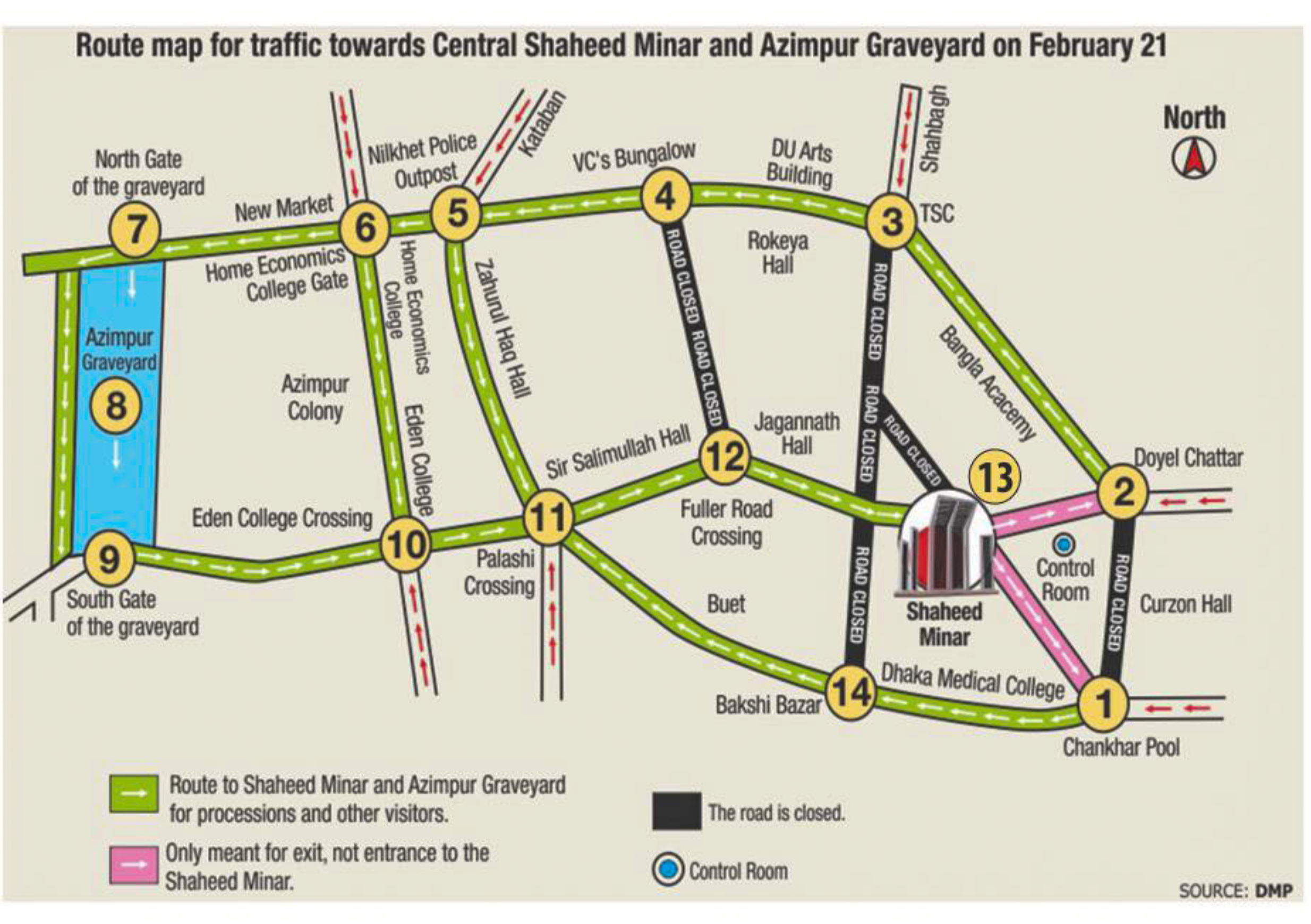


WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 32.2 L 19.5	CHITTAGONG H 32.6 L 20.5	SYLHET H 31.0 L 18.5	RAJSHAHI H 32.7 L 16.9	KHULNA H 33.5 L 20.5	BARISAL H 33.5 L 19.6	RANGPUR H 28.5 L 16.0	COX'S BAZAR H 33.8 L 21.5
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Weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur at places over the country during late night till morning, said Met Office. Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged and day temperature may rise slightly over the country. **The sun sets in the capital today at 5:55pm and rises tomorrow at 6:29am.**



Security beefed up at Shaheed Minar
DMP to deploy 9,000 policemen
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To avert any untoward incident, Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) has taken a four-tier security measure at the Central Shaheed Minar and in surrounding areas ahead of the International Mother Language Day on February 21, DMP Commissioner Asaduzzaman Miah told a press briefing at DMP media centre yesterday.

