

## Weather

## Cloudy sky forecast

Light rain or drizzle is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi divisions and the regions of Mymensingh and Tangail till 6pm today, reports UNB.

Weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country. Light change in night temperature is expected over the country, Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 30.5 degree Celsius at Cox's Bazar and the lowest 10.0 degree at Dinajpur.

**The sun sets in the capital today at 5.25 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.43 am.**

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius	Humidity in percentage	Morning	Evening
Max	Min			
Dhaka	25.6	17.8	72	68
Chittagong	30.0	17.0	80	76
Rajshahi	24.5	15.4	87	70
Khulna	26.4	16.8	76	-
Barisal	28.0	15.4	79	80
Sylhet	27.7	15.7	74	67
Cox's Bazar	30.5	18.0	78	75

## Nepal FM's trip

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use of the route for five days a week, it is virtually 'non-functional' due to inadequate infrastructural facilities at Bangabandhu. The land port needs a regular customs post, and warehousing and telecommunications facilities to develop into a useful transit point.

Once the infrastructure is in place and cargo starts moving in volume, Kathmandu will be in a position to ask New Delhi to allow unhindered transit access seven days a week through Bangabandhu, said an official familiar with transit negotiations.

The other transiting point for Nepalese goods through Bangladesh, which was established first, is the Birol-Radhipur rail route. Rail wagons carrying cargo, particularly fertiliser, use this link up to Birol located at Parbatipur. This route is lengthy and time consuming.

Nepal is likely to request Bangladesh to allow opening of

## 'PSA will prove AL's bane'

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proved that the law is being employed against the BNP leaders and activists, not against the miscreants, terrorists, killers, hijackers because they have connections with the ruling party, Bhuiyan said.

"AL activists led by several ministers damaged more than 500 vehicles in the city on December 14 after the High Court had given its ruling on the Bangabandhu murder case, but no case was filed against them," he said.

The AL government has destroyed political atmosphere in the country, jeopardised democracy, made parliament ineffective, ruined economy in a motive to stay in power permanently with the help of their masters, the BNP leader alleged.

He demanded immediate withdrawal of the false case filed against Morsed Khan, his son and others.

Bhuiyan announced that BNP would hold a public meeting at Paltan Maidan on January 11 to press for cancellation of PSA, resignation of the government and withdrawal of false cases filed under PSA against BNP leaders and activists. Khaleda Zia will address the meeting, he added.

In his speech, Khoka termed the case against Morsed Khan, his son Faisal Khan and others on charge of looting Tk 45,000 from a sweetmeat shop "unbelievable and ridiculous."

Sramik Dal general secretary Nazrul Islam Khan said, the case

## Death anniversary

The first death anniversary of Mohiuddin Ahmed, a former editor of now defunct Dainik Desh and a former student leader, will be observed today, says a press release.

A mild mahfil and doa will be held at his residence in the afternoon today to mark the occasion, the release added.

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The second death anniversary of the social worker Begum Shahida Diwan will be observed today, says a press release.

A doa will be held after Maghrib prayers at the official residence (BGTC Campus) of her second son Dewan Hamidul Hassan, Senior Instructor, Bangladesh German Technical Training Centre (BGTC), Mirpur today to mark the occasion.

Begum Shahida Diwan was the wife of distinguished educationist and professor of Dhaka University Md Rustam Ali Diwan.

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The fourth death anniversary of Akhtarruzzaman Ilias, a noted novelist and a former vice-president of Bangladesh Lekhok Shibir will be observed today, says a press release.

The central committee of Lekhok Shibir will place wreath at his graveyard at Bogra today and hold a discussion meeting on his works.

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## Pak bid for 'Shanghai Five' membership

DUSHANBE, Jan 3 : Pakistan has sought membership of the Shanghai Five, an organisation grouping Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan which aims to settle border disputes and promote security in Central Asia, a Pakistani embassy spokesman said here today, reports AFP.

