

Dry weather likely

WEATHER TODAY

Unb., Dhaka

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today.  
Night temperature may rise slightly and day temperature may remain nearly

unchanged over the country, Met office said.  
**The sun sets in the capital today at 5:11pm and rises tomorrow at 6:27am.**  
Country's highest temperature 31.9 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at

Srimangal and lowest 13.7 degrees at Srimangal.  
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 30.5	17.5	62	61	Khulna 29.5	17.6	77	65
Chittagong 27.8	19.9	89	78	Barisal 29.5	16.4	83	86
Rajshahi 29.0	16.2	70	69	Sylhet 30.2	17.8	62	72
Rangpur 28.4	16.7	78	72	Cox's Bazar 30.2	20.5	81	76

# NEWSIN brief

## Alamgir new DSCC administrator

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Additional Secretary Md Alamgir yesterday joined Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) as the fifth administrator. Alamgir replaced Nozmul Islam, who has been transferred to the agricultural ministry as an additional secretary, said a DSCC press release. Alamgir had earlier served as the director general of the Bureau of Non-Formal Education.

## Qualified primary school teachers demand recruitment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Candidates, who passed the recruitment tests for government primary school teachers in 2012 but have not been recruited, yesterday announced that they would go for a tough movement in the next month to press home their demand for employment. At a press conference in the capital's Jatiya Press Club, some of the aspirants said as they have been unemployed for months their families are heading towards poverty and uncertainty. Md Shamim Reza, an aspirant, said there are more than 1,500 qualified candidates who are still not recruited.

## Diarrhoea breaks out in Siddhirganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Diarrhoea broke out in an alarming form in Siddhirganj upazila of Narayanganj as at least 500 inhabitants were affected in the last few days, allegedly after drinking water supplied by Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (Wasa). In the 24 hours preceding 8:00am yesterday, 96 people received treatment at Narayanganj General Hospital, said civil surgeon Dulal Chandra Chowdhury. Locals said the disease broke out on December 1. However, Abdul Razzak, executive engineer of Narayanganj Wasa, who visited the area, said people using deep tube wells were mostly affected. A team from Dhaka has collected a sample for testing, he added.

## Bombs explode before Juta chief's residence

### Tension runs high on campus

JU CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified miscreants exploded two cocktails before the residence of Jahangirnagar University Teachers Association (Juta) President Prof Ajit Kumar Majumder on the campus last night, shattering some windows. Prof Ajit's wife, the only person at home during the blasts around 8:30pm, escaped unhurt. In protest, some 200 Juta members and students gathered before Vice-Chancellor (VC) Prof Anwar Hossain's residence around 9:30pm, gave him "30 minutes" to resign and threatened to otherwise "drive him out at any cost". Police and pro-Awami League Bangladesh Chhatra League activists arrived, prompting the demonstrators to shift a sit-in they were holding for the last three days from outside the compound to the inside. Dhaka District Administration Deputy Commissioner Sheikh Yousuf Harun told the agitators around 1:45am, when the report was being filed, that he was preparing to take the VC to Dhaka "as per orders from high-ups". Proctor Prof Muzibur Rahman assured legal steps after a probe. Prof Anwar returned on Monday after a 12-day sick leave, prompting the agitators to release two pro-VCs who were confined to their offices during this period. The majority of JU teachers have been demanding Prof Anwar's resignation since February accusing him of committing irregularities in teachers' recruitment, spoiling teacher-student relations, and misusing university funds.



Left, visiting Indian Foreign Secretary Sujatha Singh calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Prime Minister's Office and, right, meets Leader of the Opposition and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at the latter's Gulshan residence in the capital yesterday.



PHOTO: PMO, FOCUS BANGLA

# PM for strong armed forces to ensure peace

BSS, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said a country like Bangladesh needs strong armed forces not necessarily for any war but also to establish peace and save its territory from any aggression. Patriotic armed forces would always be with the people to meet their hopes and aspirations and alleviate poverty, a determinant factor in establishing global peace, she said. The prime minister made the remarks when the commandant of National Defence College (NDC), its faculties and staff and new graduates of its National Defence Course and Armed Forces War Course made a courtesy call on her at her Tejgaon office in the capital yesterday. Some 64 military and civil officials from home and abroad took part in the year-long NDC courses. Of them, 26 foreign military officials were from Egypt, Nigeria, China, India, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Tanzania. NDC Commandant Lt Gen Mollah Fazle Akbar also spoke on the occasion while PM's Adviser to Defence Affairs Maj Gen (ret'd) Tariq Ahmed Siddiqui and senior civil and military officials were present. Congratulating the NDC graduates, Hasina said the main objective of Bangladesh's Liberation War was to establish democracy and an exploitation-free society where every person will enjoy the benefit of freedom. "Braving various odds, we have been trying hard to ensure these principles in our politics, economy and governance systems," she said. Pointing out her government's constant efforts to increase the participation of Bangladesh Armed Forces in the UN

