

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 26.0 | L 15.8

CHITTAGONG
H 26.6 | L 14.8

SYLHET
H 26.6 | L 14.6

RAJSHAH
H 25.7 | L 10.5

KHULNA
H 26.5 | L 13.2

BARISAL
H 26.7 | L 12.4

RANGPUR
H 26.2 | L 12.5

COX'S BAZAR
H 26.0 | L 14.4

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours till 6:00pm today. Moderate to thick fog may occur at places over the river basins and light to moderate fog elsewhere during midnight till morning. The sun sets in the capital today at 05:26pm and rises tomorrow at 06:43am. Country's highest temperature 28.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Teknaf and lowest 09.9 degrees in Chuadanga.

BCC panel mayor held

Illegal pistol with bullets recovered from his house
CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Panel-mayor and councillor of Barisal City Corporation KM Shahidullah was arrested and a pistol with three bullets was found in his house in the city on Tuesday midnight.

Shahidullah, also central vice-president of Svecchhasebak Dal, vice-president of Barisal city unit BNP, was handed over to police yesterday after he failed to show any legal document for the pistol, Rab sources said.

A case was filed and he was sent to jail after being produced before the court.

Lt Col Faridul Alam, commander at RAB-8 headquarter in Barisal, said Shahidullah was arrested during a special drive to recover illegal arms and curb subversive activities.



Demanding immediate execution of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Motiur Rahman Nizami, Muktijuddher Chetona Bastobayon Projonmo Mancha holds a rally, blocking the street in front of the Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Huge Yaba haul in Ctg port

10 lakh pills seized; eight arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Rapid Action Battalion seized 10 lakh yaba tablets worth Tk 40 crore while those were being smuggled to the country by a trawler through the outer anchorage of Chittagong Port on Tuesday night.

It is the second largest Yaba haul seized in the country, said Assistant Superintendent of Police of Rab-7, adding that navy personnel seized 15 lakh Yaba pills in Chittagong on February 5 last year, which was the biggest ever.

The consignment of 10 lakh tablets was coming from Myanmar, said officials of Rab-7 at a press conference at its headquarters in the city's Patenga yesterday.

Eight persons, including a Myanmarese, were arrested in this connection, said Lt Col Mifath Uddin Ahmed, commanding officer of Rab-7.

Abdus Salam, 55, Shafique, 35, Abdur Rahim, 30, of Cox's Bazar; and Kamal, 32, the Myanmar citizen were held in the trawler "FV Emon".

On their information, the Yaba owner Joynal Abedin, 25, his associate and the trawler owner Md Syed Alam, 30, and Md Rabiul Alam, 26, were arrested in Cox's Bazar, said the Rab official. Another Mamun, 27, was held in Chittagong city's Bahaddarhat, he added.

The contraband drugs were found in six sacks, Rab sources said.

In primary interrogation, the arrestees confessed that they smuggled 14.5 lakh Yaba pills to the country in the last 10 days of December last year, said Mifath.

64KM DOUBLE TRACK LINE OPENS TODAY Dhaka-Ctg train travel time to decrease

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Train travel times will be shorter on different routes in Bangladesh Railway's (BR's) east zone as the newly installed 64km double track line of Dhaka-Chittagong route opens today.

The decrease in travel times for 51 passenger trains including intercity and mail/express trains will be up to 2 hours and 20 minutes, and for three container trains, it will be up to 6 hours and 25 minutes, according to the traffic department of the zone.

Recently double tracks have been set up on the 64km Bhairab Bazar-Tongi section of Dhaka-Chittagong route, said officials. In April last year, the 61km Chinki Astana-Laksam section of the route was turned into a double track line.

Officials said travel times would decrease as trains would not have to share the same track.

The double track line will benefit people travelling from Dhaka to Chittagong, Sylhet, Mymensingh, and

Noakhali.

Mohammad Mokbul Ahammad, general manager (GM) of the railway's east zone, said on average the journey time for each train would be 30 to 60 minutes shorter.

It will encourage people to travel by trains, he added.

Of the 320km Dhaka-Chittagong route, 244km has become double tracks so far.

