

# THE DAILY Star ON FRIDAY

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WITH TODAY'S ISSUE

A Weekly Publication of The Daily Star  
**the STAR**  
stories behind the news



**GIVING BACK THEIR LIVES**

Valerie Ann works on to improve lives of challenged people

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**THAI POLLS DELAYED**

Thailand is not returning to democracy until 2016

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Our PAPER is **BACK**

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## People living longer

Survey finds nearly 3 years added to life expectancy; death, birth rates drop

REZAUL KARIM BYRON and PORIMOL PALMA

The people of Bangladesh are living longer, reflecting a significant progress in the country's health and population status.

Life expectancy rose to 69.4 years in 2012 from 66.8 years in 2008, an increase of 2.6 years in four years, according to a new survey of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

Experts attribute the progress to overall economic development, expansion of health services, better access to telecommunications and a rise in literacy rate.

The BBS, in the survey, has also found declining birth and death rates.

"Reduction in child mortality has a direct link to the rise in life expectancy at birth. Bangladesh has been doing quite well in reducing child mortality. So life expectancy is up."

**LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH**

2008	2012
66.8 yrs	69.4 yrs
Male 65.6	Male 68.2
Female 68	Female 70.7

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Acclaimed Bharatanatyam dancer Vidushi Malavika Sarukkai performs on the opening night of Bengal Classical Music Festival yesterday.

PHOTO: RIDWAN ABID RUPON



## City caught by classical spell

5-day Bengal music-fest begins

FAHMIM FERDOUS

On the stroke of midnight when the whole city went to sleep, a stadium full of people remained wide awake, watching the awe-inspiring performance of a Bharatanatyam artist. Vidushi Malavika Sarukkai left more than tens of thousands of audience dazzled with her poise, grace and fluid movements on the opening night of the Bengal Classical Music Festival 2014 Bangladesh at the Army Stadium.

With Ustad Shahid Parvez Khan's sitar recital

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## Energy deal salvaged

Cold-hit Hasina skips retreat; Curtain falls on Saarc summit with 36-point declaration; 19th summit in Pakistan

REZAUL KARIM and HASAN JAHID TUSHER

The eight South Asian nations finally signed a deal yesterday to create a seamless electricity grid, salvaging the 18th Saarc summit that had been overshadowed by hostilities between India and Pakistan.

The development came as Pakistan gave its consent to the Saarc Framework Agreement for Energy Cooperation (Electricity), one of the

three pacts supposed to be inked at the summit in Kathmandu.

Pakistan on Wednesday had opposed all three deals.

The other two agreements are Saarc Motor Vehicles Agreement for the Regulation of Passenger and Cargo Vehicular Traffic amongst Saarc member states, and Saarc Regional Railways Agreement.

There were hectic efforts to convince the Pakistani side, which stalled the

inking of the pacts on the pretext that internal processes were not completed.

The signing of the energy deal proved the point that the political will of Saarc leaders could integrate the entire South Asian region for the benefit of its people.

"A time period of three months have been set for approval to the Motor Vehicle and Railway pacts."

MORE ON B1 SEE PAGE 17 COL 2  
SEE ONLINE FOR FULL TEXT OF KATHMANDU DECLARATION



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi shakes hands with his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif during the closing session of the 18th Saarc summit at City Hall in the Nepalese capital Kathmandu yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Modi, Sharif shake hands, meet at Saarc retreat

ANS, Kathmandu

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Pakistani premier Nawaz Sharif shook hands and met briefly during the retreat at the Saarc summit yesterday, a day after Modi conspicuously avoided Sharif while he met five other South Asian leaders here.

"Yes, they have met and shook hands at the retreat," Nepal Foreign Minister Mahendra Bahadur Pandey said over phone from Dhulikhel, where the retreat is being held on the second day of the two-day Saarc summit.

Both the prime ministers have taken a tour in and around the resort which is famous for watching Himalayas.

Leaders will spend almost five hours at the retreat.

Nepal, the host country, is pushing for talks between India and Pakistan and at least a Saarc related energy accord.

But a planned meeting between two South Asian leaders has not taken place.

As of now, both leaders have not met separately at the retreat, but Nepal and other Saarc members are pushing them to sit for talks.

Multiple diplomatic sources said that both the prime ministers were seen talking during a reception hosted by Nepalese Prime Minister Sushil Koirala on Wednesday evening in honour of visiting Saarc heads of state and government.

Both the prime ministers also spoke to each other in a waiting room.

Both Modi and Sharif were in the same

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## Hughes stops

AGENCIES, Sydney

Phillip Hughes died yesterday as a result of the injuries he sustained when struck by a bouncer two days ago, Cricket Australia has confirmed. He was 25 and would turn 26 the day after tomorrow.

Team doctor Peter Brukner confirmed the news in a statement released on Thursday afternoon.



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## Ailing Biman wakes up to rude reality

Takes a few overdue steps to contain gold smuggling

SHARIFUL ISLAM

Biman has finally decided to improve surveillance on its staff after doing nothing for seven months since 105kg gold was found in the toilet of a plane.

This too had to be done by the civil aviation minister's influence, not by Biman on its own accord.

Days after the haul on April 26, customs intelligence wrote to the managing director of Biman to beef up cargo hanger, aircraft security and improve staff surveillance at Shahjalal International Airport.

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## Mamata's tribute to Mujib

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The West Bengal government plans to set up a chair named after Father of the Bangalee Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Calcutta University.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wants the chair to be inaugurated by Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

"We want to create a 'Bangabandhu Chair' in the Calcutta University after Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and we want his daughter Sheikh Hasina to

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## Scientist Qadri on UN's tech panel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has appointed Bangladeshi scientist Firdausi Qadri and nine others to a high-level panel to advise him on proposed Technology Bank aimed at helping the world's least developed countries emerge out of poverty.

A prominent immunologist, Qadri is now serving as director at the Centre for Vaccine Sciences of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B) and is an author of more than 200 peer-reviewed scientific papers.

She has over 25 years' experience of developing vaccines for cholera. Recently, she has developed a new technique to diagnose typhoid and paratyphoid fever.



Firdausi Qadri

Firdausi Qadri was awarded the 2013 CNR Rao Prize by The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS) in recognition of her significant contribution to the field of enteric diseases and mass immunisation against some common infectious diseases.

She received a Gold Medal for her outstanding research in biological sciences from Bangladesh Academy of Sciences in 2006 and the Institut de France's and Rodolphe Merieux Foundation Grand Prize in 2012.

Romain Murenzi, executive director of TWAS in Trieste, Italy and former minister of Rwanda, has been appointed as chair of the panel, according to a UN press release issued on Wednesday.

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## Beware, tigers!

Royals of Sundarbans appear hilariously in film Roar

PINAKI ROY

The cinematography is good, no doubt. But it is not really about how good the sound or the visual effect is when you are making a film on the tigers of the Sundarbans, a globally endangered species.

What Kamal Sadanah shows in his debut film,

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