The reasons for Pakistan's demand were not immediately given by the ambassador here, and the Tajik foreign ministry declined to comment on the bid.

The five first met in Shanghai in April 1996 to discuss border issues but the focus of the summits has since shifted to questions of regional security and economic cooperation.

The members vowed in July to create an anti-terrorist unit in the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek to quell drug and arms trafficking, as well as Islamic fundamentalist incursions in the region, notably from Afghanistan.

Pakistan has been accused of supporting the Islamic militia in Afghanistan, who faced sanctions jointly tabled by Moscow and Washington for its alleged support to international terrorism.

Trade officials believe that the most important aspect of giving access to Rohanpur rail transit point is the prospect of opening up the Mongla port for bulk use of Nepalese cargo, wooing away both revenue and traffic from Calcutta.

Besides, both governments will have to remove tariff barriers to allow more commodities to enter each other's market, should they want enhancement of bilateral trade, observers feel.

Diplomatic circles in Dhaka and Kathmandu are eagerly looking forward to adoption of fresh measures towards strengthened economic ties during the upcoming visit of the Nepalese foreign minister.

He said the matter could also be discussed in the BNP parliamentary party.

## Salt factories

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On the other hand, owners of iodised salt factories are being deprived of DOs (delivery orders) from TCB office to meet the growing domestic need.

Because, TCB is failing to supply any more imported salt as the stock has exhausted.

TCB officials said that it has already distributed 30,000 tonnes. The rest 20,000 tonnes have been kept reserved for creating buffer stock. As a result, salt factories in Khulna zone are suffering from acute crisis of non-refined salt.

The rally was addressed among others by Amanullah Aman MP, Nazimuddin Alam MP, Abdus Salam, Kazi Abul Bashar, Chowdhury Alam, Abu Sayed Khan Khokon, Shahidul Islam Dulal and Shirin Sultan.

After the rally, BNP leaders and activists brought out a procession and chanted slogans against the government and filing of the case against Morsed Khan.

**Sudan extends state of emergency**

KHARTOUM, Jan 3 : Sudan's Islamist military leader Omar al-Beshir today extended a year-long state of emergency for another 12 months, reports AFP.

Beshir, re-elected president in last month's elections that were boycotted by all the main opposition parties, extended the state of emergency until December 31, 2001, the official SANA news agency reported.

The presidential order, which was issued yesterday, gave no reason for the latest extension.

Beshir first declared a three-month state of emergency on December 12, 1999, following a power struggle with his former ally-turned rival Hassan Turabi.

He extended it to March to the end of the year 2000.

On December 12, 1999, Beshir declared both a state of emergency and dissolved parliament which was preparing to vote on curbs on presidential powers that were backed by Turabi, the parliamentary speaker.

The state of emergency has given Beshir's government increased powers of arrest.

A number of opposition leaders have been arrested in the last few weeks.

The main opposition parties that boycotted Sudan's elections for both presidential and parliament charged Saturday that the results were rigged after Beshir securely won another five-year term in office.

When contacted, Director General of Shipping Directorate Abdul Malek however said the directorate has formed special inspection teams to ensure safety river transport sector and check illegal activities.

## River transport

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There are no police in the court, causing security problem.

"We have repeatedly failed to catch offenders as we do not have vehicles to travel to the spots," said one of the inspectors requesting anonymity.

There is only one inspector for the entire river routes in northern districts, Dhaka and Aricha and one for Barisal, Patuakhali, Jhalakathi, Barguna and Srwupkathi.

"In many ways I am handicapped and the laws are too weak. So how can you expect to improve things in the river traffic system," said Magistrate Abdul Mannan Elias of the Marine Court.

There are hundreds of war-

rantants but none of the offenders turn up to surrender to the court," he added.

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## Guest birds

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Talking to reporters, Professor Sohrab Uddin Sarker of Zoology Department of Dhaka University, who accompanied a party of environmental journalists to the JU, revealed that as many as 200 to 215 types of guest birds used to come to the country even a decade back. But the number is decreasing each year because of indiscriminate poaching and scarcity of water bodies.

