

DRY WEATHER LIKELY

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

Mild to moderate heat wave is sweeping over the country except the regions of Dhaka, Mymensingh, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Kutubdia,

Teknaf, Srimangal and Rangpur and it may continue, Met office said

Day and night temperature may rise over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:20pm and rises tomorrow at 5:36am.

Country's highest temperature 39.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rangamati and lowest 19.4 degrees in 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	35.6	25.4	50	33	Khulna	38.0	24.2	54	39
Chittagong	35.2	23.2	46	67	Barisal	37.1	23.1	69	57
Rajshahi	37.5	22.8	52	49	Sylhet	36.1	22.8	64	52
Rangpur	35.7	22.5	61	41	Cox's Bazar	35.8	25.0	73	77

2nd Cartoon Fest kicks off in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Second Bangladesh Cartoon Fest 2014 started yesterday with a three-day-long exhibition at Drik Gallery in the capital's Dhanmondi.

The exhibition will continue from 3:00pm to 8:00pm every day till tomorrow.

Over 100 cartoons drawn by 43 cartoonists are being displayed at the festival organised jointly by the Bangladesh Cartoonist Association (BANCARAS), and Symposium, a youth magazine.

Cartoonists will also draw caricatures of interested visitors on a first-come-first-serve basis for free in the festival.

Formed in 2010, BANCARAS first held a cartoon exhibition at the Jatiya Press Club in 2011, said Sadat Uddin Ahmed Amil, president of BANCARAS.

He added that they had officially started the festival in 2012.

This year, the festival has been dedicated to noted cartoonist Tariqul Islam Shanto, who died of a cardiac arrest in February last year while protesting at the Gonojagoron Mancha in Shahbagh, a movement demanding maximum punishment for war criminals.

To encourage young cartoonists, cartoonist Shanto Padak was launched at the festival.

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Amused visitors in a fit of laughter seeing a hilarious cartoon at Drik Gallery in the capital's Dhanmondi where a three-day cartoon festival opened yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

3-yr-old girl raped in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-year-old girl was raped in the capital's Mohammadpur on Saturday.

The victim's father alleged that one Siddiqur Rahman, 42, caretaker of a nearby apartment building, took the girl to his room and violated her there.

The incident happened on Saturday afternoon but came to light following Siddiqur's arrest on Sunday night.

The victim's father lodged a case with Mohammadpur Police Station against Siddiqur and police arrested him around 11:00pm on Sunday night from the building he was employed at.

Police produced the accused before a Dhaka court on Monday and sought remand. The court sent Siddiqur to jail.

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HC asks for expert body to stop loss of agri land

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday ordered the government to immediately form an expert committee, which will formulate a policy to prevent the loss of the country's cultivable land to different non-agricultural uses.

In response to a writ petition, the court asked for a report containing necessary recommendations from the committee in 90 days.

Secretaries to the ministries of land, agriculture, planning, and food were asked to form the committee, petitioner's counsel Manzill Murshid told The Daily Star.

As per the Planning Commission data, cropland is decreasing by one percent every year. The total cultivable land in Bangladesh stands at 8.52 million hectares, according to the agriculture ministry website.

Against the backdrop, the HC bench of Justice Salma Masud Chowdhury and Justice Md Habibur Gani also issued a rule upon the

government to explain in four weeks why its inaction and failure to stop reduction of agricultural land should not be declared illegal.

It also asked for explanation about why its inaction and failure to formulate a law to execute the 2001 national land use policy should not be declared illegal.

The respondents are the cabinet secretary, Prime Minister's Office secretary, and secretaries to the drafting and legislative division of the law ministry, to the ministries of land, agriculture, planning and food.

The order and rule came upon hearing of the petition, filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) on April 9.

The petition said agricultural land was reportedly declining due to housing, industrialisation, and many other reasons, resulting in a fall in crop production. People's lives will be threatened if agricultural land is not protected, it added.

Deputy Attorney General Mokhlesur Rahman represented the government.

Dhaka reaffirms support for Palestine

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka yesterday reaffirmed its total commitment and support to the cause of the Palestinians and expressed Bangladesh's solidarity with the Palestinians for their just struggle for an independent homeland.

