

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA H 32.0 L 27.0	CHITTAGONG H 29.5 L 25.9	SYLHET H 32.6 L 26.0	RAJSHAH H 33.0 L 26.8	KHULNA H 30.6 L 27.5	BARISAL H 28.6 L 26.2	RANGPUR H 31.5 L 26.7	COX'S BAZAR H 30.0 L 25.5
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Light to moderate rain or thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at most places over all the divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places over the country till 6:00pm today, said Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:29pm and rises tomorrow at 5:35am.

Committee to Protect Journalists seeks Probir's release

Points out that ICT act's section 57 has often been used against press

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Noting that journalists in Bangladesh have faced heightened pressure for critical reporting on the authorities, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has called for the immediate release of journalist Probir Sikdar and investigation into the threats he faced. "Jailing journalists for publishing threats made against them further undermines confidence in Bangladesh's legal system," said CPJ Asia Programme Research Associate Sumit Galhotra.

Probir, editor of Bangla daily Bangla 71 and online news portal u71news.com, was picked up by detectives on Sunday evening from his Indira Road office in the capital.

The arrest was shown in a case under the information and communication technology act accusing him of "tarnishing the image" of LGRD Minister Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain.

A Faridpur Awami League leader, Swapan Kumar Paul, filed it that day after Probir in a Facebook post said his life was under threat and that the minister, businessman Moosa bin Shamser and condemned fugitive war criminal Abul Kalam Azad would be responsible if he were killed, police said.

Working to safeguard press freedom worldwide, the independent, non-profit organisation in a report published on its website yesterday said Khandaker's office did not immediately respond to CPJ's emailed request for comment.

"The harassment of journalists comes as bloggers in the country face death threats from Islamist groups," it said.

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Factions of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists and Dhaka Union of Journalists form a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday protesting the arrest of their leader Shawkat Mahmud, and demanding his immediate release.

PHOTO: STAR

Punish MP Bodi

Demand engineers for his assault on their fellow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Engineers formed a human chain yesterday demanding punishment for ruling party lawmaker Abdur Rahman Bodi for assaulting a fellow engineer last week, and threatened to observe work stoppage in his constituency, Cox's Bazar-4, if their demand is not met.

Bodi assaulted former Ukhia upazila engineer Mostafa Minhaz for not attending an upazila parishad meeting on August 12. Minhaz was later transferred to Sonagazi upazila in Feni.

The Awami League lawmaker made headlines several times before for assaulting school teachers, forest and bank officials, a freedom fighter and many others.

Engineers formed the human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

At the programme, engineer Mohammad Ali said if the government does not take any measure within the next seven days, they will stop working in all development projects in Bodi's constituency.

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No more problem for hajis in getting visa

Claims religious affairs ministry

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hajj pilgrims will not face further trouble in getting visas from Saudi Arabian embassy in Dhaka as technical difficulties in the visa procedure have been resolved, said officials at the religious affairs ministry in the capital yesterday.

Over 30,000 pilgrims' visas have already been confirmed by the Saudi embassy and the rest will be done gradually, said Abdul Malek, assistant hajj officer of the ministry.

The Hajj flights started on Sunday and over 3,000 pilgrims have already reached Saudi Arabia in the last three days, said officials at Ashkona Hajj Office where the aspiring pilgrims are now staying.

But a total of 419 pilgrims failed to fly

for Saudi Arabia on Monday as the Saudi embassy did not grant their visas on time.

Hajj pilgrims blamed Bangladeshi Hajj officials for late visa confirmation.

Ibrahim Bahar, president of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh (Haab), said the problem occurred due to technical difficulties especially in their photographs, and he assured that no pilgrim will miss a flight again for visa complications.

The Saudi authorities fixed a quota of 1,01,750 Bangladeshi pilgrims this year. Of them, 2,700 will perform Hajj under government arrangement and the rest under private management, said officials.

The Hajj flights will continue until September 17. The return flight will start on September 28 and end on October 28.

Ecneec okays 6 dev projects

For food security, DSCC infrastructure, rail communication, river reclamation, technology and innovation, expansion of BCS academy

UNB, Dhaka

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecneec) yesterday approved the production and development of high quality seeds of paddy, wheat and corn (2nd phase) at a cost of Tk 353.45 crore to produce some 150,000 tonnes of standard quality cereal seeds through contract farmers.

The approval was given at the 4th Ecneec meeting of the current fiscal year held at the NEC conference room in the capital with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal said, "Of the total, Tk 3,814.94 crore will come from the government exchequer, while the remaining Tk 147 crore from the respective organisations' own funds."

Of the approved projects, four are new, while two are revised.

Under the seed project, the planning minister said some 150,000 tonnes of standard quality cereal seeds, including paddy, wheat and corn, would be produced, processed and distributed among the farmers to ensure food security.

