

WEATHER
FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 29.8 L 21.8	H 29.5 L 19.0	H 31.5 L 18.5	H 31.2 L 19.3	H 31.6 L 21.0	H 32.6 L 21.2	H 30.2 L 19.0	H 29.6 L 18.5

Night and day temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:59pm and rises tomorrow at 6:23am. Country's highest temperature 33.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Pataakhali and lowest 16.0 in Teknaf.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over cheques for Tk 4,20,65,000 as financial assistance to 146 owners of 156 buses, trucks and other vehicles, which were damaged during the BNP-led 20-party alliance's ongoing blockade and hartals, in her office in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: BSS

Hasina helps blockade affected transporters

Distributes Tk 4.2 crore among 146 owners

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday provided cheques worth Tk 4,20,65,000 as financial assistance to 146 owners of 156 buses, trucks and other vehicles, with one getting the highest Tk 10 lakh, damaged during the BNP-led 20-party alliance's recent hartals and ongoing blockade.

This is the first phase of support, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said during the presentation at the prime minister's Tejgaon office in the capital.

So far owners of some 823 vehicles, 287 torched and 536 vandalised, have applied to the prime minister for financial help, he said, adding, "The rest...will also be given financial help."

Some 1,800 vehicles were burned or vandalised by the BNP-Jamaat-e-Islami men since January, Obaidul added.

He said the prime minister would also provide financial help to families of drivers and helpers killed and injured.

Obaidul thanked the vehicle owners for continuing to provide service during the period, terming it a huge sacrifice.

70pc launch accidents due to design flaws

Says report of nine NGOs based on data of 29 years

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 70 percent of the total launch accidents occurred in the country between 1976 and 2005 due to faulty designs of the vessels, said a report of nine NGOs working for safe waterway yesterday.

In the law, there is provision of punishment for the launch owners, drivers and some others but no such provision for the designers, according to the report launched at a press conference on ensuring of skilled drivers to prevent launch accidents and

approval of vessels' designs in Jatiya Press Club of the capital.

At the programme, the speakers observed that water cannot enter into the vessels even after tilting 40 degree if they are built following international rules.

And the launches made in the country sink when those tilt 15 to 18 degree.

The organisations are Arpon, Udayan Bangladesh, Safe River Way Movement, Docap, Pulse Bangladesh, Samaj, CDP, Safe River Way Implementation Union, and CoastTrust.

About 500 committees had been formed since the independence to probe into launch accidents and only four reports were published, the report said.

"About 35,000 vessels are currently plying the waterbodies in Bangladesh, where only 13,000 are registered. Of them, 2,225 are passenger carriers."

Only five engineers and ship surveyors with the existing capacity can examine the fitness of 850 to 900 passenger vessels a year, the report said.

So a large number of launches

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Bangladesh to expand diplomatic network to 27 more countries

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

For reaching out to a greater global audience, the government has decided to expand its diplomatic network to 96 countries from the present 69.

Earlier, 30 missions used to maintain the ties either through concurrent accreditation or by appointing honorary consuls general or honorary consuls. Now, 38 have been accredited.

In the last five years, the government either opened or reopened 11 new diplomatic missions in Athens, Brasilia, Lisbon, Mexico City, Port Louis, Beirut, Istanbul, Kunming, Milan, Mumbai and Vienna.

Two others in Warsaw and Copenhagen are expected to become operational by this year's end.

Against this backdrop, the government reviewed the existing arrangement of concurrent accreditation.

The decision to widen Bangladesh's diplomatic presence across the world has been taken considering Bangladesh's growing economy, success in socio-economic development, key role in global peace keeping operations and vibrant engagement with multinational forums and topical and cross cutting issues, said a foreign ministry press release.

"Therefore, the review thus has enabled



A group of students of Segunbagicha High School forms a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday in protest against the ongoing blockade, hartals, and the accompanying violence inflicted by the BNP-led 20-party alliance.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Why halting ETV telecast not illegal

HC asks govt to explain; its transmission not fully restored yet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday questioned the legality of the "sudden suspension" of the transmission of Ekushey Television (ETV), which went off the air on January 5 in several districts after telecasting the speech of BNP leader Tarique Rahman.

Upon pressure from the government authorities, the cable operators halted its broadcast for giving "excessive" coverage to Tarique, a journalist of the private television station told The Daily Star yesterday, seeking anonymity.

