

DRY WEATHER LIKELY



WEATHER TODAY

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today, said Met Office.

Night temperature may fall slightly and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged

over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:33pm and rises tomorrow at 6:44am.

Country's highest temperature 28.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in

Sylhet and lowest 10.7 degrees in Chuadanga.

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	17.7	14.0	98	84	Khulna	18.2	12.5	97	85
Chittagong	22.6	14.3	97	82	Barisal	19.2	12.0	100	90
Rajshahi	14.7	12.4	100	93	Sylhet	28.0	13.9	99	79
Rangpur	20.4	12.8	97	79	Cox's Bazar	26.0	15.0	85	86

Qulkhwani of Justice Habibur held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The qulkhwani of former chief justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman was held at the capital's Gulshan Azad mosque after Asr prayers Tuesday.

Friends, colleagues, eminent personalities, academicians, Supreme Court lawyers and judges were present on the occasion and offered prayers for the departed soul.

Justice Habibur, who was chief adviser of the country's first caretaker government, breathed his last at the capital's United Hospital at the age of 85 on Saturday night.

Showered with love and respect, he was buried in the Banani graveyard on Monday.

Born in Murshidabad of West Bengal on December 3, 1928, Rahman joined

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Ershad visits party offices after around 1 and a half months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After nearly one and a half months, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday visited his party offices in the capital's Kakrail and Banani.

He stayed at the Kakrail office for an hour, inquired about ongoing repairs there and talked to JP leaders and activists. Earlier, he met religious cleric Saidur Rahman Sayedabadi at Sayedabad.

The former military dictator last went to his party office on December 3 when he had declared boycotting the January 5 parliamentary polls.

On the night of December 12, he was allegedly picked up by members of an intelligence agency and taken to Combined Military Hospital under Rapid Action Battalion escort. He later stated in a statement that the government had kept him confined for refusing to

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Sayedee hearing continues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday heard arguments for 20th day on Jamaat-e-Islami leader Delawar Hossain Sayedee's appeal against the death penalty given to him for committing crimes against humanity during the Liberation War in 1971.

During the hearing, defence counsel SM Shahjahan read out from the documents produced before the International Crimes Tribunal-1, which sentenced Sayedee to death on February 28 last year. He appealed against the verdict at the SC on March 28.

The five-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain is due to hold further hearing today.

Finish trial of journalist Manik Saha killing

Fellows urge govt on his 10th death anniversary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Journalists yesterday demanded completion of the trial of the killing of Manik Saha, a reporter of the daily Sangbad, who died in a bomb attack near Khulna Press Club in 2004.

They also urged the government to finish the pending trial of the killing of 22 other journalists, including Humayun Kabir Balu and Sagar-Runi, through a speedy tribunal.

The journalists made the call from a discussion at Khulna Press Club on his 10th death anniversary

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Bangladesh Chhatra League activist Mamunul Hasan Shourav, whose right hand was chopped off by a fellow member of the organisation, is undergoing treatment at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogra town yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

BCL man chops off fellow's hand in Bogra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A Bangladesh Chhatra League member chopped off the right hand of another pro-Awami League BCL activist over personal enmity at Shahordighi in Bogra town Tuesday evening, said police.

Raki Ahmed of Azizul Haque College unit also cut off three fingers of Mamunul Hasan Shourav's another hand, said Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge AHM Fayjur Rahman.

Shourav, who was undergoing treatment at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital, told The Daily Star that Raki along with his accomplices forcibly took him to a desolate place.

Later, they attacked him with sharp weapons as he often declined to commit crimes on Raki's instructions, claimed Shourav, son of Mohammad Shafi of Brindabanpara.

The victim's mother Atiya Ferdousi filed an attempted murder case accusing Raki, who is on the run, and some other unidentified people with the police station last night.

Cold hits poor across country

Dozens of hospital admissions reported

STAR REPORT

The winter chill intensified by the absence of sunlight has hit hard the country's poor, especially the homeless living on streets and under open sky, for the last couple of days.

In some districts, dozens of hospital admissions were reported. Most of the victims were elderly people and children suffering from cold-related complications.

Met officials in Dhaka said temperature did not fall below 10 degrees Celsius but people were feeling colder, as dense fog and clouds were blocking sunlight.

Meanwhile, poor visibility disrupted ferry services and road communications on the Paturia-Daulatdia, Mawa-Keorakanda, and Dhaka-Chandpur routes, reported our correspondents.

In the western district of Chuadanga, temperature hit 10.7°C at 10:00am yesterday,

while the lowest temperature in the capital stood at 14°C.

People, especially children and elderly people, have been attacked by cold-related diseases.

At least a hundred patients with cases of coughing, pneumonia and asthma were treated in Chuadanga sadar hospital yesterday. In the 14-bed child ward at the hospital, 60 children arrived for admission but they had to be shifted to Kushtia sadar hospital, said doctors.

In Bhola, at least three children have died of cold-related diseases in the last three days, according to hospital sources.

Dr Nitya Nanda Chowdhury of Bhola sadar hospital said 92 children were admitted there yesterday. Of them, 56 were accommodated in the 10-bed child ward.

For the last few days, temperature has

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NEWSIN brief

New cabinet sits today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three days after the swearing-in, the new cabinet will hold its first meeting at the Bangladesh Secretariat at 10:00am today with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

President Abdul Hamid's speech, to be delivered in the inaugural session of the new parliament, is likely to be placed there, said sources. Besides, the prime minister might give directives to the cabinet members about their way of working in the coming days.

