

DRY WEATHER LIKELY

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today. Mild cold wave may sweep at places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia, Tangail and Mymensingh, said Met Office.

Light to moderate fog may occur over the country during midnight till morning. Night temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius and day temperature may rise slightly over the country. **The sun sets in the capital today at 5:26pm and rises tomorrow at 6:43am.**

Country's highest temperature 29.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 09.8 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	24.3	13.2	64	54	Khulna	25.2	13.3	84	71
Chittagong	26.2	16.3	70	51	Barisal	24.2	13.0	88	79
Rajshahi	22.0	11.6	94	82	Sylhet	26.0	13.0	81	71
Rangpur	21.5	11.0	97	76	Cox's Bazar	29.0	17.4	75	69

NEWS IN brief

Barbara Wickham new director of British Council Bangladesh

CITY DESK

Barbara Wickham arrived in Bangladesh on Thursday to take up her new post as country director of British Council Bangladesh.

She started her professional career in 1978 as an English as foreign language teacher in Cairo and also worked in overseas teaching and training in Spain, the UK and China for 10 years. After completing her MA in Applied Linguistics she joined the British Council and has also been a country and area director in China, Nepal, Venezuela, Ethiopia and Pakistan.



ABC Radio's 6th anniversary today

CITY DESK

ABC Radio will start its sixth founding anniversary celebration today, with an array of special programmes for three days.

Acclaimed artists Shafin Ahmed, Topu, Mahfuz Ahmed, Parvez, Preetom and popular musical bands have been invited for live conversations and exclusive performances, says a press release. With an aim to entertain its listeners twenty four seven, ABC's journey into the new year begins today with new shows like On the Run, Hit Hot, Speed Breaker and Chill Out.

Emergency exercise held at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Civil Aviation Authority, Bangladesh (CAAB) arranged an emergency exercise for officials concerned at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital on Monday to enhance their skills to deal with emergency situation like bomb threat, fire and air crash.

Representatives from CAAB, Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence, Bangladesh Army, Bangladesh Air Force and Rapid Action Battalion, Biman Bangladesh Airlines and other airlines, Bangladesh Health Service, Bangladesh Ansar and VDP and some private hospitals took part in the exercise, said a press release.

CAAB Chairman Air Vice Marshal M Sanaul Haque was also present during the exercise.

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka performs country's first of a kind surgery

CITY DESK

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka has successfully performed gastric bypass bariatric surgery in Bangladesh for the first time.

The hospital on Saturday performed the surgery on a 47-year-old male diabetes patient who weighed 100kg. The surgery is a safe procedure for weight loss and surgical cure of diabetic patients. The procedure involves stapling the stomach to create a long tube to which a length of the small bowel is connected. This effectively controls extreme hunger as well as prevents excess fat in a person's diet from getting absorbed.

Patients can expect a loss of around 85 percent of excess body weight as well as drastic reduction in blood sugar levels and hypertension, said a press release.

Reunion of DU social welfare institute alumni assoc Jan 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A reunion of the Dhaka University's Institute of Social Welfare and Research Alumni Association will be held at Gonoswasthya Kendra in Savar outside the capital on January 23.

Interested people should register for the programme by January 15, says a press release.

Contact numbers are 01552457155 (Jahangir Morshed); 0171333230 (Kazi Asaduzzaman); 01922266014 (Golam Rosul) and 01552304257 (Omar Faruq).



BNP's Gulshan office in the capital continues to be under siege by law enforcers with party Chairperson Khaleda Zia inside till late last night since Saturday evening.

PHOTO: STAR

Drug smuggling on rise under aegis of AL men

Narcotics dept discussion told; Yaba tops list, Phensedyl follows; Myanmar, India main sources of supply; repeated requests for checking trafficking falling on neighbours' deaf ears

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

DNC STATISTICS

Seizures	2010	2014
Yaba pills	8 lakh	59 lakh
Bottles of Phensedyl	9 lakh	6 lakh

Transborder traffickers have made Bangladesh a huge market of Phensedyl and Yaba pills, manufactured in two neighbouring countries, which is insidiously destroying the youth, discussants said yesterday.

Smuggling is increasing under the aegis of the ruling party, the speakers told the discussion at the Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) in the capital's Tejgaon, and

also suggested a strong political will to check the malpractice.

According to DNC statistics shared yesterday, Yaba from Myanmar tops the list of smuggled drugs while Phensedyl from India is in the second position.

Over eight lakh Yaba pills were seized in the country in 2010 while over 59 lakh tablets were seized in 2014 till November, the data showed.

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SC lawyer seeks bar on media coverage of Tarique's speeches

Petitions HC; hearing likely today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking restrictions on the media in publishing reports on the future statements of BNP Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman, who has been in London since 2008.

In her plea, Nashreen Siddiqua Lina said Tarique was a "fugitive accused" but he had been making "abusive, slanderous and derogatory" comments about Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, which was a "violation of the constitution".

Attaching the clippings of newspaper reports on Tarique's recent speeches, she prayed for HC's directives on the government to ensure that the media did not report such statements anymore.

The HC may hear the petition today, Nashreen told The Daily Star.

Why not screen Ijtema pilgrims for Ebola

HC asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to explain why it should not be ordered to screen pilgrims, at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, coming into the country for Biswa Ijtema from Ebola-affected African countries to prevent Ebola contamination.

The HC issued a rule in this regard after hearing a writ petition filed by Children's Charity Bangladesh Foundation (CCBF).

The rights group prayed to the HC to direct the government to screen African pilgrims who will attend Biswa Ijtema in Tongi scheduled to be held in two phases from January 9.

Petitioner's lawyer Abdul Halim told The Daily Star that the rule is returnable in two weeks.

AL to celebrate last nat'l polls victory Jan 10

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League will celebrate what it calls the "day of victory for democracy" on January 10 after it failed to hold programmes on January 5 because of a ban on political assemblies.

The party won a second consecutive term through a one-sided election on January 5 last year. BNP, which boycotted the polls, however, says it was the "day democracy was annihilated".

As both parties were set to hold programmes on the day, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police banned

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Evict grabbers of Bakkhali River in Cox's Bazar

HC asks govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to immediately evict the encroachers of the river Bakkhali in Cox's Bazar, and to submit a report before it after complying with the order in a month.

During hearing a writ petition, the court also ordered the government to take effective steps to stop dumping waste into the river to protect it from pollution.

The court came up with the order after examining a report submitted by the Department of Environment saying that around 50 people have grabbed the land of the river and garbage is being dumped into it, petitioner's lawyer Iqbal Kabir Lytton told The Daily Star.

Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) filed the petition in September last year seeking HC directives on the government to protect the river.



The rising political tension in the country has left Kuakata sea beach with few to no visitors yesterday.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH



A policeman frisks a motorcyclist on Mohakhali flyover as security in the capital was tightened yesterday, the first day of the BNP-led countrywide indefinite blockade.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Recklessly driven bus rams baby-taxi from behind killing three

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three people died when the CNG-run auto-rickshaw they were in became sandwiched between two buses in the capital's Uttara yesterday.

The dead were CNG driver Nazrul Islam, 37, and passengers - MM Hossain Uddin, 35, and Pradip Kumar Majumder, 44.

Uttara police said the auto-rickshaw was behind a BRTC bus at a traffic signal near North Tower around 6:30pm.

Driver of a Suprabhat bus lost control of his vehicle and rammed into the auto-rickshaw from behind, sandwiching it between the two buses, they added. Police seized the Suprabhat bus.

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