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'We will govern expansively, audaciously'

Says NY Mayor Mamdani in his inaugural speech

AFP, New York



Zohran Mamdani promised Thursday to show left-wing politics can succeed as he took over as New York mayor for a term sure to see him cross swords with US President Donald Trump.

Thousands of people gathered in freezing conditions in the United States' largest city to celebrate the 34-year-old Democrat's inauguration after his impressive political rise from relative anonymity just a year ago.

"They want to know if the left can govern. They want to know if the struggles that afflict them can be solved," Mamdani said outside City Hall. "We will do something that New Yorkers do better than anyone else: we will set an example for the world."

In the 24-minute speech, he added: "Beginning today, we will govern expansively and audaciously."

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For quite some time, Northbrook Hall Road near Victoria Park in Old Dhaka has remained dug up for the renovation of the sewage system. Locals complain that the slow pace of work by Dhaka South City Corporation is disrupting daily life. Iron rods and mud piled on the road restrict movement, while open trenches pose risks of injuries, and the stagnant water raises fears of a dengue outbreak. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Dense fog disrupts flights, triggers road accidents

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dense fog returned to Dhaka and elsewhere across the country yesterday morning after two days of clearer weather, disrupting flight schedules and causing multiple road accidents.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, seven districts were under a cold wave yesterday, compared to 16 districts the previous day.

The fog spread over nearly two-thirds of the country, including Dhaka and most other areas, except parts of the Rajshahi, Rangpur and Khulna divisions, reducing visibility and creating unsafe conditions on roads and at airports.

The BMD also said the country may experience two to three mild to moderate cold waves and one to two moderate to severe cold waves in January.

In some areas mercury may go down to as low as 4°C, as per the month's climate outlook that was issued following an expert committee meeting on Thursday.

Earlier, sunlight returned on Wednesday after four consecutive days of fog. Light fog remained on Thursday morning, but dense fog returned early yesterday.

Asked about the cold spell, Tariful Newaz Kabir, a meteorologist at the BMD, said the weather may remain the same for the next few days.

The daytime temperature may rise slightly tomorrow [Sunday], but the mercury will drop again from the following day, he said.

"As there will be a thick fog blanket over most of the

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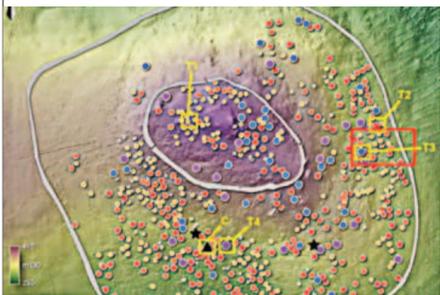
Prehistoric village discovered in Britain, Ireland

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Archaeologists have uncovered what could be the largest cluster of houses ever discovered in the entirety of prehistoric Britain and Ireland.

Until now, the largest cluster of ancient settlements known in Ireland was Mullaghfarna, an archaeological site in County Sligo.

The mound is thought to have contained over 150 houses during the middle Stone Age period of 3300-2900 BC, and also in the later Bronze Age period between 1200-900 BC.



Now, researchers have found evidence of an even larger settlement containing over 600 houses existing in prehistoric Ireland during the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age periods between 3700-800 BC.

The prehistoric house remains were unearthed in County Wicklow, Ireland. This region, called the Baltinglass hillfort cluster, has up to 13 large hilltop enclosures spread across a "necklace" of hills at the south-western edge of the Wicklow Mountains, with at least seven major hillforts and several additional enclosures.

SAINT MARTIN'S 20-BED HOSPITAL

When the sea stands between life and death

Most patients sent to Teknaf as lone hospital fails 10,000

TANGILA TASMIN

Forty-five-year-old fisherman Roton Mollah has been raising his young daughter alone for the past year after losing his wife and unborn child while trying to reach medical care from Saint Martin's Island.

"When she went into labour, I hired an auto-rickshaw and rushed her to the only hospital on the island. There were no doctors, only a few technicians. They told me to take her to Teknaf if I wanted proper treatment."

He set off again, hoping to reach the mainland in time. But before they could board a trawler, his wife collapsed from pain and died on the jetty. Their unborn child also died.

"People in Saint Martin's Island continue to die from otherwise easily treatable conditions. Just a few months ago, a man died from a heart attack because the hospital had no doctors or equipment," he said.

Saint Martin's Island, the smallest administrative unit (union) in Bangladesh, is home to thousands but lacks adequate education and healthcare facilities. Water transport remains the primary mode of travel.

- » Staff shortages persist despite projects
- » Only basic care available
- » Home births linked to maternal, neonatal deaths
- » Referral hospitals across the Bay
- » Transport delays proving fatal



According to the 2022 census, the union had a population of 8,492 -- about 4,491 males and 4,001 females. The Health Services Division now estimates the number of permanent residents at around 10,000.

Yet the entire population, along with tourists, relies on a single facility -- Saint Martin's 20-Bed

Hospital. Established in 2002, it initially had 10 beds before being expanded to 20.

Though it initially had a workforce of around 30, including doctors, nurses, technicians and support staff, locals said most left soon after joining and the vacancies were never properly filled.

They added that medical teams arrive only temporarily through short-term projects or agreements.

Earlier media reports said that 16 NGO officials and employees were appointed at the hospital in March 2020 under a Health and Gender Support Project, but the posts lapsed after the project ended on June 30 last year due to a lack of funding.

A 2025 study titled "Community-based Environmental Management: The Case of St Martin's Island, Bangladesh", published by the Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education, found that the hospital offers only basic care -- treating fever, diarrhoea, minor injuries and normal births.

The lack of proper medical services is further compounded by geographic isolation, irregular transport and the absence of

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Labour shortages, fog push up some veggie prices

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Winter vegetables are now abundantly available across Dhaka's kitchen markets, but shoppers continue to face mixed price trends as labour shortages and fog-related disruptions keep several items costlier than expected.

Traders say dense fog in producing regions disrupted harvesting, while a shortage of farm labour pushed up procurement costs. "Workers were unwilling to work unless paid more. As a result, prices for some veggies rose by Tk 10-20 per kilogramme compared to last week," one trader said.

Onion prices, however, have eased by Tk 10-20 per kg within a week, selling at Tk 50-60 in retail markets. Imported onions were priced at Tk 60-70.

At Karwan Bazar, wholesale potato trader Md Sabuj of Bikrampur Bhandar said old potatoes from cold storage are now available at nominal prices, selling at Tk 9-11 per kg wholesale.

New potatoes are costlier, with wholesale prices rising by Tk 2 per kg over the past week to Tk 15-20, while retail prices stood at Tk 25-30.

Supplies are currently arriving from Thakurgaon and Nilphamari, mostly hybrid varieties, with Bogura expected to begin shipments in two weeks and Munshiganj in about a month.

Mosharraf Hossain, a trader with decades in the business, said prices of coriander leaves, green chillies, beans, cauliflower and cabbage are comparatively cheaper, but tomatoes, eggplant, ridge gourd, bottle gourd, long beans and radish have all seen hikes of Tk 10-20 per kg.

Ripe tomatoes, which sold for Tk 60-70 last week, were

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US 'locked and loaded' to respond

Trump warns to intervene if Iran suppresses peaceful protests; Tehran vows response

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump said yesterday that the United States is "locked and loaded" to respond if Iran kills protesters, after cost-of-living demonstrations in the country turned deadly.

Protesters and security forces clashed in several Iranian cities Thursday with six reported killed in the first deaths since the unrest escalated.

Shopkeepers in the capital Tehran went on strike Sunday over high prices and economic stagnation, actions that have since spread to other parts of the country.

Trump said on his Truth Social platform that "if Iran shoots and violently kills peaceful protesters, which is their custom, the United States of America will come to their rescue."

"We are locked and loaded and ready to go," the Republican leader added.

Meanwhile, Iran yesterday warned against any US intervention in the country, vowing a response. "Any interventionist hand that attacks Iran's security under any pretext whatsoever will be exposed to a response," Ali Shamkhani, an adviser to the supreme leader, wrote on X. "Iran's security is a red line."

Iran's Fars news agency reported Thursday that two people were killed in clashes between security forces and protesters in the city of Lordegan, in the province of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, and three in Azna, in neighbouring Lorestan province.



A mourner lights candles outside the "Le Constellation" bar yesterday after a New Year's Eve fire and explosion in Crans-Montana, Switzerland, that killed at least 40 and injured more than 100. Investigators have begun the painful task of identifying the victims.

PHOTO: REUTERS



Rhymester Sukumar Barua dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekushey Padak winning esteemed rhymester Sukumar Barua is no more. He died at 6:55am yesterday at a hospital in Chattogram. He was 87.

His daughter, Anjana Barua, confirmed the news to The Daily Star, saying he had been admitted for the past week with multiple health complications. Fluid had accumulated in his lungs, and he passed away while undergoing treatment.

Family sources said Sukumar suffered a stroke in 2006 that paralysed his right leg. Since then, he had battled heart disease, high

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