

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 28.0 L 21.3	H 27.5 L 21.4	H 27.7 L 18.2	H 29.5 L 17.9	H 28.5 L 23.0	H 27.8 L 21.4	H 28.2 L 18.0	H 27.6 L 22.8

Rain is likely to occur at a few places over all the divisions till 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur during midnight to till this morning, said Met Office. Day temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:11pm and rises tomorrow at 6:26am.

CHT PEACE ACCORD
Chalk definite roadmap for implementation
Jatiya Nagorik Udyog discussion told
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government must immediately set a definite roadmap for the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace accord's effective implementation and help the region's people overcome frustration, speakers told a discussion in the capital yesterday.

People of the CHT might start having suspicions and feel deceived if the government fails to gain their trust, they observed.

Jatiya Nagorik Udyog organised the discussion, "Implementation of CHT Accord: A National Pledge" in the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh marking the agreement's 18th anniversary.

Ushaton Talukder, lawmaker of Rangamati, urged politicians and civil society members to unite for the implementation, alleging that the government was not taking it seriously and that it was not in the national policy.

"Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti has already declared a non-cooperation movement," he said, adding that the government must realise that it was important for the sake of national interest.

Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary, Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, placed a four-point demand including taking legal and administrative measures.

Communist Party of Bangladesh President Mujahidul Islam Selim termed the agreement an unachieved part of the Liberation War, saying Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was failing to fulfill her commitment.

Oikya NAP President Pankaj Bhattacharya alleged that the state was treating the CHT as its "colony" and that this was threatening the country's unity.

Noted journalist
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A faction of Gonojagoron Mancha brings out a procession in the capital's Shahbagh yesterday, demanding suspension of all diplomatic relations with Pakistan which denied committing any war crime or atrocities in Bangladesh during the 1971 Liberation War.
 PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

DENIAL OF GENOCIDE
File case with Int'l Criminal Court against Pakistan
Syed Hasan Imam urges government
 DU CORRESPONDENT

Celebrated cultural personality Syed Hasan Imam yesterday urged the government to file a case with International Criminal Court against Pakistan for the genocide of 1971.

"The atrocities...are listed in the Guinness book of records as one of 20th century's top five genocides. There is no other alternative to cutting ties with this state as it denied (committing) the genocide which I witnessed," he said.

Syed Hasan was addressing a rally organised by a Gonojagoron Mancha faction led by Imran H Sarker in the capital's Shahbagh demanding severing diplomatic and economic ties for interfering in Bangladesh's domestic affairs like the war crimes trials.

Pakistan on November 30 denied committing any war crimes or atrocities during the 1971 Liberation War. It also rejected

FIGHTING CHILD MARRIAGE
Canadian high commission awards four govt officials
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Commission of Canada yesterday awarded four government officials for demonstrating leadership in efforts to prevent child marriage in Bangladesh.

Md Gaus, divisional commissioner, Barisal; Md Mostafa Kamal, deputy commissioner, Khulna; Md Shahbuddin Khan, deputy commissioner, Jamalpur; and Syed Faruq Ahmed, upazila nirbahi officer, Kaliganj, were honoured at a ceremony held at a hotel in the capital in observation of the International Day of the Girl Child 2015.

Talking to The Daily Star, Mostafa Kamal, who was the first to develop a detailed district action plan in Bangladesh to eliminate child marriage from Khulna district, said, "This January the rate of child marriage was 70 percent, but now according to an assessment by Unicef, the rate went down to 40 percent."

Kamal spread messages about the impacts of child marriage through the use of Pot Song, a traditional music of southern Bangladesh where stories are told through pictures painted on pots. His efforts were supported by Rupantar and funded by Unicef.

Initiatives of Shahbuddin Khan, who was absent, were highlighted. He developed a database of 42,000 adolescents between the ages of 10 and 19 in 23 unions of Jamalpur, where Unicef is working to prevent child marriage.

Canadian High Commissioner Benoit-Pierre Laramée lauded the awardees. The nation funds Plan Canada with
 SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

PROPOSED LAW FOR FEMALES' MINIMUM MARRIAGEABLE AGE
Scrap provision for making it 16 under special circumstances
Women's rights activists urge govt
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The proposed special provision in the child marriage restraint act to keep 16 as the marriageable age for females under special circumstances would be tantamount to "child killing", said women's rights activists yesterday.

They said through such a condition the state itself is encouraging "marital rape".

The rights activists were addressing a press conference on "Cancellation of Special Provision in Section-16 of Child Marriage Restraint Act-2014 and Keeping Minimum Marriageable Age for Female Child 18 Unconditionally" organised by Samajik Protirodh Committee, a platform of 68 NGOs, at Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

The law ministry recently vetted and returned, to the women and children affairs ministry, the draft of the child marriage restraint act which has a special provision stating that under special circumstances, marriage of a 16-year-old girl to a man above the age of 21, with permission from either parents or courts, would not be considered as child marriage.

Zakia K Hassan, president of Women for Women, said, "We personally and collectively believe that enacting it will be tantamount to child killing."

Advocate Salma Ali, executive director of Bangladesh National Women Lawyers' Association, questioned the necessity of lowering the minimum marriageable age to 16 and said a female, with rare exceptions, is not fully mentally and physically prepared for marriage before 18.