This was stated by Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali when Palestine Ambassador and Dean of Diplomatic Corps Shaher Mohammad called on him at the state guesthouse Meghna.

The minister said Bangladesh always supported Palestine's bid to

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The Daily Star - grameenphone IGNITE Activation programme begins in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The activation programme of The Daily Star-Grameenphone event "IGNITE", a science competition for school students, began yesterday at Cambrian School and College and Motijheel Ideal School in the capital.

Students from Cambrian School and College, Banani Bidyaniketan, Bangladesh International School, BAF Shaheen School and College, Manarat International School, Sir John Wilson School, Motijheel Model School and College, Ideal School and College, Motijheel Government Boys' School and College, Vigarunnisa Noon School and College and Willes Little Flower School and College attended the programme.

Students from Buet, Kuet and Bangladesh University of Business and Technology moderated the programme and shared various scientific theories and mathematical puzzles with the students.

The activation programme will continue for two more days in the capital.

IGNITE, a joint initiative of Grameenphone and

(PHOTO ON PAGE 4) SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

BCL leader threatens to kill RU teacher

Flies into fury, being refused lunch boxes without vouchers on Pahela Baishakh

RU CORRESPONDENT

A Rajshahi University unit Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leader threatened to kill a teacher when the latter refused to give lunch boxes to a group of BCL activists without vouchers during the Bangla New Year celebrations on Monday.

Shamim Hossain, an assistant professor of the management studies department, alleged that Rahajul Amin alias Ridoy, joint secretary of RU unit BCL and a master's student of the department, had given him another threat two hours later over the phone.

"Ridoy along with 12/15 BCL activists came to the department and demanded lunch boxes for all of them around 1:30pm," the teacher said.

"When I refused to give them lunch boxes without vouchers, Ridoy threatened to kill me. He also complained to the department chairman for not getting lunch."

Two hours later, around 3:30pm, an unknown caller threatened to shoot the teacher dead on the campus, as he "misbehaved with Ridoy, didn't give him lunch", Shamim Hossain told The Daily Star, saying it was Ridoy who had orchestrated the call.

Ridoy denied both allegations but a number of teachers and students were present when he threatened the teacher in person.

"When sir refused him saying, 'I can't do that because vouchers are limited', Ridoy shouted, 'I belong to Chhatra League, why don't you give me lunch?'," said a witness told The Daily Star, on condition of anonymity, fearing retribution.

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NEWS IN brief

4 cleaners hurt in bomb explosion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four female day labourers sustained splinter injuries in a crude bomb explosion while cleaning roads at Meradia in Khilgaon of the capital yesterday.

Selina Begum was undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital while others were given treatment there. "As soon as I pushed my spade into the ground, something [an abandoned crude bomb] exploded with a big bang around 10:00am," Selina told The Daily Star. Police said the workers were cleaning the roads under the city corporation.

Man beaten to death in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was beaten to death by his friends at Dhaka Uddyan yesterday.

Mehedi Hasan Opu, 22, of Keraniganj was declared dead at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

The deceased's cousin, Rejowan Hossain, told reporters at DMCH that Opu's friend Akter took Opu to Dhaka Uddyan, where Akter and some others over a previous enmity beat Opu leaving him seriously injured.

Meanwhile, police recovered an unidentified man's body from the capital's Khilgaon area.

Chevron, Brac launch road safety awareness programme

METRO DESK

The Bangladesh government, jointly with Brac and Chevron, launched a three-year road safety awareness programme for the communities of Bibiyana gas field and Sylhet city.

The project, in collaboration with Roads & Highways Department, the BRTA and Bangladesh Police, will be implemented through Brac's road safety programme which started in March 2001. It will provide training in defensive driving to 1,000 drivers and safe pedestrian behaviours to 4,500 school children of 25 educational institutions.

Youth held with firearms in Ctg

BSS, Ctg

Members of Rapid Action Battalion yesterday arrested a youth and seized four light guns and 24 bullets at Syedbari here in Rangunia.

Rab-7 sources said a team of the elite force arrested Alauddin alias Alo, 24, with the firearms.

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