Planning minister won't take govt car, house

BSS, Dhaka

AHM Mustafa Kamal, new planning minister, will not take any government car, driver and house, which he is entitled to as a minister.

The minister informed the cabinet division of it before taking the charge of the ministry, said a press release yesterday.

Mustafa Kamal is expected to start his official work formally through discussion with the officials and employees of the ministry on January 19.

Meanwhile, the minister along with other members of the new cabinet yesterday paid tributes to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by placing wreaths at his mazar at Tungipara in Gopalganj.

Ismat Ara moved to public administration ministry

UNB, Dhaka

Three days after taking the charge as the state minister for the primary and mass education, Ismat Ara Sadek was reappointed to the public administration ministry in the same capacity yesterday.

A gazette notification was issued in this regard yesterday, Cabinet Secretary M Mosharraf Hossain Bhuayan told the UNB.

Ismat Ara was elected MP from Jessore-6 constituency with Awami League ticket in the January 5 national election.

Swechchhasebak Dal leader killed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Unidentified miscreants have hacked a pro-BNP Swechchhasebak Dal leader to death at Chapain in Savar, on the outskirts of the capital.

Police recovered the body from a paddy field Tuesday morning.

Mizanur Rahman alias Raham Ali, 35, was joint secretary of Savar thana unit.

The victim's sister Rahela Begum said Raham had gone out of house after receiving a cellphone call around Monday night.

Savar Model police Sub-inspector Sheikh Farid Uddin said they detained one Babu, Raham's neighbour.

Two held with 7,200 Yabas in Savar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) detained two siblings and recovered 7,200 Yaba pills from their Khagan Bazar residence in Birulia of Savar, on the outskirts of the capital, yesterday.

The detainees are Tanzina Akter and Helal Uddin.

On a tip-off, a Rab-4 team recovered the pills after breaking the tiles of a room and from a wardrobe. They also recovered Tk 1.5 lakh.

Tanzina's husband Alamgir Hossain, who runs the drug peddling business, used to masquerade as a journalist to the locals to hide his illegal business, said Rab officials, adding that Alamgir is on the run.



Soumendra S Das, marketing director, GlaxoSmithKline Bangladesh, left centre, and Salehuddin Ahmed, managing editor, The Daily Star, exchange copies of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday. The MoU was on the launching of the third season of The Daily Star Spelling Bee, an English spelling contest for students of classes VI to X. Witnessing the ceremony among others are Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher, The Daily Star, fourth from left in the back row, and Russell T Ahmed, CEO of champs21.com, third from right in the back row.

PHOTO: STAR

3 die in road crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people, including a couple, were killed as a bus rammed a battery-run auto-rickshaw at Shonir Akhra in the capital on Tuesday.

Azmeri Begum, 40, died instantly while her husband Khalilur Rahman, 45, and other passenger of the three-wheeler Maya Chowdhury, 50, also a street vendor, succumbed to injuries at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital.

Khulsi, 5, only child of the couple, also received minor injuries but their driver escaped unhurt, said police. The bus hit the vehicle carrying the four passengers from behind in Shonir Akhra bridge area near their house in Rayerbagh around 12:15pm, said Minhazul Islam, assistant commissioner of Demra Zone.

Abdul Gani, a relative of Khalilur, filed a case in this connection. No one was arrested but police seized the Feni-bound bus, said police. Khalilur, a staff at Shaheed Nabi School in Tikatuli, and Azmeri were buried in their village at Baufol in Patuakhali yesterday, Lokman Hossain, a relative of the victims, told The Daily Star.

PROMPT RESPONSE TO FOODBORNE ILLNESS OUTBREAKS IEDCR to use tech-based surveillance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Aiming to ensure rapid response to foodborne illness outbreaks, the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) will use cellphones and the internet to monitor and conduct surveys on epidemics and communities.

Software assisted interviews over cellphones will drastically cut costs of sending field workers to rural homes while the surveillance will detect the disease and determine its specific cause and nature, said IEDCR Director Prof Mahmudur Rahman yesterday.

It will also broaden scopes for surveys and strengthen IEDCR's laboratory facilities, he told a daylong workshop, which highlighted key objectives of a three-year programme, "Foodborne Illness Surveillance in Bangladesh", at his office in the capital.

IEDCR will implement the programme in a couple of months with funding from the Netherlands government and technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Prof Mahmudur cited the example of a diarrhoea outbreak. "With the new safety surveillance, we will collect blood and

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Don't seek foreign help over internal crisis


DU teachers urge politicians

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers Association (Duta) yesterday urged the country's politicians not to seek external help to solve internal issues and called upon foreign representatives not to assume the role of a politician on the pretext of brokering solutions to domestic crises.

"This kind of action will rather harm us as a country, nation and our independence, sovereignty, self-respect, which were earned after a nine-month battle," said a statement signed by Duta President Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed and Secretary Prof ASM Maksud Kamal.

The release said Bangladesh was trying to purge itself of stigmas through the execution of war criminals following due legal procedure. "In this critical time, the recent diplomatic moves taken by some representatives of our friendly countries have left us embarrassed as a nation."



Roundtable

Jagannath Hall Alumni Association will arrange a roundtable on the attacks on the religious minorities; Venue: Cirdap Auditorium; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Bangabandhu Academy will hold a discussion on the start of Sheikh Hasina's government; Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity; Time: 11:00am.



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