Prof. Sohrab said that guest birds like gangreny, gadwan, mallard, pintail, shobeler, etc fly to Bangladesh every winter from mainly Siberia and some European countries. These days, foreign birds can only be seen at Tanguar Haor, Nijhum Dwip, Dublar Char, Kutubdia areas.

He also informed that there are a few species of guest birds that live on trees. There are also some birds, which lays eggs there and give birth. The fledglings grow up to be resident birds. The migratory birds, on an average, stay here for nearly six months and then leave off on their flight back home.

But government denied that there had ever been any commitment other than the ones in the accord.

It also accused Larma of staying off the meetings of the treaty implementation committee and the refugee taskforce.

The central committee of Lekhok Shibir will place wreath at his graveyard at Bogra today and hold a discussion meeting on his works.

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## Shantu Larma

From Page 1  
ment had to postpone its plan to place the amendment before the Jatiya Sangsad in its last session.

Larma, on his part, is expected to raise issues such as rehabilitation of internal refugees, functioning of the Land Commission, relocation of non-tribal settlers out of CHT and withdrawal of the Army. He had recently said that the government had reneged on its commitments made during the signing of the treaty on December 2, 1997 and he did not expect the government to fulfil those.

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## News



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina unveiled the plaque of the foundation stone of 'Bijoy Tarango' to be built in memory of the members of Navy who embraced martyrdom in the great War of Liberation at Chittagong Naval Academy yesterday.

-PID photo

## PM : Indian Ocean

From Page 1  
hard work are essential.

She said they should keep in mind that there is no alternative to hard work and honesty. "Strong mental power and utilization of available facilities will give you the chance to excel."

Not the number but quality will be the determining factor of standard, she said and hoped that the new officials will utilise available resources and opportunities for the welfare of the people.

About the inclusion of female cadets in the naval force last January, the Prime Minister said this is certainly a revolutionary step of the government for establishing equal rights of men and women.

The Prime Minister praised the members of the naval force for their service to the nation, for controlling smuggling and protecting the maritime boundary and sea resources.

She also mentioned their role in saving the people during natural disasters and constructing homes under Asrayan projects for the homeless.

On arrival at the parade ground, the Prime Minister was received by Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral Abu Taher. She was taken to the tastefully decorated "Quarter Deck" (saluting dais).

Hasina took salute of the impressive march past of the midshipmen which was commanded by Midshipman Fazle Rabbi.

The Prime Minister distributed BSc degree certificates among the midshipmen conferred upon them by the National University. She also handed over trophies and medals among the outgoing midshipmen.

Midshipman Raquib M Habib was adjudged the best all-round midshipman and received the coveted sword of honour. He was

also presented with Osmani Gold Medal and Chief of the Naval Staff Gold Medal for outstanding performance in academic and professional subjects.

Ministers, MPs, Chittagong City Corporation Mayor Mofizuddin Chowdhury, Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Harunur Rashid, high civil and military officials and relatives and guardians of the midshipmen attended the ceremony.

After the parade, the Prime Minister laid the foundation of 'Bijoy Tarango' at Red Kin Point of the Academy in memory of the members of the Bangladesh Navy martyred during the liberation war of 1971.

Later, she witnessed an attractive steam past of Naval ship at the Karnaphuli river, in which 17 ships of navy including gun boat, missile ship, patrol craft and torpedo boats were used.

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Political insiders said the Opposition still stands by its previous decision not to attend the parliament sittings.

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They alleged that several BNP hardliners, including standing committee member Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, Jatiyatabadi Juba Dal President Mirza Abbas, BNP leader Salahuddin Qader Chowdhury and BNP Chairperson's private secretary Mosaddeq Ali Falu are responsible for inciting trouble in JCD by directly patronising the Pintu-Laltu faction.

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