"About 8,000 policemen in uniforms and 1,000 detectives in plainclothes will be deployed in the areas... vehicular movement on roads will be restricted," said Asaduzzaman, adding that Shahabbagh to Shaheed Minar areas will be under CCTV cameras.

People from different tiers will be allowed to march towards the Shaheed Minar and offer tributes after 12:45am after the President Abdul Hamid, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, cabinet members and foreign diplomats have left the premises, he added.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

Youth in shop hurt by stray bullet in capital
Muggers open fire while taking away Tk 5 lakh
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A shop staff was injured by a stray bullet as muggers opened fire while snatching Tk 5 lakh from a bKash sales representative in the capital's Shah Ali area yesterday.

Al Amin, 25, who was inside Rokeya Pharmacy, is undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, said police.

Four to five muggers on two motorbikes intercepted sales representative Salahuddin alias Jewell on road no-6 and took away the money from him. While fleeing, they opened fire and the bullet hit Amin, police said.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

All DSCC streets to get LED lights this year
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Light emitting diode (LED) bulbs will replace all sodium and other forms of street lights under Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) this year, increasing visibility and reducing electricity consumption, said Mayor Sayeed Khokon yesterday.

Inaugurating the initiative by switching on lights near Panthakunja, he also said CCTV camera footages would be clearer and law enforcing agencies would be able to easily identify persons inside the moving vehicles.

Initially, 2,687 LED lights would be installed by June, costing around Tk 21 crore, from Banglamotor to Central Shaheed Minar via Shahabbagh, from Shahabbagh to Jatiya Press Club via Doyel Chattar, from Kadam Foara to Ruposhi Bangla via the Kakrail mosque and from

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

Third gender deserves equal human dignity
Bandhu, USAID discussion told
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Even a festival like Eid or Puja that brings boundless joy for all comes as an unbearable agony for the third gender known as Hijra, said a leader of the minority group yesterday, while narrating the anguish of the hermaphrodite population deserted by families.

"None cares about us; even burial of a hermaphrodite invites a crisis," said Anonnya Banik, a third gender and liaison officer of Bandhu Social Welfare Society (BSWS), at a discussion.

Bandhu with the support of USAID organised the discussion on "humanity, human rights, and health care -- parity, social justice and role of civil society" at The Daily Star Centre.

There is no space in society for a person to grow up as a hermaphrodite; they either have to be identified as a male or female, while they are none, she said. The families too start disowning a hermaphrodite child in fear of social "stigma", she added.

"At some point we spare our families the burden and seek refuge in the community of fellows only to live a life of utter indignity," said a sorrowful Anonnya.

Owners in Dhaka city do not rent out houses to hermaphrodites; they have to stay outside the capital city, she said, citing her own example that she has to live in Savar but to travel every day to attend her work in Kakrail.

Pinki Sikdar, a hermaphrodite and executive director of Badhan that works for rights of the third gender, said they forsook their families, when their personal liberty was restricted and

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

Star anniversary celebration a projection meeting: Hanif
 BSS, Dhaka

Awami League joint general secretary Mahbub-ul-Alam Hanif yesterday said most of the people of Bangladesh believed that the founding anniversary celebration programme of The Daily Star was nothing but a "projection meeting".

"The projection meeting was held with the person who was the key man behind the 1/11 conspiracy (of 2006)," he said without mentioning any name.

He made the remarks at a press conference after emerging from a joint meeting of the party at AL president Sheikh Hasina's political office at the capital's Dhanmondi.

Hanif said, "The Daily Star celebrated its founding anniversary a few

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

FOLLOW YOUR FOOD

NUTRITIOUS BOTTLE GOURDS

Consistently present in the Bangladeshi meal scene and throughout the year at low prices, bottle gourd (more commonly known as lau) is one such vegetable. A staple in our diet, let that be for breakfast, lunch, and dinner or maybe even in the form of a snack, this vegetable can be prepared in many different ways, such as a side dish or dessert. Bottle gourd is mostly used to prepare curry dishes. But their greener, younger counterparts can even be prepared in the form of a dessert. They contain vitamins, minerals and fibers that are essential for human health.

