

MODERATELY HEAVY TO
HEAVY FALLS LIKELY



WEATHER
TODAY

Unh, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka, Chittagong, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions in the 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also likely at places, Met Office said.
Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.
The sun sets in the capital today at 5:27pm and rises tomorrow at 6:00am.

Country's highest temperature 33.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 20.5 degrees at Dinajpur.
Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage			Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening		Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	30.7	24.2	78	94	Khulna	33.0	22.6	96	91
Chittagong	30.4	23.6	80	84	Barisal	30.0	23.9	81	93
Rajshahi	32.6	24.0	86	80	Sylhet	28.0	23.0	95	78
Rangpur	31.3	23.4	79	78	Cox's Bazar	30.5	25.0	77	85

CHANGING ELECTORAL CODE

Final draft to come in two or 3 days: EC Hafiz

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) will finalise the draft amendment to the electoral code of conduct for the upcoming general elections within two or three days, Election Commissioner Abu Hafiz said yesterday.
"After finalising it, we will send it to all registered political parties and put on the Election Commission's website seeking opinions of all stakeholders," he told reporters at EC Secretariat in the capital.
The aim of the amendment is to ensure a level-playing field, he said. "We are still to know whether the election would be held with or without dissolution of parliament. If the election is held without dissolution of parliament, MPs may join polls," he said. In that case, the code will be amended in a way so that MPs cannot enjoy extra facilities during campaign, he added.

China offers 400m RMB as development assistance

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

China will provide 600 million renminbi (RMB) as development assistance to Bangladesh in 2014.
Foreign Minister Dipu Moni was told this by her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi during a bilateral talk in Beijing on Sunday, said a foreign ministry release yesterday.
The amount includes 400 RMB, which is under discussion for different development projects between the two countries.
During the meeting, the foreign ministers discussed the entire range of bilateral relations including trade, investment, connectivity, defence, maritime cooperation, and relaxation of visa regime to ease people-to-people contact.
Terming Bangladesh a "big country" in South

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TIB welcomes publishing of National Broadcasting Policy draft

BSS, Dhaka

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) welcomed the publishing of the draft of National Broadcasting Policy (NBP) on the information ministry website for receiving opinions about the policy.
In a letter signed by TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman to Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu, TIB sent several recommendations with opinions about the policy, which was made by the information ministry, said an official release yesterday.
The information minister praised the role of TIB and hoped that TIB will continue their role in the government initiatives to develop media.



PHOTO: BSS

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over a certificate to a recipient of Bangabandhu Jatiya Krishi Puraskar 1418 at the capital's Osmani Memorial Hall yesterday. This year, 28 individuals and organisations were conferred the award for their contribution to the field of agriculture.

MEETING GROWING POPULATION'S FOOD DEMANDS

Intense agricultural research prerequisite: PM

She presents Bangabandhu Jatiya Krishi Puraskar-1418 to 28 persons, organisations

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday laid importance on constant and intense agricultural research to meet the demand for food of the country's growing population and make the country hunger and poverty free.
"Without new innovations to produce more food and make it more diverse, it is not possible to maintain the present pace of food production," she said while distributing Bangabandhu Jatiya Krishi Puraskar-1418 in the capital's Osmani Memorial Hall.
Bangladesh was able to cope with the worldwide food crisis and soaring food prices in the last few years due to her government's pragmatic steps for agricultural research, she said.
"We have to maintain the

growth in the agriculture sector to protect our agri-based economy, ensure food security of the people and rural employment and improve their living standards," said Hasina.
Seeking support of agricultural scientists, she said as an agro-based country, more attention must be laid on agricultural production to strengthen the country's economy to live as a dignified nation amongst the world community.
Hasina announced that the government would further consider increasing the retirement age of agricultural scientists so that they can contribute more.
She said, "It is the responsibility of the government to make the agricultural components available to farmers. Why will they

have to go for agitation or lay down their lives for those items?"
She said her government would continue providing support to farmers including agriculture loan, fertiliser at fair prices and subsidy on irrigation while making agricultural components available.
Hasina said food grain production was raised to about 373 lakh metric tonnes in 2012-13 fiscal year from 333 lakh metric tonnes in 2008-09.
She said the living standard of people in the country increased over the last few years. Moreover, the level of their protein intake has also increased.
She hoped that the award will inspire people working in the agricultural field to work with

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Sundarbans land grabbing escalates as Rampal project proceeds

Roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the government prepares to construct the controversial Rampal power plant near the Sundarbans, land grabbing has reached an unprecedented level in the forest, speakers alleged at a roundtable yesterday.
Different business groups with links to the two major political parties are openly destroying the world's largest mangrove forest while the government takes no action against them, they said.
Organised by the weekly Shaptahik, the discussion, "Unnayan, Jalani Babosthapon O Janashartho", was held in the capital's Bilia Auditorium.
"People who say that coal-fired power stations produce low cost electricity are wrong because they don't count the social and environmental costs of these plants," said Prof Anu Muhammad of Jahangirnagar University.
The Rampal plant, about 14 kilometres off the Sundarbans, will pollute the water bodies in the forest and destroy its ecological balance, he said. "Had the policymakers considered these impacts, they would have realised that the power station is not cost effective at all."

