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# Long queues on highways

Up to 80km-long tailbacks on three major highways keep passengers stranded for hours

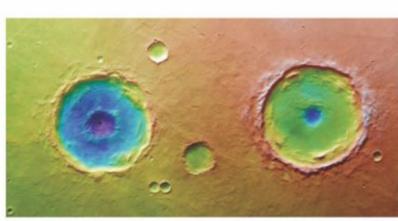
STAR REPORT

After four days of hartal, three major highways in the country were overwhelmed with vehicles yesterday leading to gridlocks that stretched for up to 80km. There were cases of people being stuck on highways for up to 15 hours in the scorching heat. Even the communications minister and the home minister got stuck. Traffic flows came to a halt on Dhaka-Tangail, Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Mymensingh highways as none were following traffic rules. Traffic and highway police were hardly seen on location and the few policemen on duty were helpless in tackling the enormous jams. The worst jam was on Dhaka-Tangail highway. More than 5,000 examinees of primary teachers recruitment exams failed to reach their exams halls in Tangail district alone. Unable to travel on the previous four back-to-back hartal days, people in their thousands began their journeys on buses yesterday. There were people taking the opportunity of the two-day weekend plus Pahela Baishakh holiday to visit their homes. Trucks which remained stationary due to hartals began hauling goods yesterday as well.

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After days of hartals, the Dhaka-Tangail highway was overwhelmed with vehicles yesterday and people were stuck in a traffic jam that stretched for at least 80km. Inset, a sick person going to a hospital on a truck is stuck in the jam amid the heat. The photos were taken at Korotia of Tangail. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON



## Martian twins

Unique 'double craters' found on red planet

MAIL ONLINE

Massive underground ice explosions on Mars have created a unique set of twin craters, it has been revealed.

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## Joypurhat Jamaat leader 'abducted'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday threatened to enforce an indefinite strike in Joypurhat district from Monday if the law enforcers fail to rescue its "missing" Secretary General Nazrul Islam by tomorrow. Leaders of Jamaat made the announcement at a press conference at Joypurhat Municipality around 11:30am. They

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## POWER PLANT NEAR SUNDARBANS Greens term EIA report incomplete

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Terming government's draft environment impact assessment (EIA) report on a proposed coal-based power plant in Rampal incomplete, environmentalists and rights activists yesterday opposed it. They said if the 1,320 megawatt power plant was constructed on the basis of the current analysis, it would wreak havoc on the Sundarbans -- just 14 km from the project site in Bagerhat district. They came up with the observation during a people's consultation meeting, organised by Power Development Board, at Bidyut Bhaban in the capital. They questioned how India's Thermal Power Company (NTPC) got clearance for the project when the same Indian company could not obtain permission to build coal-based power plants on the Indian side of the world's largest mangrove forest. Prof Shamsul Alam, energy adviser to the Consumers Association of Bangladesh

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## Hilsa too costly

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the Bangla New Year 1420, is nearing, price of hilsa has become more than double in a fortnight. Hilsa weighing 1 kg and above are now in high demand in the fish market. Shukkur Ali, a hilsa trader in the capital's Karwan Bazar, said he sold a piece of hilsa weighing 1.2 kg for Tk 3,000 and 1.5 kg for Tk 4,000 yesterday. They were sold for Tk 1,200-1,300 and Tk 1,800 respectively 15 days ago.



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## BANGLA NEW YEAR Preparations on for Mongol Shobha Jatra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

This year the Mongol Shobha Jatra, one of the major attractions of Pahela Baishakh celebration in Dhaka, will be more than just a procession featuring popular motifs of Bengal. It will be a journey with a promise of making Bangladesh free from the clutches of war criminals. Tomorrow Bangalees will welcome the new Bangla year 1420, and bid

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Charu Shilpi Sammelan Parishad prepares for Pahela Baishakh celebrations at Fine Arts Institute in Chittagong yesterday. Pahela Baishakh, the Bangla new year, is tomorrow.

PHOTO: STAR

## Tight security for Baishakh

DMP for closing celebrations early

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police and Rapid Action Battalion have taken stringent security measures in the capital for the celebrations of Pahela Baishakh tomorrow. The Dhaka Metropolitan Police authorities urged the venue authorities to wrap up celebration programmes at Ramna Batamul by 5:00pm and elsewhere by 7:00pm. "Law enforcers will do their level best to tackle any untoward incident during the celebration but people should remain vigilant and inform the nearby police if anything suspicious is noticed," said DMP Commissioner Benazir Ahmed yesterday. He was briefing journalists at DMP's public relations office about the security management ahead of Pahela Baishakh, the first day of the Bangla new year.

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### PRAYER TIMING April 13

Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4:35 - 5:10
Zohr	12:45 - 1:15
Asr	4:45 - 5:00
Maghrib	6:24 - 6:28
Esha	7:45 - 8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

### ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with State Minister for Law Qamrul Islam that the ruling Awami League is ready to talk with the BNP only if the main opposition severs relations with the war criminals and Jamaat-e-Islami?

Yes (29.2%)  
No (70.8%)

TOTAL VOTES: 291

The Daily Star  
Integral Energy Limited  
TODAY'S POLL  
Do you agree with LGRD minister Syed Ashrafur Islam that the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami had sought to overthrow the government by using the Hefajat-e-Islam?  
PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net  
YOU MAY ALSO VOTE AT facebook.com/dailystarnews

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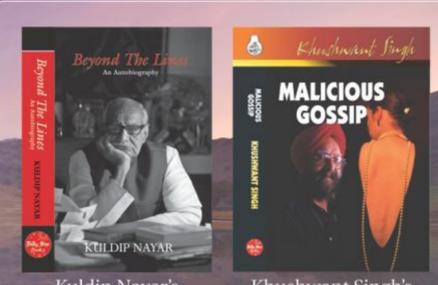
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