Bottle gourds contain vitamin-C; one of the most natural powerful antioxidants that assist the body in the elimination of free radicals that is one of the causes associated with cancer developments. Additionally, the vegetable is a great source of thiamin, niacin (vitamin B-3), pyridoxine (vitamin B-6), pantothenic acid (vitamin B-5), and minerals such as iron, zinc, manganese, potassium, calcium, and magnesium. The combination of these vitamins and minerals protect the body from many physical ailments such as Anemia, Osteoporosis, Rickets, and Tetany. Bottle gourds boost the immunity system; prevent infections, development failure in children, heart arrhythmia, muscular fatigue and muscle cramps.

Bottle gourd is a known remedy for indigestion and constipation as it assists in easy digestion and believed to aid with liver function, urinary tract infections and stop graying of hair; juice of the leaves help cure jaundice. Fresh bottle gourds contain traces of folates that decrease the probabilities of neural defects in newborns when taken by the mothers during the earlier trimesters.

Md. Badsha from Bogra is a vegetable farmer who supplies Shwapno with an array of vegetables including bottle gourds. The whole process of cultivating bottle gourds takes about 6-7 weeks. It takes about a week to prepare the soil before Badsha can start sowing the seeds for bottle gourd cultivation. The soil is prepped using natural fertilizers such as cow dung, after which the seeds are planted on days when it is not cloudy or raining.

Photo: Dolon Talukder

When vegetables are mature enough to be picked, they go through a three step sorting process based on their sizes. They are then wrapped in banana leaves and jute and sent straight away to Shwapno. The goal is to get the local fresh vegetables from the fields to the shelves of Shwapno at the earliest hour possible for which reason the entire process takes no longer than a day.

UP POLLS 2016

Chairmen hopefuls facing harassment
Alleges BNP
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday alleged that its chairmen hopefuls for the upcoming union parishad (UP) polls were facing harassment, intended at keeping them away from electioneering, in many places.

"You all know better who those people are... They want to establish one-party ruling system wearing the mask of democracy," Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi Ahmed told journalists at the Election Commission (EC) secretariat.

He had led a five-member delegation to submit to EC Secretary Sirazul Islam a letter stating that acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir would attest BNP-nominated chairmen candidates.

Ruhul stated his apprehension that the ruling Awami League men might stuff

SEE PAGE 5 COL 7

Evidence found against 3 Mymensingh men
Says crimes tribunal's investigation agency
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal's investigation agency yesterday said to have found evidence of three Mymensingh men's alleged involvement in crimes committed during the 1971 Liberation War.

Accused Amjad Ali, 88, is the son of Fajar Ali Akanda of Palashihata (or Kishoreganj) village; Riaz Uddin Fakir, 65, son of Nayeab Ali Fakir of Bhalukjan village and Wajuddin, 70, son of Joynal Abedin of Bidyananda village under Phulbaria upazila in Mymensingh.

The agency, however, will suggest that the prosecution presses charges against only Riaz and Wajuddin as Amjad died while investigations were ongoing, the agency's coordinator, Abdul Hannan Khan, told

journalists at its Dhanmondi office.

Involved with Jamaat-e-Islami's politics, Riaz is now in jail and Wajuddin on the run, he said.

Hannan said there were at least five charges of the trio "committing" crimes like abduction, torture, killing, rape and genocide between August 22 and November 21. The agency cited 36 people as prosecution witnesses, he added.

The charges are over the abduction, torture and killing of three people of Kalairpar, Chaklauripara and Phulbaria municipality between August 22 and 25; killings of three people of Bidyananda and Betbari on August 27; a genocide killing eight Hindus and raping of three Hindu women in Risipara on November 5; a genocide killing 43

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

Abducted Bangladeshi-born US
 FROM PAGE 4

Mofizul frequently visited Bangladesh over business purposes every year, said Mofizul's nephew Abul Hossain who filed the abduction case with the police station on Wednesday.

He was supposed to fly back on February 22 to New York where he lives with his family, he added.

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