Executive Director of Manusher
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Standing from left, Kaliganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer Syed Faruq Ahmed, Barisal Divisional Commissioner Md Gaus, Khulna Deputy Commissioner Md Mostafa Kamal, and Jamalpur Deputy Commissioner Md Shahabuddin Khan, who were honoured by the Canadian high commission; with, sitting from left, Canadian High Commissioner Benoit-Pierre Laramée, State Minister for Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Tarana Halim, and UN Resident Coordinator Robert Watkins, at a ceremony in a Dhaka hotel yesterday marking International Day of the Girl Child.

MOFAKKHARUL MURDER
HC upholds death for two
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday upheld a lower court verdict that had sentenced two convicts to death for killing Mofakkharul Ahmed Soheli, a doctor of Bangladesh Medical College Hospital, in the capital's Dhanmondi in 2008.

The convicts, Mofakkharul's driver Saiful Islam, 36, and Saiful's cousin Firoz Miah, 35, are now in Dhaka Central Jail.

According to the prosecution, a gang of miscreants led by Saiful killed Dr Mofakkharul in his residence on January 11 for grabbing his property. They
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WASTE MANAGEMENT
No secondary station at Pantha Kunja Park
Orders High Court
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday declared illegal the construction of a secondary transfer station (STS), a structure for waste management, at Pantha Kunja Park in the capital's Karwan Bazar.

The court delivered the verdict after hearing a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association challenging the legality of constructing the STS at the park and its adjacent public road.

Dhaka North City Corporation had been erecting the structure in violation of the conditions of the Department

Late Yasmin Rahman
 Wife of M. Faizur Rahman

We request all relatives and friends to pray for Mrs. Yasmin Rahman, the dearest member of our family who passed on to eternity sixteen years ago.

STAR WEEKEND
 in other news...

With a fresh new format, new writers and a new perspective, the Star Weekend has an array of interesting articles for you. This week our spotlight is about the adverse impact of banning social media websites in Bangladesh. There is also an important article on the history and present condition of a British colonial era building that was used as the first court of Chittagong. Don't forget your copy of Star Weekend tomorrow, Friday!

SAY YES TO SOCIAL MEDIA
 ELITA KABIR
 PHOTO: MAZ HAQUE AP/UPRO

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go with others.
 — Alan Watts

It has been more than two weeks that Bangladesh is without Facebook, WhatsApp and Viber. Some of the most visited and used social media platforms were apparently, closed down temporarily for national security. Censorship of the net a couple of days before the hanging of war criminals Salauddin Quader Chowdhury and Abdulmunem Mujib, the common platforms for communication between entrepreneurs, creative agencies, digital media companies and bloggers were switched off. While the citizens thanked the government and the law enforcement officials for keeping street clear of the State Minister of the Post, Telecommunications and Information Technology division however, the much expected post hanging site, Tarana Halim the Information Technology division created in Dhaka to the social media ban, drew more social media attention. This week's spotlight focuses on the good old days of Facebook and how social media actually helped curb crime and bring justice, and the opposite. Turn to pages 8-9.

4 LEFT IN PROGRESS BUT FACEBOOK SHUT ONE
 It is said that a few days ago, the support of Bangladesh's internet service providers (ISPs) was used to block access to Facebook.

11 SHUT UP AND LISTEN
 It is said that a few days ago, the support of Bangladesh's internet service providers (ISPs) was used to block access to Facebook.

13 PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE WHO DO IT
 It is said that a few days ago, the support of Bangladesh's internet service providers (ISPs) was used to block access to Facebook.

14 EQUAL IN LAW BUT NOT IN REALITY
 It is said that a few days ago, the support of Bangladesh's internet service providers (ISPs) was used to block access to Facebook.

Singair Poursava
polls stayed for 6 months
 STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has stayed for six months the process for holding elections to Singair Poursava in Manikganj on allegation of irregularities in voters' list.

The order came on Tuesday after hearing a petition filed by Mostak Ahmed Bhuiyan, a voter of Singair, challenging the legality of the schedule of the election, which was supposed to be held on December 30.

Petitioner's lawyer ABM Golam Mostafa Taj told The Daily Star that earlier the HC issued a rule asking the Election Commission to explain why the existing voters' list for Singair should not be declared illegal and why it should not be directed to make a fresh voters' list.

“ব্যঙ্গ-সৃষ্টিতে অসাধারণ প্রতিভার প্রয়োগ। ... বন্ধু আবুল মনসুরের হাত-সাঁফাই দেখে বিস্মিত হলাম। ভাষার কান মলে রস সৃষ্টির ক্ষমতা আবুল মনসুরের অসাধারণ। এ যেন পাকা গুস্তাদী হাত।”
 —কাজী নজরুল ইসলাম

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আজিজ সুপার মার্কেট, শাহবাগ: প্রথমা (৯৬৬৪৮২৫), পাঠক সমাবেশ (০১৭১৩০৩৪৪০) কাটাবন: প্রকৃতি (০১৭২৭৩২৮৭২৩), বেহিলি রোড: সাগর পাবলিশার্স (৯৩৫৮৯৪৪) বিমান বন্দর: বুক ওয়ার্ম (৯১২০৩৮৭), নরসিংদী: বই পুস্তক (০১৮১৮৫০৪৯৯৩) কুষ্টিয়া: বইমেলা (০১৭১১ ৫৭৫৬০৬)।
 চট্টগ্রাম: বাতিঘর (০১৭১৩০৪৩৪৪), প্রথমা (০১৭১১৬৪৯৪২২)