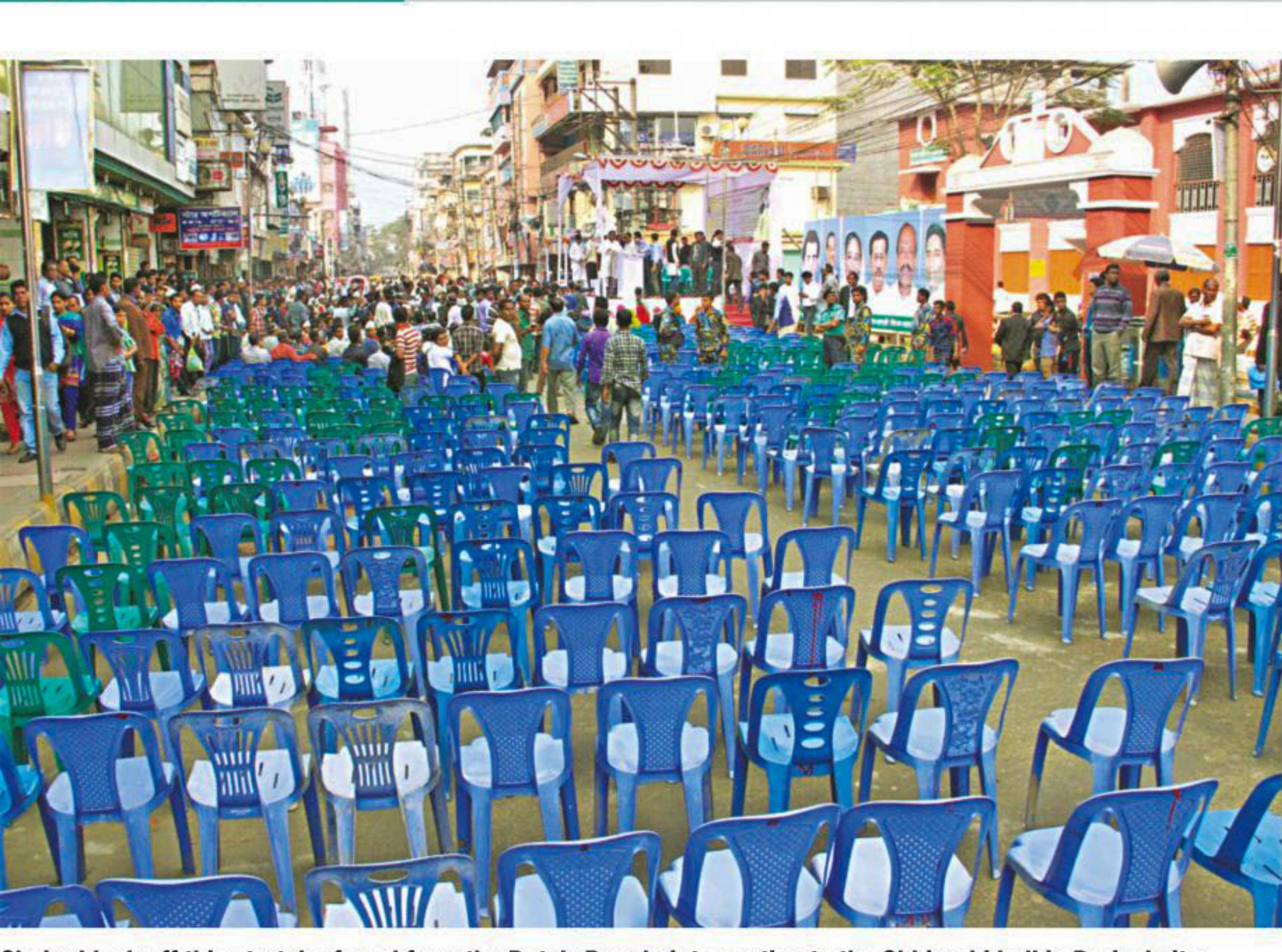


YESTERDAY'S
TEMPERATURESDHAKA
H 27.0 | L 16.8CHITTAGONG
H 28.2 | L 16.3SYLHET
H 26.2 | L 14.3RAJSHAHI
H 28.0 | L 14.7KHULNA
H 28.5 | L 18.0BARISAL
H 28.5 | L 16.7RANGPUR
H 24.8 | L 13.9COX'S BAZAR
H 28.4 | L 15.6

Chairs block off this stretch of road from the Dutch-Bangla intersection to the Obhiruchi hall in Barisal city yesterday that too an hour before schedule around 2:00pm. The irony is that the district Jubo League organised the rally protesting the ongoing blockade and hartals of the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

10-bed burn unit opens at BSMMU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Amid rising number of patients burned in political violence across the country, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University has opened a 10-bed burn unit.

A total of 20 doctors and 30 nurses led by Prof Saif Uddin Ahmed of surgery department will treat patients with all types of burns free of charge.

