

DRY WEATHER LIKELY



Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur over river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. **The sun sets in the capital today at 5:16pm and rises tomorrow at 6:36am.** Country's highest temperature 27.5 degree

Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 6.5 degree Celsius at Sreemangal. The highest and lowest temperatures 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	26.0	13.0	71	66	Khulna	26.0	14.3	87	80
Chittagong	25.0	13.2	83	56	Barisal	26.3	11.5	89	85
Rajshahi	24.7	12.4	94	77	Sylhet	25.8	11.0	67	67
Rangpur	22.8	12.5	63	79	Cox's Bazar	27.5	13.5	67	73

NEWSIN
brief

Two new Rab battalions launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Two new battalions of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were launched in Rangpur and Mymensingh yesterday.
Lt Col Imran Ibne Abdur Rouf has been appointed as the commanding officer of Rab-13, with its headquarters in Rangpur, and Additional Deputy Inspector General Md Lokman Hakim of Rab-14, with its headquarters in Mymensingh.
The new battalions in the districts will work with the 12 remaining battalions to make Rab more dynamic, said Wing Commander ATM Habibur Rahman, director of Media and Legal Wing of Rab headquarters.

Bombs seized from ex-JCD leader's house in Khulna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna
Detective Branch of police seized three bombs from the house of a former leader of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal on Khulna city's Shamsur Rahman Road Tuesday night.
Nafiur Rahman, DB inspector of Khulna Metropolitan Police, said they raided the house of Ferous Alam Milon, former vice-president of the city unit, when nobody was at home.
They also found huge amount of bomb making materials and gun powder in a poultry firm on the roof of the three-storey building, he added.

Fire guts Tk 20 lakh worth of garments in Gausia shop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A fire broke out inside a closed garment shop on the third floor of Gausia Market in the capital's Nilkhet and partially burnt an adjacent one yesterday, gutting the former's garments worth around Tk 20 lakh as per fire service estimates.
However, no casualties were reported.
Five units of fire fighters after an hour of hectic efforts doused the fire which broke out around 8:05pm.
Fire service suspect the fire might have originated from a short circuit.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY OBSERVED
Boosting of relations with labour importing countries stressed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Bangladesh should strengthen diplomatic relations with labour importing countries and protect rights of its workers employed abroad, said speakers at a discussion yesterday.
They said rights of migrant workers must be ensured and they should not be treated just as a way of developing the country economically.
The speakers also stressed the importance of developing skills of Bangladeshi workers so that they can compete with other nationalities.
They were addressing the discussion organised by expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry in the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. The programme was organised on the International

Migrants Day yesterday.
Foreign Minister AH Mahmud Ali said welfare issues of migrants, including skill development, professional training and reduction of migration costs, must be dealt with utmost sincerity.
"We will have to look for new labour markets to ensure more work opportunities for our people. But there is no alternative to ensuring safe migration for them," he said addressing as the special guest.
Addressing as the chief guest, Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain said the incumbent government had taken epoch-making steps for welfare of the migrants.
"We have reduced migration costs, eased the migration process and framed

laws and ordinances to protect rights of the migrants. We have established discipline in the manpower sector removing irregularities by recruiting agencies," he mentioned.
Expatriates' Welfare Secretary Zafar Ahmed Khan, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque, and Director General of Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training Begum Shamsun Nahar, among others, spoke at the programme.
Some 117 children of migrant workers were given scholarships for academic purposes from the wage earners welfare fund of the overseas employment ministry.
Besides the discussion, a debate competition on contributions of migrants in the socio-economic development of

Relatives say family members, amidst the opposition's fresh 72-hour blockade from Tuesday morning, did not come to take driver Al Amin Mollah's body away from Dhaka Medical College Hospital in the capital yesterday fearing the same violence that claimed his life. The 28-year-old yesterday succumbed to complications arising from 25 percent burns he received when blockaders during the opposition's December 3 programme torched a staff bus owned by a garment factory near Gazipur intersection.



PHOTO: STAR

Christians urge opposition to refrain from blockades, hartals around Christmas

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
Bangladesh's Christian community yesterday urged the opposition alliance not to enforce blockades and hartals from December 23 to 27 as they will celebrate their biggest religious festival, Christmas, on December 25.
The community is concerned that their celebration might be hampered by blockades and hartals, said leaders of the community at a press conference organised by Bangladesh Christian Association at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.
Although the festival is celebrated on December 25, the Christian community would start preparations for Christmas a couple of days earlier, said State Minister for Social Welfare Promode Mankin, also president of the association.
Many Christians would like to celebrate Christmas with their families living outside the capital, said Nirmal Rosario, secretary general of the association.
"But this will not be possible if blockades or hartals are enforced at that time," he said.

School students to get textbooks on Jan 1

Says Nahid
UNB, Dhaka
Textbooks will be in the hands of primary and secondary level students on the first day of next year, despite the ongoing violence by the BNP-Jamaat, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said yesterday.
He also said that discipline had been restored in the country's education sector over the last five years.
"Now we can distribute books among students on January 1 ... examinations begin on the specific date while their results are published within 60 days," he told a discussion at the NCTB auditorium in the capital.
Nahid, who is also primary and mass education minister, said the

Obituary

CITY DESK
Azizur Rahman (Feroz), a prominent businessman, died of lung cancer at Singapore General Hospital on December 15. He was 70.
A doa mahfil will be held in his Banani residence in the capital tomorrow.
All relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to attend the programme.

ARSON ATTACK ON BUS
Another driver dies of burns

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
A driver, Al Amin Mollah died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday, battling for life for 15 days after he had suffered burns in an arson attack during an opposition-enforced blockade.
"What will happen to my family if I die?" The 28-year-old had asked a correspondent of The Daily Star when he visited the hospital a week ago.
Al Amin, of Bondan village in Gazipur, was the eldest among four siblings and the sole bread earner of his eight-member family.
While undergoing treatment, he could never brush aside the thought of his family's helplessness without him.
"Only people like me are falling prey to such political violence and our families are passing days in uncertainty," Al Alim, father of a two-year-old daughter, Afreen, had once said.
He sustained 25 percent burns on the face, parts of the chest and both hands on

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Youths at risk for lack of sex education

Say health experts
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The youth of Bangladesh are at risk of practicing unsafe sex due to lack of adequate sex education in schools which can contribute to the spread of HIV/AIDS and unintended pregnancies, said health experts.
Religious and cultural norms are also impediment to get sufficient lessons on sexual health in schools, they observed.
They made the observation at a convention of health experts titled, "Bangladesh's Sexual-Reproductive Health Programme: Experiences and Responsibilities," organised by Population Services and Training Centre (PSTC), at BIAM auditorium in the capital yesterday.
Addressing the event, Prof Rashid E Mahbub, president of Bangladesh Health Rights Movement, said the government must take the issue of sexual health with utmost importance as lack of knowledge in this regard has severe



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DHAKA TODAY

Human chain
Naton Dhara Bangladesh will form a human chain protesting Pakistan's statement against the execution of war criminal Abdul Quader Mollah; Venue: In front of Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Rally
Bangladesh Krishak League will stage a rally protesting Jamaat-

Shibir attack in which, what it says, the league leader Khorshed Alam was killed; Venue: Before Khaddor Market, Gulistan; Time: 10:30am.

Conference
The Independent University, Bangladesh will arrange a conference on Advances in Electrical Engineering; Venue: IUB campus, Bashundhara; Time: 9:00am.