

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 26.6 L 14.6	H 26.2 L 14.8	H 26.4 L 14.2	H 25.8 L 10.7	H 26.7 L 12.1	H 26.8 L 12.2	H 26.2 L 12.2	H 27.2 L 15.3

Moderate to thick fog may occur at places over the river basins. Night temperature may rise by (1-2)°C and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:27pm and rises tomorrow at 6:43am.



Dhaka University Teachers' Association, left, and Sylhet Agricultural University Teachers' Association, right, stage sit-ins on their respective campuses yesterday, demanding removal of "discriminations" against public university teachers in the eighth national pay scale. The demonstrations were part of the programme announced by the Federation of Bangladesh University Teachers' Association.



PHOTO: STAR

NEWS IN brief

DU teachers, students demand change of metro rail route

DU CORRESPONDENT
 Hundreds of teachers and students of Dhaka University yesterday formed a human chain demanding change of the proposed metro rail route a part of which has been planned to be built through DU campus.
 Speakers at the programme -- held at the altar of Razu Memorial sculpture -- claimed that the metro rail service would hamper the academic atmosphere of DU greatly by creating noise in the university area. The speakers also said this project is necessary for country's development but the route should not be built through the university.

Scientists also want time scale back

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Scientists have expressed frustration as their demands are not reflected in the eighth national pay scale.
 At an emergency meeting at Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission in the capital, they demanded restoration of time scale and selection grade in the new pay scale, says a press release.
 They also demanded that people be recruited to the commission as scientific officers or to equivalent posts at entry level.

3 held with 86,000 yaba tablets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 The Department of Narcotics Control (DNC) in Dhaka and Gazipur arrested three drug peddlers along with 86,000 Yaba tablets yesterday.
 DNC arrested Md Taiyub and Obaidullah of Cox's Bazar from Motijheel area with 9,500 pills, said Mohammad Mamun, acting deputy director of DNC's intelligence wing.
 DNC officials arrested Sanjay Saha in his Mouchak residence of Kaliakair upazila in Gazipur district and seized 76,500 tablets.

List of risky buildings to be made

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
 Chittagong District Administration has decided to make a list of risky buildings in the port city yesterday.
 Chittagong's Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mesbah Uddin announced it at a meeting of District Disaster Management Committee held at the DC office in Chittagong court building.
 The administration will send letters to Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) and Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) to help them prepare the list.
 Developer companies, using substandard construction materials would be brought to book through mobile court, DC said.
 The meeting took decision to conduct drills at schools and other institutions in the port city and upazilas to create earthquake awareness.

Brac University orientation held

CITY DESK
 Brac University held an orientation programme for the Spring-2016 term on Tuesday for 930 newly enrolled students.
 The orientation introduced new students to campus life as they begin their journey at the University, from academics and community norms to resources and support services. Prof Syed Saad Andaleeb, PhD, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University delivered the welcome speech.

People disregard Jamaat

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 incident was reported in the city and other major districts.
 In the capital, vehicular movement was normal with a good number of cars, creating traffic jams at some key points including Farmgate, Motijheel and Shahbagh intersections.
 Commuters were seen waiting for buses to go to their offices and other destinations while law enforcers remained deployed.
 It was the same scenario in Chittagong city with a good number of business establishments beside major thoroughfares remaining open.
 Loading and unloading at the port was normal and no classes at educational institutions were held.
 Chittagong city, north and south district units of Sectors Commanders' Forum organised a rally in front of Dost Building at the New Market intersection protesting the hartal and demanding an immediate ban on Jamaat and Islami Chhatra Shibir.

Offence against rights activists reaches new height

Says Ireland-based group Front Line Defenders
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Offence against human rights activists has reached new heights in many countries including Bangladesh but international reaction to the circumstances remains weak, Ireland-based rights group Front Line Defenders said in its annual report.
 "Extreme violence is being used more frequently and in more countries, while fabricated prosecutions and unfair trials have become the norm in many parts of the world," said Executive Director of the organisation Mary Lawlor.
 The 2016 report launched yesterday said 156 human rights activists were killed or died in detention in 25 countries in the first eleven months of 2015.
 As of November, 52 were killed in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. Almost 70 percent of these killings involved environmental, land or indigenous peoples' rights. In reference to Bangladesh, the report cited the killings of five bloggers. Rights activists also received death threats from religious extremists. Physical assaults by police, plainclothes agents or unidentified thugs were on the rise, and occurred in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, India, the Maldives, Nepal and Vietnam.

PM for exploiting global organic food market

Distributes Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award
UNB, Dhaka
 Stressing the importance of diversifying the country's export basket with various agro-products, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said Bangladesh can exploit the opportunity of exporting organic foods as those have huge demand in the global market.
 A special demand for organic foods has been created across the globe, she said, adding that the prices of organic foods are much higher than the foods produced through chemical fertilisers.
 Hasina was addressing a function after handing over the Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award 1420 to some 28 individuals and four organisations at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium in Dhaka.
 The prime minister also underlined the need for greater investment in agro-based industries in 100 economic zones being set up across the country.
 Once the 100 economic zones are set up, she said, the country will be able to earn more foreign currencies through producing, processing and exporting agro-based products.
 "Bangladesh is no longer a country of food deficit...it has attained food autarky and also made its place in global arena in many things, including rice, wheat, fish, vegetable and fruit production," she said, urging people not to keep their land fallow and maintain the production momentum.
 On the country's economic progress, Hasina said no one will be able to undermine Bangladesh as it has demonstrated its strength by going for constructing Padma Bridge with its own fund.
 Apart from boosting the agricultural production, steps should continue so that the farmers get the due prices of their produce alongside diversifying the export basket of the agricultural products through setting up more agro-processed factories, Hasina said.
 The prime minister renewed her firm resolve to turn Bangladesh into a hunger- and poverty-free middle-income country by 2021.
 Hasina said the Food and Agriculture Organization awarded Bangladesh in recognition of its achievement in agriculture.
 The Ministry of Agriculture organised the

TIB seeks qualified persons

TOP ACC, NHRC POSTS
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) yesterday urged the government to appoint honest, competent, neutral, professionally experienced, skilled and acceptable persons to top posts of Anti Corruption Commission, National Human Rights Commission and Information Commission.
 In a statement, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharzaman said it is the government's duty to appoint persons having the determination and leadership qualities to ensure good governance, resist corruption, establish human rights and ensure the right to information.

Dr Mahbub's namaz-e-janaza today

CITY DESK
 The namaz-e-janaza of eminent economist Dr Mahbub Hossain will be held at Gulshan Azad Mosque today after Jumma prayers, said family sources.
 His body would reach Dhaka from the United States this morning. He will be laid to rest at Banani Graveyard.
 Dr Mahabub, one of the best known agricultural and development economists in Bangladesh and South Asia, passed away at the Cleveland Clinic, Ohio, on Sunday.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina presents Bangabandhu Jatiya Krishi Puraskar 1420 to a recipient in Osmani Memorial Auditorium of the capital yesterday. This year, 32 individuals and organisations were conferred the award for their contribution to the field of agriculture. PHOTO: BSS

