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DEVOTEES POUR IN

With sacks on their shoulders and prayer caps on their heads, thousands start streaming into the Biswa Ijtema ground at Tongi on the Turag yesterday for the world's second largest congregation of the Muslims. They crammed inside buses and trains and when there was no space inside they got on the roofs to travel to the Ijtema that begins today.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



MANZUR MURDER CID given 2 months more to end probe

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) two more months for a further investigation into the 1981 murder of Maj General Abul Manzur.

Manzur, a sector commander of the Liberation War, was killed at Chittagong Cantonment on June 1 of the year, just two days into the assassination of the then president Ziaur Rahman.

Judge SM Saiful Islam of the First Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court, asked the CID to complete the probe



SEE PAGE 17 COL 2

286 vessels pass thru' Shela route

11 sent back for violating rules

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite an outcry from green activists, shipping has resumed through the Shela river from Wednesday with at least a dozen cargo ships having violated rules on the very first day.

The river was made off limits to shipping after a tanker capsized in the water streaming through the Sundarbans on December 9, spilling 3.58 lakh litres of crude oil into the world's largest mangrove forest and threatening its unique biodiversity.

Nearly a month passed and the government reopened the route, used mainly to ship cargo from Mongla port, for vessel movement with some conditions, including that no oil tanker should use the route and vessels have to enter the around-60km river from both Joymangal and Bogi ends between

6:00am and 11:00am.

However, the shipping ministry did not make any arrangement for monitoring this on the first day, leaving the whole thing at the forest department's disposal.

Some 286 vessels plied through the route on Wednesday and some vessels were prevented from entering the river due to violation of the rules.

"We have sent back 11 vessels to the [Mongla] port and caught another yesterday [Wednesday] as it was plying through the Shela by night," said Belayet Hossain, range officer of Chandpai Forest range.

The vessel -- MV Shyamali -- was handed over to the Coastguard, he added.

However, the Coastguard released the vessel yesterday afternoon.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Rubel in jail

It's too early for BCB to decide on replacement

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) found itself in a spot of bother after Rubel Hossain landed in jail yesterday following the paceman's surrender before a Dhaka court in connection with a rape case filed by film actress Naznin Akter Happy.



Rubel



Happy

The BCB on Sunday announced a 15-member Bangladesh World Cup team that included the 25-year-old bowler.

The team's preparation camp is all set to start from January 12 and after 10 days' training at home, the Tigers will fly for Brisbane on January 24.

Although yesterday's development came as a surprise, the BCB was yet to take any decision about a replacement as they wanted to wait for a few more days to know about

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

Biswa Ijtema begins today

STAR REPORT

Ignoring chilling winter and the 20-party blockade, thousands of devotees have gathered on the bank of the Turag at Tongi as the first phase of Biswa Ijtema, Muslims' second largest congregation after the hajj, begins today.

Organised by Tabligh Jamaat, the first phase of Ijtema, which will formally start after Fazr prayers with religious sermons by Islamic scholars and prayers, is scheduled to end with Akheri Munajat on Sunday, seeking spiritual wellbeing and welfare of the Muslim Ummah.

Several million devotees in and outside the capital are expected to join Juma

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1



Cargo vessels moving through the Shela river in the Sundarbans. The route was reopened on Wednesday after remaining closed for about a month following a tanker oil spill on December 9.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



Teixobactin

The first new antibiotic in 30 years

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A new antibiotic – the first in nearly 30 years – has been discovered by scientists who claim it appears to be as good, or even better, than many existing drugs with the potential to work against

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

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CELEBRATING 20 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

The Daily Star

Integral Energy Limited ONLINE POLL

Do you think it was justified for the government to allow vessels to ply through the Shela river in the Sundarbans defying the UN experts and environmentalists recommendations?

Yes (09%) No (91%)

TOTAL VOTES: 224

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think it was justified for the new director general of the Rapid Action Battalion, Benazir Ahmed that his force would not take the responsibility for past criminal activities committed by its members?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING January 9

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
5-30	12-30	4-00	5-30	7-00
6-05	1-15	4-15	5-35	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation