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## THE YEAR IN REVIEW: ECONOMY

# Shrinking revenue a growing worry

Sometimes things have to go wrong in order to go right, American author Sherrilyn Kenyon once said.

When AHM Mustafa Kamal assumed the role of finance minister on January 7, there were many things that were wrong with the economy. In other words, the stage was set for him to showcase his intellectual elasticity and can-do bravado to correct those wrongs and definitively set the economy on the right track.

"It is not difficult to address the existing problems. You will no longer see the faults that you now see," he said in a press conference on the day he was announced as the new finance minister.

Twelve months on, cold hard data suggests that he sat by idly. When he took over, exports and revenue were on the slow lane, defaulted loans were ballooning and the stock market was sinking. Those

2019'S REPORT CARD			
	A+	A	B C
Remittance	✓		
Exports			✓
Revenue			✓
Default loans			✓
Credit growth			✓
Inflation	✓		
Balance of payment	✓		
GDP	✓		

ailments still exist and in fact have -- taken a turn for the worse.

Bangladesh's inadequate revenue stream in comparison to the size of the economy and development works is of great concern.

At 9.2 percent, Bangladesh's tax-to-GDP ratio last fiscal year was one of the lowest

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Jebun Nesa, 45, gazes blankly into the distance as she sits amid the charred remains of her shanty at Baunia slum in the capital's Mirpur yesterday, a day after a fire gutted around 87 homes and 17 shops there. Story on page 16.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## DU CAMPUS 12 student fronts unite to combat violence

DU CORRESPONDENT

A new student alliance -- Santrash Birodhi Chhatra Oikya -- was formed yesterday on the Dhaka University campus to combat violence.

It has 12 student organisations.

At a press conference at the Madhur Canteen, Ducus Social Service Affairs Secretary Akhtar Hossen, also a joint convener of Bangladesh Sadharan Chhatra Adhikar Sangrakkhan Parishad, announced the platform's name.

"To bring an end to the ongoing violence, all the students need to unite. Our alliance, comprising democratic and progressive student organisations, begins its activities today officially. We will protest against communal and autocratic forces," he said while reading out a statement.

The alliance members are: Bangladesh Sadharan Chhatra Adhikar Parishad Sangrakkhan, Chhatra Federation (Gana Samhati Andolon), Samajantrik Chhatra Front (Marxist), Samajantrik Chhatra Front (BSD), Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Biplobi Chhatra Moitri, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation (Jatiya Mukti Council), Biplobi Chhatra-Jubo Andolan, Greater Chittagong Hill Tracts Pahari Chhatra Parishad, Nagarik Chhatra

**SEVEN RINGS CEMENT**  
FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE

## Khulna coast into 3rd place

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangabandhu Bangladesh Premier League's (BBPL's) second Dhaka phase kicked off yesterday in Mirpur, with table-toppers Chattogram Challengers winning a low-scoring day match and Khulna Tigers thumping lowly Rangpur Rangers by 52 runs in the night game at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

Khulna skipper Mushfiqur Rahim hit a polished 59 off 43 balls as they posted 182 for seven.

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## Terminal to match aspirations

Much-needed expansion work at Shahjalal airport begins today

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and RASHIDUL HASAN

First impressions are the most lasting, it is often said. And in case of cities and countries, it is often airports that provides that.

And Dhaka's dimly, antiquated Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA), built about four decades ago and has not gone through any major facelift since, definitely do not do justice to what Dhaka and Bangladesh stand in this day and age.

Which is why, the ground breaking ceremony of HSIA's Terminal 3 today, after a delay of three years, warrants a toast.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the construction works of Terminal 3, which is expected to be modern, world-class and more befitting of the aspiring higher middle-income country that Bangladesh is today.

The terminal will cost Tk 21,399 crore and is expected to be complete in four years' time if the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) can keep a tight grip on the proceedings.

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## DCC COUNCILLORS

# AL, BNP grapple with glut of aspirants

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Both the ruling Awami League and the BNP were struggling to pick councillor candidates for the January 30 Dhaka north and south city corporation elections after multiple aspirants collected nomination forms for each post.

Although the councillor polls would be non-partisan, the parties were giving much importance on backing the deserving candidates, who are expected to join the election campaign for the mayor contenders.

Amid this backdrop, the AL and the BNP are set to announce the names of the mayor and councillor candidates today.

The situation seems to be more complicated for the AL. On an average, eight aspirants are seeking the party's blessing for each councillor post.

For the BNP, the number is three.

Also, some current councillors from the ruling party have been on the run since allegations surfaced that they were involved in illegal casino business and misusing power.

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## 'Robber' killed in 'gunfight' with cops

UNB, Noakhali

A suspected robber was killed in a "gunfight" with police at Nateswar in Sonaimuri upazila of Noakhali early yesterday.

The dead is Mokhesur Rahman alias Dacoit Subal, 38, of Durgapur village in Begumganj upazila of the district, said police.

Abdus Samad, officer-in-charge of Sonaimuri Police Station, claimed a patrol team of police encountered a group of robber around 12:45am. Sensing the police presence, the criminals opened fire.

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**BRAC SAAJAN MoneyTransfer**



With its headlamps on, a train leaves the fog-shrouded capital around noon yesterday. Road, rail and river communications have been badly disrupted across the country due to a cold wave for the last few days. The photo was taken in the city's Tejgaon area.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Wind, rain chill North

Mercury may drop further across the country today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mild cold wave, which is sweeping over the regions of Panchagarh, Dinajpur and Nilphamari, may continue and spread, according to the Met office.

"Temperature across the country will go down by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius Saturday [today]. The intensity of fog will also increase," said Arif Hossain, meteorologist of Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD).

Meanwhile, the number of patients with diseases related to cold has increased in different districts.

According to the BMD, the lowest temperature in the country was recorded yesterday in Tetulia at 9.2 degrees Celsius. In Dinajpur, the temperature was recorded at 9.4 degrees Celsius while in Nilphamari it was 10 degrees Celsius. In Dhaka, the lowest temperature was 15.2 degrees Celsius.

Light rain is likely to occur at a few places in Chattogram and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places in Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka, Mymensingh and Rajshahi divisions as seasonal low lies over the south Bay, the BMD said.

Weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country.

Meanwhile, chilly weather, coupled with rain, disrupted normal life in different regions of the country yesterday.

In Bogura, people suffered because of wind and rain, said Shah Md Sajib, assistant meteorologist of Bogura BMD.

The situation was similar in other northern districts.

The lowest temperature in Bogura town was recorded at 12.4 degrees Celsius yesterday.

Rain may rise the intensity of cold in the town in the next two days, Sajib said.

Abdul Wadud, assistant director of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogura, said, "The number of patients with diseases related to cold is increasing slightly in the last two days. But the situation is under control."

"Fourteen children have been admitted to the hospital with pneumonia and Diarrhoea while 11 adults were admitted with asthma during this time," he said.

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