Names of awardees

UNB, Dhaka
 Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award 1420 included five gold, nine silver and 18 bronze medals.
 The gold medalists are Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI), Mosammat Nurunnahar, Mohammad Abdul Quyum Majumdar, Niva Rani Bishwash, Jessore and Shakti Kirtania.
 The silver medalists are Jahangir Alam Shah, Md Amzad Hossain, Md Abdul Hamid, Bangladesh Sugar Crop Research Institute, No 73 Soikerchar CIG (Crop) Mohila Samabaya Samity Ltd, Md Atikur Rahman, Alhaz Md Abdus Salam Sarkar, Md Azmal Hossain and Md Shamsuddin Mondal.
 The bronze medalists are Manindra Nath Singha, Md Aklul Mian Chowdhury, Atanu Sarkar, Biplab Kumar Sen, Farhad Ahmed, Aklima Begum, Fatema Khatun Majumdar, IAPP Mohila Dughdho Utpadonkari Samabaya Samity Ltd, Manmath Sarkar, Md Moniruzzaman Monir, Chang Reng Mro, Md Rezaur Rahman, Md Akmal Hossain, Md Idris Ali, Md Razib Malitha, Abidur Nur Chowdhury Riyadh, Md Mahbubur Rahman Fatik and Jamunur Islam.

Bangladesh warned of high prevalence

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 industrialisation and smoking were major contributors to the rise of cancer cases.
 Malaysia is working with local universities and global experts to assess its health system, Dr Noor Hisham Abdullah, director general of Health Malaysia, wrote in a letter to the New Straits Times on June 22 last year.
 It has adopted the "family doctor" concept to strengthen the primary healthcare service in Malaysia in which each family will be assigned to a doctor who will take the responsibility of their healthcare "from womb to tomb", he said.
 These initiatives are underway when Malaysia already heavily subsidises the health sector. Its health ministry recovers less than 3 percent of actual expenditure in the public healthcare system.

Kavitha Mathuvay, regional director of market development at the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), said Malaysia was focusing on wellness care rather than treatment.
 The argument is "why not educate people towards preventive care and take care of their health" in terms of lifestyle, eating pattern, smoking, and sugar intake, she said.
 The picture of preventive care in Bangladesh, however, is still dismal.
 According to the Bangladesh National Health Accounts (BNHA) 1997-2012, spending on preventive care -- primary healthcare, immunisation, nutrition and public health awareness -- was only 13 percent of the total healthcare expenditure in 2012.
 On the other hand, expenditure on medicines and curative purposes accounts for 67 percent.

Prof AK Azad Khan, president of the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, said lifestyle diseases were emerging as an epidemic, but authorities did not seem to be proactive in taking appropriate policies on prevention.
 "For example, we sent a proposal to the government on a national policy on prevention of diabetes five years back, but nothing has happened," he told The Daily Star last week.
 Meanwhile, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Malaysia Shahidul Islam said they were planning exchange of learning visits by the health ministers of Bangladesh and Malaysia.
 "We can share our experience on medical science and exchange research personnel for the benefit of both the countries," he told a group of journalists in Kuala Lumpur last month.

Charges against 11 'militants' accepted at court

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 alleged members of banned Islamist outfits -- Ansarullah Bangla Team and Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), according to the charge sheet.
 After scrutinising the case diary and other relevant documents, Judge SM Kuddus Zaman of the District and Sessions Judge's Court passed the order yesterday.
 The court also fixed January 18 for a hearing on charge framing in the case against the accused.
 On December 1 last year, Dipak Chandra

Saha, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Ashulia Police Station, submitted two charge sheets -- one for the killings and robbery, and the other for possessing explosives -- to the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.
 The case lodged for possessing explosives is pending with another Dhaka court.
 In broad daylight on April 21 that year, robbers shot eight people dead and injured several others in Bangladesh Commerce Bank Ltd in Ashulia, on the outskirts of the capital, before leaving with

Tk 35 lakh.
 A mob captured and beat one of the robbers to death.
 During the investigation into the case, Dipak discovered the involvement of 13 people in the robbery and the killings.
 One of the 13 was beaten to death by the mob, and the alleged mastermind behind the robbery, Abdullah Al Baki, was killed in a "shootout" with law enforcers in Gabtoli last November.



A participant in the second phase of the central round of Rupchanda-The Daily Star Super Chef 2016 receives an apron from the judges at Film Development Corporation (FDC) in the capital yesterday. The participant got promoted to the next round of the competition. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS