

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 34.8 L 24.6	CHITTAGONG H 32.7 L 24.6	SYLHET H 27.4 L 20.0	RAJSHAHI H 36.8 L 23.5	KHULNA H 36.4 L 24.8	BARISAL H 35.1 L 23.8	RANGPUR H 33.0 L 18.2	COX'S BAZAR H 33.0 L 24.5
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Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rangpur, Dhaka and Barisal divisions with hails at places till 6:00pm today. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:10pm and rises tomorrow at 6:00am. Country's highest temperature 36.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rajshahi and lowest 18.2 degree in Rangpur.

HC restricts silica sand extraction for six months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday restricted extraction of silica sand by using machines, from 19 hilly streams at six upazilas in Moulvibazar for the next six months.

In response to a writ petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela), the HC bench of Justice Zubayer Rahman Chowdhury and Justice Md Khasruzzaman ordered the local administration to seize the drills, excavators and dredgers from the hilly streams of Moulvibazar Sadar, Srimongol, Kamolganj, Rajnagar, Kulaura and Barolekha.

It also prohibited giving lease for extracting silica sand without environmental impact assessment and clearance certificates, and issued a rule as to why the extraction should not be

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A newly surfaced char strewn with discarded stuff near Paturia ghat in the Padma river in Manikganj last week. This is a direct result of thousands of travellers' inconsiderate act of throwing waste into the river, which is already threatened because of water shortage in the lean period.

PHOTO: MOKAMMEL SHUVO

Child gives hope to HIV positive parents

Constant medical care saves boy from inheriting fatal disease

MOKAMMEL SHUVO

The boy looks as healthy, energetic and cheerful as most children at 7. But before he was born, his mother kept her fingers crossed that her HIV would not pass on to the child.

Thanks to constant medical care and close monitoring of the mother during pregnancy and afterwards, an antibody test into the 18th month of the delivery revealed that the baby was not infected by the much-feared human immunodeficiency virus.

Now the little kid has grown up to study in the second grade.

Not only his mother, his father had also tested positive for AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) before their marriage.

They married in 2007, despite having such a fatal illness, after developing affection for each other.

The boy is now the couple's world of love and happiness. "None on this earth was as happy as we were after knowing that our child had no HIV," the 26-year-old mother told The Daily Star.

The parents have been taking medicines regularly to suppress the virus in their bodies. During pregnancy, she continued having those drugs.

After birth, the baby was given syrup for six weeks and then another medicine for one year, said his father, at 38 years old.

The family was provided with the treatment under a pilot project of Marie Stopes Bangladesh, an NGO that gives sexual and reproductive healthcare, said Habiba Akhter, executive director of Ashar Alo Society, which coordinates health services to HIV patients.

Currently, HIV positive mothers are receiving treatment under the "Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV" project at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University in Dhaka, Chittagong Medical College Hospital, and Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College, said Dr Marina Akhter, programme manager of the project.

As many as 61 women with AIDS have been treated during pregnancy since the introduction of the project in May 2013, she said, and 46 of them so far gave birth to healthy babies, meaning they do not have AIDS. It was confirmed that they were clean only after the DNA Polymer Chain Reaction test.

Seven other women had miscarriages and seven are still

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7 TESTIFY IN N'GANJ 7-MURDER CASES Nur threatens witnesses at courtroom

Alleges prosecution lawyer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Seven persons, including a senior judicial magistrate and three policemen, gave testimonies before a Narayanganj court yesterday in two cases filed in connection with the sensational seven-murder.

District and Sessions Judge Syed Enayet Hossain recorded the testimonies till 2:00pm before adjourning proceedings until March 28.

Earlier, the court accepted pleas from defence counsels of Tareque Sayeed and Nur Hossain seeking time for cross-examining the wit-

nesses and complainant.

Meanwhile, the complainant's lawyers alleged that Nur Hossain, the prime accused, tried to threaten some witnesses during proceedings.

Seven people, including Narayanganj city corporation panel mayor Nazrul Islam and senior lawyer Chandan Sarkar, were abducted from the Dhaka-Narayanganj Link Road on April 27, 2014. Their bodies were found floating in the Shitalakkhya river a few days later.

The district and sessions judge's court of Narayanganj on February 8

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Pass discrimination elimination law soon

Demand Dalit leaders at national dialogue in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Dalit communities yesterday demanded that the draft elimination of discrimination act-2015 be immediately passed in parliament to protect the rights of scheduled castes, ethnic minorities, the physically challenged and transgender people.

"If I am born as a human being, then why am I treated as untouchable!" said Bangladesh Harijan Oikya Parishad Secretary General Nirmal Chandra Das at a national dialogue, organised to observe the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The oikya parishad and Bangladesh Dalit Parishad jointly organised the dialogue in association with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF),

Paritran, Bhumij Foundation, Social Association for Development of Bangladesh, and UK aid in the capital's Cirdap auditorium.

Six lawmakers at the dialogue promised to do all that was necessary to pass the act, which makes discriminating against persons a criminal offence, punishable with a maximum 10 years' imprisonment or Tk 10 lakh fine or both.

Nirmal stated of a 10-point demand including introducing quotas for Harijans and Dalits in government service recruitment and at all educational institutions, including them in development activities, ensuring their representation in local governments and parliament and implementing the

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PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

On the narrow footpath, which gets narrower still because of occupation by vendors, two people can barely walk without bumping into each other. Moreover, vehicles wait for passengers standing beside the walkway. Both acts are illegal but have been overlooked. The photo was taken in GEC area of Chittagong city yesterday.



Diti laid to rest at village home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Family, relatives, friends, and cultural personalities and activists yesterday bade a tearful farewell to Parveen Sultana Diti, one of the most widely known faces of Bangladeshi cinema.

She was buried beside her parents at their family graveyard at Sonargaon Upazila in Narayanganj. Earlier, thousands of mourners joined the namaz-e-ajanaza of Diti in the capital and at her village home in Duttapara.

The actor breathed her last at the capital's United Hospital on Sunday afternoon after battling brain cancer.

Her body was taken to Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC) at 9:30am yesterday, where her colleagues paid the last respect. Then it was taken to

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China willing to help build deep-sea port

UNB, Dhaka

China has expressed its willingness to cooperate with other countries in helping Bangladesh build its first deep-sea port at any location, as the Bangladesh government no longer considers appropriate the previously proposed Sonadia site.

Chinese Ambassador to Dhaka Ma Mingqiang expressed the willingness at "DCAB Talk", organised by Diplomatic Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (DCAB) in the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday with its president, Angur Nahar Monty, in the chair.

The government is now considering building a deep-sea port at Payra in Patuakhali and a number of countries, including China, India and some in the Middle East and Europe, want to invest in different components of the project, according to government sources.

On Chinese investment in Bangladesh, the ambassador said it was growing. "This year there will be something different. This year will be different."

He said there should be a need for investment, in which case it would automatically come in. "Many Chinese groups are coming to Bangladesh in recent times," he said.

According to Chinese customs statistics, the trade volume has reached US\$ 14.7 billion in 2015, although still overwhelmingly in deficit for Bangladesh and surplus for China.

"We need to have balanced trade to make it sustainable. We cannot offset the trade deficit simply by doing trade," the ambassador said, mentioning that more direct Chinese investment can help minimise the gap.

He said Bangladesh needs to build up manufacturing capacity to produce more products so it could "catch up" to Chinese demand.

He assured that industrial capacity cooperation was a major part of the

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