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Another school student run over by truck

Road accident deaths already over 27 this month; observers of National Road Safety Day lament ban on gatherings in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Just a day after the death of a female college student who was run over by a bus plying in the wrong direction in the capital's Mugda, a 15-year-old schoolboy was killed as a truck ran him over in Gazipur yesterday.
Rasel Rana alias Apan, son of Abul Hossain of Konabari and a class XI student of Konabari MA Kuddus High School, was returning home from school on a bicycle when the incident occurred before Palli Bidyut Samity office around 12:15pm.
Doctors at Dhaka Medical College Hospital declared him dead while his friend Suman, who was pedaling, is undergoing treatment there.
The female student, Marjana Jahan Munmun, 17, of Central Women's College in Tikatuli, is the third such female victim in the capital of the last 30 days.
Of the two others, Sanjida Begum, 35, died after being run over by a bus before her 12-year-old daughter in Motijheel on October 12.
The other, Roksana Begum, 37, was hit by a heavy vehicle in Kamalapur while returning home after picking up her five-year-old daughter from school on September 24.
Yesterday, We Demand Safe Road organised a press conference in Dhaka Reporters Unity marking "National Road Safety Day 2013" and to reiterate their 7-point demand for safer roads.

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POLL-TIME GOVT UK, Canada hail Khaleda's proposal

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United Kingdom and Canada have welcomed the proposals made by the government and the opposition for their efforts towards dialogue to find a way to holding a transparent, credible, inclusive and peaceful election.
The two countries, which earlier appreciated Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's efforts to initiate dialogue with the opposition, yesterday hailed BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's proposal to form a non-partisan election-time government where the ruling and opposition parties will nominate five advisers each.
The British and Canadian missions in Dhaka hoped that both the government and the opposition would use the opportunity and approach for a dialogue.
Responding to a question about the opposition leader's proposal and pledges, British High Commissioner Robert W Gibson particularly praised her reassuring remarks about international terrorism and regional co-operation and her renunciation of violence.
"We hope that the suggestions made in her speech will be considered by the government and that meaningful dialogue will quickly begin."

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NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ACT-2009

Amendments necessary for watchdog's independence

Say eminent rights activists, jurists, professionals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent rights activists, jurists and professionals yesterday called for bringing necessary amendments to National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Act-2009 for ensuring NHRC's administrative and financial independence.
They also suggested empowering NHRC so that it can investigate human rights violation allegations against law enforcers. Currently, NHRC can only seek a report from the government over such allegations.
They also recommended incorporating civil society members in the selection committee which recommends persons for the posts of NHRC chairman and members.
Currently the seven-member selection committee comprises the Speaker, law and home ministers, Bangladesh Law Commission chairman, cabinet secretary and two lawmakers, from the opposition and ruling parties.

The recommendations came at a roundtable, organised by NHRC at a city hotel, on reviewing the act.
Moderating the roundtable, NHRC Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman said NHRC had both failures and limitations but it was their responsibility to bring the necessary amendments so that their successors could work smoothly.
Bhorer Kagoj Editor Shyamal Dutta said NHRC's effectiveness was fully dependent on the government's political commitment.
Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman said though established by the government, NHRC was not a government organisation and the government could only work as a watchdog.
The NHRC chairman and members should be non-partisan and must work beyond political influences, he said.
Eminent rights activist Sultana Kamal

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22 men detained at Mirpur

Cops suspect they are BNP-Jamaat activists planning subversive activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police detained 22 men at National Bangla High School in the capital's Mirpur last night on suspicion that they were "BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir activists planning subversive activities".
Nothing illegal was found in their possession but police were questioning why they had gathered there at night, Dhaka Metropolitan Police Assistant Commissioner (Mirpur Zone) Shakhawat Hossain told The Daily Star.
Mirpur police sources said a majority of the detainees, all teachers, were of the school.

Stalkers of women attack puja mandap visitors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

At least five people were injured on Sunday night in an attack by youths who were chased off from a puja mandap in Mamurdi village of Gazipur's Kapasia upazila on Friday for harassing women and passing lewd comments.
The injured were provided primary treatment while one of the attackers, whose name could not be known immediately, was detained and handed over to police. A case was filed but villagers of Mamurdi informed The Daily Star that they are in fear of another attack. Kapasia and Monohordi police are scheduled to hold an arbitration in Aral Bazar of Kapasia upazila tomorrow.
There were some eight youths who had first arrived at the Thakurbari Puja mandap on Friday from adjoining Kistibadi village under Narsingdi's Monohordi upazila, said witnesses.
Armed with sharp weapons, they returned with another 12 youths on Sunday night and attacked whoever they found at the mandap, added the witnesses.

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