## POLITICAL VIOLENCE

# Minorities living in fear

### Say Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad, Adivasi Forum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Religious minorities and the indigenous people of the country are living in utter fear and uncertainty during the ongoing political violence, said Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad, and Bangladesh Adivasi Forum yesterday. Amidst the din of politics across the country, the communal forces are attacking the minorities, burning their houses, and destroying their temples and properties, they added. At a press conference held at Jatiya Press Club in the capital, they alleged that the attacks were a part of a conspiracy to drive the minorities out of the country. "While the communal forces are continually attacking the minorities, the state is repeatedly failing to protect them," said Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of the parishad. He regretted that the government had not ensured exemplary punishment for the perpetrators who attacked the minority communities in different areas, including Pabna, Barisal and Lalmonirhat. He also urged the UN, European Union and all the international human rights organisations to save the communities. The forum General Secretary Sanjeeb Drong said, SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

## BNP-Jamaat killing people to degrade politics

Claims Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday alleged that the BNP-Jamaat coalition resorted to killings through arson and blasts to make people lose respect towards politics and to take revenge over not being voted to power in the last election. "With such incidents, real politicians working for the welfare of the country and its people are being degraded before society. This is what the opposition leader wanted," said the SEE PAGE 5 COL 1



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with the commandant, faculties, staff and new graduates of National Defence College at the Prime Minister's Office yesterday. PHOTO: PMO



Freedom fighters at Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday on the last day of their three-day hunger strike demanding scrapping of the current constitution and framing of a fresh one through a constituent assembly to restore peace in the country.

# Freedom fighters demand framing of new constitution

## End three-day hunger strike for peace

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 100 freedom fighters yesterday demanded scrapping of the current constitution and framing of a fresh one through a constituent assembly to restore peace in the country. Terming the present constitution "non-democratic", they said based on this, the two leading political parties had created a "calamity" in the country. The freedom fighters' demand came after the end of their three-day token hunger strike that started at the capital's Central Shaheed Minar on Monday. "We fought in 1971 to bring peace in the country, and now after over four decades, we have to fight again for the same reason," said freedom fighter Maj (ret'd) SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

## Higher judiciary fails to clear 15,000 cases this year for hartals, blockades

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

More than 15,000 cases have been added to the list of pending cases at the already overburdened higher judiciary due to hartals and blockades in the last 11 months this year, causing immense sufferings to justice seekers. During the period of January 1 to December 4, the High Court judges could not conduct proceedings on 59 days when the strikes were enforced, while an average of 260 cases are usually adjudicated by the court on every workday, said Supreme Court sources. Most of the judges of the 53 HC benches and lawyers of the cases could not sit for proceedings on security reasons though judges of both Appellate and HC divisions attended offices. The Appellate Division judges usually hear cases on the days of strike if the lawyers attend the court but most of the time the latter remain absent, said sources. Such disruptions in judicial functions deprive the litigants of timely adjudications of their cases while causing an uncertainty among them, said eminent jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik. On the other hand, lawyers and their clerks suffer loss of income, he told The Daily Star. With the newly added ones, the number of pending cases at the HC now stands at over 3.2 lakh, according to the SC registrar's office. The HC disposed of 56,375 cases last year when 12 days were wasted due to strikes.

## College student's protest against drug peddling turns fatal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A college student hacked on the head by drug peddlers on November 24 succumbed to his injuries at Rajshahi Medical College Hospital yesterday, prompting aggrieved locals to bring out a procession with the body in Rajshahi city's Shaheb Bazar. Mohammad Jony, 23, son of Mohammad Mortuja of Shekher Chalk and a second-year student of Shah Makhdum College, was hacked during a clash between some locals and the peddlers that began after he had protested the trade, said police. He had been in the Intensive Care Unit since then. Police so far arrested Shimul and Manik, two of the nine persons Jony's father accused in a case.

## OPPOSITION'S BLOCKADE

# Waterways lone safe travel option

HELEMUL ALAM

With arson and sabotage by opposition blockaders pushing road and rail communications to the verge of collapse, waterways have become the only safe option for travel between the capital and the rest of the country. However, the number of daily passengers, unable to reach launch terminals in the first place, dropped by nearly 50 percent during the blockades from November 26 to Tuesday, except Friday, informed launch owners and staff. During this period, over 29 percent of trips between Sadarghat Launch Terminal and Chandpur, Barisal, Patuakhali, Barguna and other southern districts was cancelled, as per Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority. On a regular day, around 50,000 passengers and 128 launches pass through Sadarghat. "Though blockaders tried to prevent launches from setting sail in some places on the blockade's first day, service has been normal till date," Badiuzzaman Badal, chief adviser, Bangladesh Inland Waterways Association, told The Daily Star yesterday. Meanwhile, Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, addressing a press briefing at the ministry, said, "Launch and ferry services are running smoothly and our efforts are on against any kind of sabotage." Mosharraf Hossain, general secretary of a fish traders' association of the capital's Karwan Bazar, said fish was arriving over the waterways as usual although it was a negligible amount compared to that coming over the roads. A Chandpur-bound garment worker, Mainuddin, told The Daily Star at Sadarghat yesterday that four of the nine days he took as leave to see his mother went to waste as the blockade kept him confined in his Daudkandi home. "Though I was in fear while coming to Sadarghat by bus, I am feeling quite relaxed as a journey by launch is much safer," he said.