The countrywide annual demand for seeds is 370,000 tonnes, said Mustafa Kamal, adding that about 40 percent of the current demand could be met through this project, which will be implemented by the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADCO) in 166 upazilas of 35 districts in six divisions by June 2020.

The planning minister told journalists that the prime minister asked the authorities to quickly undertake initiatives to meet the remaining

demand for quality seeds.

The meeting also gave its nod to another project titled "Damaged CC roads, drains and footpath development of five areas under Dhaka South City Corporation" at a cost of Tk 250 crore. Of the total cost, Tk 175 crore will come from the exchequer, while Tk 75 crore from the DSCC's own fund.

While approving the project, Hasina directed the authorities concerned to make sure that the sewerage system remains effective to prevent waterlogging during the rainy season.

Also approved was a revised project titled "procurement of dredgers and other related equipments for dredging rivers of Bangladesh", worth Tk 1253.54 crore, to be implemented by the Bangladesh Water Development Board by December 2016.

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Teachers and students of Jahangirnagar University join a procession brought out by the drama and dramatics department on the campus yesterday commemorating noted playwright Selim Al Deen marking his 66th birthday.

PHOTO: STAR

BARAPUKURIA CASE Khaleda seeks records, final report from HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday prayed to the High Court to call for all records and a final report of Barapukuria coalmine corruption case against her from the authorities concerned.

Khaleda placed the prayer through filing two separate petitions with the HC in order to ascertain the legal procedure under which the Anti-Corruption Commission appointed the second investigation officer to probe the case after the first IO had exempted her from the case in June 2008, Raghib Rauf Chowdhury, a lawyer for Khaleda, told The Daily Star.

Meanwhile, ACC's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that the petitions were submitted in order to drag the trial proceedings of the case.

The ACC filed the case on February 26, 2008 accusing Khaleda and 15 others of causing a loss of Tk 159 crore to the state exchequer by awarding a contract for operating Barapukuria coalmine to a Chinese company through abuse of power.

Later, the HC stayed the case proceedings for several times and issued a rule on the government and the ACC to explain why the case against Khaleda should not be scrapped.

Trials being hampered for lack of infrastructure

Chief justice tells president; smells conspiracy against judiciary

CITY DESK

Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha told President Abdul Hamid that trials were being hampered due to a lack of proper infrastructures at the district level, reports BSS.

The chief justice made the observation with the president when he paid a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban yesterday, President's Press Secretary Joynal Abedin told the news agency.

Hamid underscored the need for taking concerted efforts to resolve the problems related to infrastructures at the district level. The president emphasised quick disposal of cases to ensure punishment for criminals.

Justice Sinha also apprised the president of different initiatives taken so far to reduce case backlog.

Meanwhile, Chief Justice Sinha on Monday said there was a smell of conspiracy against the judiciary's dynamism. He urged lawyers to stay alert against such conspiracy, reports UNB Natore correspondent.

"There's a smell of conspiracy against the vibrancy of the judiciary in disposing of cases since I've taken over the charge. Remain alert against the plotters," he told a reception accorded to him by Natore District Bar Association.

Stressing on the punctuality of lawyers, Sinha said if lawyers came to court on time and case proceedings began timely every day

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Rajshahi road crash kills six of a wedding party

Another killed in Lalmonirhat

CITY DESK

Six people, including two children and three of a family, were killed on the spot and two others injured when a truck hit a battery-run rickshaw-van and ran them over on Puthia-Taherpur road in Tebaria area of Rajshahi yesterday afternoon, reports our staff correspondent from Rajshahi.

The deceased were the rickshaw-van driver Biddut, 36, his wife Bristi,

32, Sumi, 28, her son Rudro, 6, Puja, 10, of Dashmaria village and Bichitra, 50, of Bogra.

They were the passengers of the rickshaw-van and returning from a wedding ceremony.

Locals caught the truck driver Joban Ali, 40, of Charchat upazila and torched the vehicle. Later, they handed over the driver to police after giving him a mob beating.

The incident occurred due to negligence of the truck driver, said Shahriar

Khan, officer-in-charge of Puthia Police Station.

The district administration announced Tk 10,000 compensation for the dead and Tk 5,000 for the injured.

Meanwhile, a bicyclist was killed after a truck hit him on Lalmonirhat-Burimari highway in Bawra area of Patgram upazila in Lalmonirhat, adds our correspondent.

The victim was Paresh Chandra Sen, 65, of Shafinagar village.



Sonali Bank Limited
Head Office, Dhaka

Human Resource Development Division

Request for Expression of Interest for Selection of Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) in the rank of General Manager

Sonali Bank Limited announces a vacancy for the position of Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) in the rank of General Manager for a period of two years on contractual basis. For detailed job description and instructions to apply for the position, please visit our website: www.sonalibank.com.bd

- Application should be received not later than 03/09/2015.
- Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.
- No TA/DA will be given.

GD-2739

Md. Sahid Hossain
General Manager