Out of the remaining 76km, the 5km Talshahar-Ashuganj section will come under the double track line within this year, while the bidding process for setting up double tracks on 71km Laksam-Akhaura section is under way, the GM said.

Meanwhile, schedules of most trains in the zone have been changed, while the intercity train Mohanagar Probhatee has been renamed Mohanagar Express.

Now the train will start from Chittagong at 12:30pm instead of 7:00am, said Jobeda Akter, deputy director (public relations) of the east zone.

14.5KG GOLD SEIZURE Biman's staff arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives arrested a technician of Biman Bangladesh Airlines in the capital's Uttara on Tuesday night for his alleged involvement in the smuggling of 14.5kg of gold bars, which were seized at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on December 23.

Abdus Sattar, 45, is one of the eight accused in a case filed in this regard, said detectives.

Customs intelligence officials seized the 125 gold bars, worth around Tk 7 crore, from two female passengers, who travelled from Chittagong to Dhaka on Biman Bangladesh Airlines' Kuwait-Chittagong-Dhaka flight, and arrested Anwar Parvez and Osman Sohel who smuggled the bars from Kuwait and handed those over to the women.

NEWS IN brief

Re-vote at 51 centres on Jan 12

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Revote at 51 polling stations under 20 municipalities will be held on January 12, said Election Commission (EC) officials yesterday.

Voting at those polling stations was suspended on last December 30 due to violence and irregularities. Election to Singair municipality of Manikganj will be held today.

Quasem's appeal hearing to start Feb 2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday fixed February 2 for starting hearing on the appeal of war criminal and Jamaat leader Mir Quasem Ali challenging his death penalty for his wartime crimes against humanity.

The SC fixed the date as the appeal came up before it for an order. The International Crimes Tribunal-2 on November 2, 2014 sentenced Quasem to death for crimes against humanity in 1971.

Nasir Uttara Club president again

CITY DESK

Nasir U Mahmood was re-elected president of the Uttara Club Limited for the term 2015-16, says a press release.

The election was held on December 25. Other members are Iftekhhar Mahmud, Noor Mohammad Dicon, SM Kaium Ali, AM Mahmudur Rahman, Md Nurul Islam, Arshad Murshedi Hossain Piplu, Md Shafiqul Alam, Piara Nergis, Md Maruf Aziz Babu, and KM Khayrul Basher.



Ibrahim Medinet Premium Services inaugurated in capital

CITY DESK

Aiming to ensure an easy and comfortable health treatment, Ibrahim Medinet Premium Services (IM) started journey on Tuesday, said a press release.

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Anisul Haque inaugurated the services in the capital's Banani. President of Bangladesh Diabetic Association Prof AK Azad Khan also was present.



Indian High Commissioner-designate to Bangladesh Harsh Bardhan Sringla pays a farewell call on Bangladesh Ambassador to Thailand Saida Muna Tasneem at her office yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam inaugurates North West International School (NWIS) in Rangpur city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Qualified teachers can help develop quality manpower

Inaugural event of English medium school in Rangpur told

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

A new English medium school has opened in the divisional city of Rangpur with a goal to provide quality education in eight northern districts.

The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam inaugurated the North West International School (NWIS) at Dhap Engineerpara last evening.

The editor underscored the need for quality education for developing skilled human resources. Good schools with qualified teachers can help develop quality manpower, which is crucial for nation building, Mahfuz Anam said.

He laid importance on students' skills in

English language and hoped NWIS would be able to play a vital role in this regard. The editor said there was no contradiction in adhering to Bangali culture and learning English at the same time.

Chairman of NWIS Board of Directors Dr Mahmudul Islam Selim, who chaired the event, said the people involved would try their best to make NWIS a centre of excellence. Acting Principal of NWIS Sarwar Jahan Shamim, noted playwright Ferdous Hasan, and NWIS advisory committee member Rakibuzzaman also spoke on the occasion. NWIS starts its academic activities this session from Play to A-level.

State-run media asked to highlight PM's 8 initiatives

BSS, Dhaka

The information ministry yesterday urged the state-run media outlets to highlight Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's "eight innovative initiatives" mainly aimed at fighting poverty.

