will be considered effective from January 1 this year. Previously, the government-set gross salary of water transport workers used to range between Tk3,495 and 14,755.

The announcement of the strike withdrawal came after a four and a half hours' meeting among transport workers, owners and government officials.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan chaired the meeting held at the conference room of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA) in the capital.

"We are urging all employees to join work within the shortest possible time," said Chowdhury Ashiqul Alam, general secretary

of Bangladesh Nourjan Sramik Federation after the meeting, around 8:00pm.

Two federations of water transport workers enforced countrywide work abstention from early hours of January 9 to press home their 16-point demand, mainly for pay hike.

The other demands include ensuring workers' security on waterways, maintaining navigability of rivers, proper fitness certification of all vessels, and immediate disposal of cases pending with the marine court.

In the last three days, the work abstention disrupted countrywide river communications causing immense suffering to passengers and traders.

The transport owners also pledged to withdraw the cases filed against workers during the strike, reinstate all employees in their positions and not to harass any worker.

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## MPO LISTING Teachers continue agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agitating teachers and employees of non-MPO schools, colleges, madrasas and polytechnic institutes demonstrated at the Suhrawardy Udyan in the capital yesterday after police again prevented them from using Central Shaheed Minar.

The teachers and employees, under the banner "Non-MPO Shikkha Pratishthan Shikkhak Karmachari Oikya Jote", were demonstrating for the fourth consecutive day demanding their institutions be included in the government's Monthly Payment Order (MPO) system.

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## Saudi Arabia allows women in parliament

Saudi king names 30

AFP, Riyadh

Saudi King Abdullah appointed 30 women to the previously all-male consultative Shura Council in decrees published yesterday, marking a historic first as he pushes reforms in the ultra-conservative kingdom.

The decrees, published by the official SPA news agency, give women a 20 percent quota in the Shura Council, a body appointed by the king to advise him on policy and legislation.

One decree amended an article in the council's statute to give women representation on the body while the other named the 150 members, among them 30 women.

King Abdullah took the decisions following consultations with religious leaders in the kingdom, where women are subjected to many restrictions and are not allowed to mix with men, according to the decrees published by the SPA.

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## Thailand to deport 700 Rohingyas

AP, Songkhla, Thailand

Thai authorities said yesterday that about 700 people from Myanmar's beleaguered Rohingya minority who had entered Thailand illegally were found in two separate raids in the country's south and that they would be sent back to Myanmar.

Police and government officials found 307 Rohingya asylum seekers during a search Friday at a warehouse in Sadao district in Songkhla province, police Maj. Col. Thanusin Duangkaewngam said. On Thursday, nearly 400 Rohingyas were found in a raid in the same district.

"The Rohingyas said they had voluntarily

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## Nearly half of world's food ends up as waste

GUARDIAN ONLINE

As much as half of all the food produced in the world – equivalent to 2 billions tonnes – ends up as waste every year, engineers warned in a report published on Thursday.

The UK's Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) blames the "staggering" new figures in its analysis on unnecessarily strict sell-by dates, buy-one-get-one free and Western consumer demand for cosmetically perfect food, along with "poor engineering and agricultural practices", inadequate infrastructure and poor storage facilities.

In the face of United Nations predictions that there could be about an extra 3 billion people to feed by the end of the century and growing pressure on the resources needed to produce food, including land, water and energy, the IMechE is

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## The ancient social networks

LIVESCIENCE

Think of it as the earliest version of the Facebook wall post: Ancient Pompeii residents revealed their social networks through graffiti on actual walls.

Now, a new analysis of some of these scribbled messages reveals the walls of the wealthy were highly sought after, especially for political candidates hoping to drum up votes.

The findings suggest that Pompeii homeowners may have had some control over



A wall in Pompeii covered in red graffiti. Wall scribbles were common all over the ancient city, *top*, both on public buildings and inside and outside of private homes.

PHOTO: WWW.SMITHSONIANMAG.COM

who got artistic on their walls, said study researcher Eva-Maria Viitanen, an archaeologist at the University of Helsinki.

Pompeii, which was famously destroyed and frozen in time by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79, was a city of "avid scribblers".

People scratched messages into the city's stucco walls or wrote them in charcoal. They copied literary quotes, wrote greetings to friends and made notes of sums.

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## Raped schoolgirl fighting for life

Accused still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A class-six girl, who was raped late last month, is fighting for her life at Patuakhali General Hospital.

Doctors termed her condition critical as she was bleeding profusely from the overnight rape of December 28 last year.

It is the third reported rape case over the past one month in the country, after the Tangail and Savar gang rapes.

Police identified Shamim Ahmed Akon, a second-year student of Patuakhali Govt College, as the alleged rapist.

Police are yet to arrest him as he is on the run but arrested his father and Nazma Begum, who allegedly aided the rapist in committing the crime. They were sent to jail yesterday.

The victim is a 13-year-old girl who obtained GPA 5 in the 2012 Primary School Certificate examination.

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**PRAYER TIMING** January 12

	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

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