ETV is completely out of the network in 10 districts and Dhaka, partially in 32 others, while it is fully operational in 22 districts, said the journalist.

Tarique allegedly maligned Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in his speech.

After hearing a petition filed recently by a reporter and two viewers of ETV, Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice

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Announcement for theSTAR Readers

For the last 20 years in The Daily Star and last 18 years in The Star magazine **Chintito** has been one of the most read columns of the paper. He has regaled, provoked, delighted and sometimes infuriated his readers with his witty, biting commentary on politics and society. **But who is Chintito?**

Find out this Friday February 27 when the Star reveals it all. Don't miss reading the last issue of the Star in the old format before it changes...

NEWSIN brief

21 blockade, hartal violence victims get financial help in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A total of 21 victims of hartal and blockade violence, were given Tk 10,000 each as financial assistance yesterday in Chittagong city.

Chittagong Deputy Commissioner Mejbah Uddin handed over the money to the victims at the Burn Unit of Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Chittagong District Administration donated money for five victims while the rest got money from the Zakat Fund of Islamic Foundation Bangladesh, Chittagong.

Ctg Jubo League man shot dead in broad daylight

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

An unknown gang shot a Jubo League activist dead in Raozan upzaila of Chittagong yesterday afternoon, said police.

Mohammad Shahid, 30, was found dead by the roadside in Charabattal, about half a kilometre from his home at Harishkhan village, said Pradip Kumar Das, officer-in-charge of Raozan Police Station. He had bullet wounds in the head and chest, he added.

The OC said the motive behind the murder of Shahid, who was accused in five cases for dealing with drugs and for robbery, could not be known immediately.

Cuta demands cancellation of Manna's certificates

CU CORRESPONDENT

Chittagong University Teachers' Association yesterday demanded cancellation of Nagorik Oikyo Convener Mahmudur Rahman Manna's academic certificates from CU, says a press release issued by Cuta President Benu Kumar Dey and General Secretary Mostafizur Rahman Siddique.

Law enforcers detained Manna in the capital on Tuesday after his two phone conversations were leaked where he advised BNP leader Sadeque Hossain Khoka to capture some DU dormitories to put pressure on the government, and where, with an unnamed person, expressed willingness to discuss with army officials the current political situation.

Free kidney check-up for media professionals launched in capital

BSS, Dhaka

Free kidney check-up for both print and electronic media workers has been launched in the capital to promote awareness campaign against kidney diseases.

Yesterday, Save Life Foundation and Gift Life Foundation jointly set up a screening camp at ATN Bangla.

National Professor MR Khan, chief advisor to the foundations, urged people to support them for providing healthcare facilities to underprivileged people.

ATN Bangla Chairman Mahfuzur Rahman, Prof MA Kabir Chowdhury and Convener of the foundations Dr Sohely Ahmed Sweetey also spoke.

Seminar
OXFAM and other will organise a seminar on Indigenous and Mainstream communities. Venue: Spectra Convention Centre, Gulshan, Time: 10:00am

Workshop
IEEE Power and Energy Society Chapter and others will organise a workshop on Solar PV Charge Controller. Venue: BUET, Time: 10:00am

এই গ্রন্থ বাংলাদেশের বিখ্যাত রসায়নিক ও রাজনীতিবিদ **আবুল মনসুর আহমদ**কে নিয়ে প্রায় ৬০০ পৃষ্ঠার কালের ধ্বনি'র পূর্ণাঙ্গ সংখ্যা পাওয়া যাচ্ছে একুশের বইমেলায় লিটল ম্যাগ কন্সার "কালের ধ্বনি" বাংলা একাডেমির মূল অংশের চনং স্টলে এছাড়াও পাওয়া যাচ্ছে-পাঠক সমাবেশ আজিজ সুপার মার্কেট, শাহবাগ মূল্য-০৩০ টাকা সম্পাদক: ইমরান মাহমুজ প্রচ্ছদ পরিকল্পনা ও নামলিপি কাইয়ুম চৌধুরী (সর্বশেষ কাজ) তারিখ: ০১৭৬৫ ৩০৭০৭০

And the winner **THE MAN BEHIND CHINTITO**

For the last 20 years in The Daily Star and last 18 years in The Star magazine **Chintito** has been one of the most read columns of the paper. He has regaled, provoked, delighted and sometimes infuriated his readers with his witty, biting commentary on politics and society. **But who is Chintito?**

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