The initiatives are Ektee Bari, Ektee Khamar project, Asrayan Prokalpa, Digital Bangladesh, Education Assistance Programme, Women Empowerment Programme, Electricity for All, Social Safety Programme, and Community Clinic and Child Development.

Obituary

CITY DESK

Angury Begum Azam, mother of architect Rafiq Azam, passed away at a hospital in the capital yesterday. She was 80.



Angury, wife of Mohammad Azam, left behind five sons, four daughters and grandchildren. She was buried at Azimpur graveyard following a namaz-e-janaza at Lalbagh fort mosque after Asr prayers. Her qulhwani will be held at house 55, road 6/A Dhanmondi tomorrow after Asr prayers.

Dr Abul Kashem
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dr Abul Kashem, father of Jatiya Party secretary general Ziauddin Ahmed Bablu, died of old age complications at a hospital in Bangkok yesterday.

He was 87. JP Chairman HM Ershad conduced the death of Kashem.

Mirza Abbas sent to jail

FROM PAGE 4

Moreover, Abbas told the court he was never absconding and he had been staying at home.

CORRUPTION CASE

Judge Md Aminul Haque of the Special Judge Court-4 of Dhaka rejected Abbas' bail and sent to jail after his surrender in a graft case filed by Anti-Corruption Commission.

The court on February 24 last year issued an arrest warrant against Abbas and four others in the same case as they were shown fugitive.

Brahmanbaria war

FROM PAGE 3

of one Badiuzzaman Mukta and five others, Tarafder said one eyewitness who managed to get released could not specify that "Taher and Nani were involved in the killings".

The defence counsel further claimed Nani was a minor during the Liberation War so it was not possible for him to participate in the atrocities.

After the completion of argument, the prosecution sought time for placing arguments on legal points. The tribunal fixed January 10 for hearing further arguments.

Egypt won't support Pak

FROM PAGE 4

alliance against any country but it is against terrorism, he added.

On terrorist organisation Islamic State (IS), the Egyptian envoy said, "The IS is already busy with the Middle East. Why should they come here (Bangladesh)", adding that he does not believe that IS is responsible for killing two foreigners in Bangladesh.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fazlur Rahman, former senior secretary to the ministry of industries and father of Ganasamhati Andolon convener Zonayed Saki, died of old age complications on Tuesday night at his residence of Madhya Badda in the capital.



He was 82. He left behind his wife and five children.

Meherun Nesa
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Meherun Nesa, mother of former advisor to a caretaker government ASM Shahjahan, passed away in the capital on Tuesday. She was 93, says a press release.

She left behind two sons. She was buried in Banani Graveyard. Her qulhwani will be held at Banani Mosque after Asr prayer tomorrow.

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 discusses the discriminatory steps taken against the university teachers and its deep impact on the nation in the long run. There is also an important article about an initiative of 'Save Our Sea' to help the endangered turtle population of the St Martin's island to recover. Don't forget your copy of *Star Weekend* tomorrow, Friday!

THE DEADLOCKED FUTURE

MD SHAHABUZZAMAN KHAN CHANDAN

The nation's brightest scholars, being refused several times, have taken to the streets in demand of a dignified livelihood. Professors and teachers have threatened to shut down all public universities in Bangladesh from January 11, 2016 if their appeal is not accepted. Read this week's spotlight on pages 7 and 8 to know more about this national crisis and its deep impact on the future of Bangladesh.

3 THE SAD LIFE OF A YEMBE: How about an initiative of Save Our Sea? In the wake of a massive marine pollution, Bangladesh is facing a dire situation. Read this week's spotlight on page 7 to know more about this initiative.

4 MARTIAL LAW ENFORCED: A JOURNEY THROUGH THE NIGHT: In the wake of a massive marine pollution, Bangladesh is facing a dire situation. Read this week's spotlight on page 7 to know more about this initiative.

5 BETWEEN A MAN AND HIS CAMERA: A journey through the night of a journalist who has been documenting the marine pollution in Bangladesh. Read this week's spotlight on page 7 to know more about this initiative.

13 MAN AND HIS HANDICRAFT: A journey through the night of a craftsman who has been documenting the marine pollution in Bangladesh. Read this week's spotlight on page 7 to know more about this initiative.