Inaugurating the unit in the Cabin Block yesterday, Vice-Chancellor Pran Gopal Datta said, "Under the present circumstances, we initially started with 10 beds and it will be upgraded to 20 beds."

The BSMMU authorities took the initiative as the Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) has been struggling to cope with the flood of burn victims.

The newly launched unit at BSMMU has seven small cabins and a room with three

beds. The authorities restricted entry of visitors for the patients' wellbeing.

"It has been designed in such a way that severely burned patients will remain isolated as a safeguard to prevent infections," said the VC.

BSMMU's Director Brig Gen (retd) Md Abdul Majid Bhuiyan told The Daily Star that patients at the burn unit would also receive treatments for other complications free of charge.

Around 30 physiotherapists of BSMMU have received training from the DMCH burn unit to ensure quality treatment for patients, hospital sources said. The DMCH burn unit has already been packed with around 500 patients against only 300 beds.

It is struggling to arrange spaces for more burned people who became victims of arson attacks during the ongoing blockade across the country. Two burn victims -- Popy, 9, and Sazu, 6, -- have already been shifted to BSMMU.

Indian national arrested with 2.7kg gold at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officials detained an Indian national with 2.7kg of gold in the capital's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday.

Bijoy Kumar, 41, landed at the airport from Dubai, said Kazi Md Ziauddin, joint commissioner of customs.

The official said on information, a team of customs officials challenged him and found the gold worth around Tk 1.38 crore on his person.



Central Shaheed Minar getting a face-lift in the capital yesterday with less than a week to go before February 21 or Language Movement Day and International Mother Language Day.

PHOTO: STAR

ICT defers charge framing against 2 Netrakona 'Razakars'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday deferred passing order on charge framing in the war crimes case against alleged Razakars of Netrakona -- Obaidul Haque alias Taher and Ataur Rahman alias Noni.

The tribunal fixed March 2 for passing order.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice M Enayetur Rahim had fixed yesterday to pass order, but said they want to look over documents again.

The tribunal on December 11, 2014 took the charges into cognisance against the two alleged Razakars.

According to the formal charge submitted by the prosecution, the two were involved in the abduction and killing of at least 15 persons and looting and setting fire to between 400 and 450 houses in 1971.

The prosecution said the duo led Razakars, an auxiliary force of the Pakistani occupation army, in the

Bacteria present in 40pc tube-well water: Survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bacterial contamination is found in almost 40 percent of tube-wells in a survey that casts doubts upon the quality of drinking water in the country, according to NGO Forum.

Such prevalence of bacteria in underground water poses a great risk of spreading intestinal diseases in many areas across the country, the NGO observes.

The NGO Forum presented the survey findings at an experience sharing event titled "Efforts to Ensure Safe Water Through Water Quality Testing Services" held at the DPHE auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Earlier, it had collected water from 3,654 tube-wells from all seven divisions in the country between 2005 and 2014 and tested the samples at its own laboratory.

The study, however, did not mention how many people were likely to be affected by the contaminated water.

Addressing the event, SMA Rashid, the Forum's executive director, said their laboratory, which was established in Dhaka in 2000, was equipped with instruments able to test water samples using 41 parameters. On average, they conducted 12,000 to 16,000 tests at the laboratory every year, he added.

Dr Abul Hasnat Milton, senior lecturer of The School of Medicine and Public Health at University of Newcastle, Australia, presented the key findings of the survey. He said the prevalence of bacteria in drinking water posed a particular challenge to the country since about 50 percent of the population would be living in urban areas by 2030.

He also pointed out that unsafe level of manganese was found in water samples collected from different districts.

"Seventeen percent of the country's tube-wells are unsafe because of the concentration of manganese in the water," he added. Water samples from 6,780 tube-wells were tested for manganese, he informed.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

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Night temperature may fall slightly and day temperature remains nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:51pm and rises tomorrow at 6:31am. Country's highest temperature 30.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Patuakhali and lowest 10.6 in Sreemangal.

AL-led alliance to hold mass processions Feb 20

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance will organise mass processions across the country on February 20 to protest "terrorism and anarchy" of the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

In the capital, the alliance will march from Bangabandhu Avenue at 4:00pm to Suhrawardy Udyan.

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No political talks, go tough

Some citizens urge govt; Rafique-Ul Huq says dialogue essential to resolve crisis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Denouncing the recent formation of "concerned citizens" to push for dialogue between the two major political parties, some eminent personalities yesterday urged the government to go tougher and do whatever was necessary to resist the ongoing arson.

Dialogue can not be held with those who do not believe in Bangladesh's independence, they viewed at a roundtable, "Terrorism, violence and national security", organised by Sector Commanders Forum, Liberation War '71 in the capital's Bangladesh National Museum.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Baby Nazneen briefly detained for trying to visit Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Singer Baby Nazneen was released nearly an hour after police detained her as she tried to visit BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at the latter's Gulshan office in the capital yesterday.

Gulshan police Officer-in-Charge Rafiqul Islam told The Daily Star that they freed her around 9:00pm.

Law enforcers barred Nazneen from entering the

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