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# Shut them all within 2 months

HC asks DoE to implement order in 5 districts, including Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued some directives for the government to reduce air pollution in and around the capital and also ordered the Department of Environment to shut down the rest of the illegal brick kilns in five districts, including Dhaka, in next two months.

It also asked the authorities to seize the vehicles emitting black smoke beyond permissible limit in Dhaka city.

The directives and orders came during the hearing for a writ petition, filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh in January last year.

On Sunday, the DoE submitted a report to the HC stating that it has shut down 349 illegal brick kilns, which have no environment clearance certificate, out of 559 in Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, Munshiganj and Manikganj in line with the court's earlier directive.

The DoE said the brick kilns were closed through operating mobile courts and issuing notices. Besides, it realised fines of Tk 4.93 crore from the owners of the brick kilns, and the drives were going on.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice FRM Nazmul Ahasan and Justice KM Kamrul Kader in its directives said

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Two little girls are sleeping under a thin blanket at the capital's Kamalapur Railway Station on Sunday night. Earlier in the evening, they arrived from Kishoreganj with their mother, who would take them to a doctor at Dhaka Medical College Hospital the next morning. The family had nowhere else to go, so they spent the night at the station amid the bone-chilling cold.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

## Relief from cold likely in 2 days

STAR REPORT

Temperatures may rise over the next few days, reducing the effects of the cold wave sweeping over the country, says the Met office.

"Temperatures have already started increasing today [Monday] and will continue for the next couple of days," said Monwar Hossain, a meteorologist at Bangladesh Meteorological Department.

But another cold spell may hit the country by the end of this week, he told The Daily Star yesterday evening.

In the 24-hour weather bulletin, the Met office last night said, "Night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged and day temperatures may rise by two to three degrees Celsius across the country."

Along with it, moderate to thick fog may occur over the country between midnight and noon, the bulletin said.

Yesterday's lowest temperature was recorded at 7.2 degrees Celsius in Tentulia of Panchagarh,

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## DIGITAL SECURITY ACT Arrested baul to be produced at court today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Baul singer Shariat Sarkar will be produced before a Tangail court today after a three-day remand, police said.



Shariat Sarkar

Mirzapur police arrested the 40-year-old folk singer on Saturday in a case filed under the Digital Security Act, charging him with hurting Muslim sentiment.

He was arrested in Mymensingh's Bhaluka upazila.

Shariat, who studied up to class VI, is a resident of Jamurki area of Mirzapur upazila, police said.

Mohammad Faridul Islam filed the case with Mirzapur Police Station on January 9, accusing Shariat of making comments during a performance that hurt his "religious sentiment".

Immediately after the arrest, police produced him before a judicial magistrate's court in Tangail with a 10-day remand prayer. The court of Senior Judicial Magistrate Akramul Islam placed him on a 3-day remand, Court Inspector Tanvir

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## 'Clerics get lost!'

Iran protests rage on over plane disaster; police deny shooting protesters

REUTERS, Dubai

Protesters denouncing Iran's clerical rulers took to the streets and riot police deployed to face them yesterday, in a third day of demonstrations after authorities acknowledged shooting down a passenger plane by accident.

Demonstrations, some apparently met by a violent crackdown, are the latest twist in one of the most serious escalations between the United States and Iran since the 1979 Iranian revolution swept the US-backed shah from power.

Video from inside Iran yesterday showed students chanting slogans including "Clerics get lost!" outside universities in the city of Isfahan and in Tehran, where riot police were filmed taking out positions on the streets. Images from the previous two days of protests showed wounded people being carried and pools of blood on the ground. Gunshots could be heard, although the police denied opening fire.

US President Donald Trump, who raised the stakes last week by ordering the killing in a drone strike of Iran's most powerful military commander, tweeted to Iran's leaders: "don't kill your protesters."

Tehran has acknowledged shooting down the Ukrainian jetliner by mistake on Wednesday, killing all 176 aboard, hours after it had fired at US targets in Iraq to retaliate for the killing on January 3 of General Qassem Soleimani in Baghdad.

Iranian public anger, rumbling for days as Iran repeatedly denied it was to blame for the plane crash, erupted into protests on Saturday when the military admitted its role.

Scores, possibly hundreds, of protesters were videoed at sites in Tehran and Isfahan, a major city south of the capital.

"They killed our elites and replaced them with clerics," they chanted outside a Tehran university, referring to Iranian students returning to studies in Canada who were on the plane.

'DON'T BEAT THEM'

Videos posted late on Sunday recorded the gunfire around protests in

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## 'GUNFIGHT' WITH COPS 2 'narcotics dealers' killed in Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Two suspected drug peddlers were killed in a "gunfight" with detectives during an anti-drug raid in Dinajpur Sadar upazila early yesterday, said police.

The dead are Rahmat Ali, 35, from Dakkhin Balubari village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila and Abul Kashem, 34, from Shipahipara village in the same upazila.

Two policemen were also injured in the incident. They are Nahid Hossain, assistant sub-inspector at the Detective Branch (DB) of police in Dinajpur, and Mahbub Alam, a constable at the same unit, said Anwar Hossain superintendent of police (SP) in Dinajpur.

They are being treated at M Abdur Rahim Medical College Hospital in Dinajpur, Anwar said.

During a press conference at his office yesterday, Anwar said being

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## HUNT FOR LIFE BEYOND EARTH China launches gigantic telescope



REUTERS, Shanghai

China on Saturday officially opened operations of the world's largest radio telescope, which it will use for space research and help in the hunt for extra-terrestrial life, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

The Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope, or FAST, is the size of 30 football fields and has been hewed out of a mountain in the southwestern province of Guizhou. It is also known by the name "Sky Eye" in China.

Xinhua reported that the telescope had received national approval to start operations. It finished construction in 2016 and has been undergoing debugging and tests in the years since.

FAST's Chief Engineer Jiang Peng told Xinhua that the telescope's trial operations had so far been reliable and stable, and that its sensitivity was more than 2.5 times that of the world's second-largest

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## Pakistan HC annuls death penalty of Musharraf

AFP, Lahore

A Pakistan court yesterday annulled the death sentence handed to former military ruler Pervez Musharraf, ruling that the special court which had found him guilty of treason last year was unconstitutional, a government prosecutor told AFP.

The original ruling had marked the first time a former leader of the armed forces had faced such a sentence for treason in Pakistan, where the military maintains strong influence

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**PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 14**  
Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:36 7:00  
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:40 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## 'Neo-JMB IT den' busted in Savar

1 held; bomb-making materials, sharp weapons seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Police yesterday busted a den of "Neo-JMB" and arrested a female member of the militant outfit in Ashulia's Gokulnagar area on the outskirts of the capital.

Police also seized bomb-making materials, crude bombs, sharp weapons, three toy pistols, and computer equipment.

The arrestee Shaila Sharmin, 25, is the wife of militant suspect Tanvir who is a student of Jahangirnagar University and an IT expert. Police are looking for him, said Maruf Hossain Sarder, superintendent of police in Dhaka.

Being tipped off about a militant den, police raided a two-storey building in the evening, he told reporters at the scene after the raid.

The suspects rented a flat on the ground floor of the building one-and-a-half-

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A cart with logs sticking out plying the Buriganga Second Bridge in the capital's Babu Bazar area yesterday. Such slow-moving vehicles, which are often involved in accidents, are not allowed on the bridge.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Queen agrees 'transition' for Harry, Meghan

AFP, Sandringham

Queen Elizabeth II yesterday said Prince Harry and his wife Meghan would be allowed to split their time between Britain and Canada while their future is finalised.

The couple said last week they wanted to step back from the royal frontline, catching the family off guard and forcing the monarch to convene crisis talks about the pair's future roles.

The 93-year-old queen, her son and heir Prince Charles, and his two sons princes William and Harry began a family summit at her private Sandringham estate in Norfolk, eastern England, yesterday.

She called the discussions "very constructive" and said she and her family were "entirely supportive of Harry and Meghan's desire to create a new life as a young family."

"Although we would have preferred them to remain full-time working members of the royal family, we respect and understand their wish to live a more independent life as a family while remaining a valued part of my family," she added.

"Harry and Meghan have made clear that they do not want to be reliant on public funds in their new lives.

"It has therefore been agreed that there will be a period of transition in which the Sussexes will spend time in

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