

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 29.7 L 27.0	H 33.5 L 26.6	H 33.0 L 25.1	H 35.0 L 26.6	H 35.0 L 26.5	H 34.2 L 26.9	H 31.8 L 25.4	H 33.0 L 26.2

Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:57pm and rises tomorrow at 5:47am. Country's highest temperature 35.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Maizid Court and the lowest 24.5 in Syedpur.

Halving road deaths needs global efforts

International safety conference in Finland told

PANKAJ KARMAKAR from Finland

With around five million people dying annually due to road traffic crashes, violence, drowning, suicide, and similar other mishaps, international experts, rights activists and government officials from around 110 countries called for coordinated and stronger actions of world leaders to combat them.

They came up with the call on the second day of a high-level international conference titled "Safety 2016- the 12th World Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion" at Tampere city in Finland yesterday.

Traffic crashes take the largest chunk of injury-related deaths claiming over 1.2 million lives annually across the world, they said, adding that there needed global commitment for attaining the target to halve the deaths caused by traffic

crashes within 2020.

Beyond deaths, tens of millions of people suffer injuries that lead to hospitalisation, emergency department visits, and treatment. Many are left with temporary or permanent disabilities; violence and injuries (not only road crash, rather all other mishaps) are responsible for an estimated six percent of the total number of people living with disabilities globally.

The participants disseminated the data referring to different researches and studies by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in the last couple of years.

Violence and injuries affect all age groups, but have a particular impact on young people and those in their prime working age from 15-29 years. Three injury-related causes are among the top five causes of death -- road traffic injuries, suicide, and homicide.

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Road crashes take 10 more lives

STAR REPORT

As reckless driving continued, 10 more persons were killed in road accidents in three districts yesterday, raising the death toll to over 150 since the start of Eid-ul-Azha vacation, according to media reports.

Meanwhile, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday accepted responsibility for the deaths in road crashes on highways during the holidays.

"I am not claiming that I am successful in establishing discipline in transport sector and as a minister I can't avoid responsibility of the accidents on highways," he told journalists at a meet the press in Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU), adding that he is shocked at such deaths.

In Munshiganj, four people were killed and 25 injured in a head-on collision between two buses on Dhaka-Mawa highway in Sirajdikhan upazila's Nimtoli, reports our Munshiganj correspondent.

One of the deceased was Saidul Islam, 20, a first year Honours student of Bikrampur Adarsha College.

"My brother was going to his college... Someone informed us that my brother was injured in an accident and he was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Unfortunately, we found him dead there," Imdadul Haque Milon, Saidul's elder brother, told The Daily Star.

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Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, speaks at a conference where he was awarded.

Star editor honoured for courageous journalism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, was honoured by East West Center for his courage and determination in journalism.

At a conference titled "South Asia Looking East" held in New Delhi on September 9, the US-based organisation also honoured five other journalists from India, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka.

Mahfuz Anam faces over 80 defamation and sedition cases in different courts in Bangladesh for stories published in his newspaper in 2007 based on leaks fed by the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence. The editor had regretted the decision to carry the reports without independent verification in a TV talk show, nine years later in February 2016, triggering the avalanche of cases. In the face of such intense pressure, Mahfuz Anam fearlessly carried on his journalistic duties.

While terming the cases politically motivated and a way to silence the media, local and international media and human rights organisations, including International Federation of Journalists, Human Rights Watch, PEN International, Asia News Network, Amnesty International, Editors Guild of India, and Editors Council of Bangladesh, among others, condemned the move by the government and the ruling party.

"It has been my experience, in any clash between independent media and a powerful government, the government wins in the beginning. It wins because it has all the coercive machinery of state behind it. But the good news is free press wins at the end. It does so because it is energised by the inalienable right of people to freedom," Anam told the conference while receiving his award.

The five other awardees were Rowaida Rhima Follosa Macarambon (The Philippines), Stella Paul (India), Zaffar Iqbal Sheikh (India), Habib Khan

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Vehicles stranded on a road in Sylhet city's Taltola area in the morning recently. PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

S Korea lifts 'special alert' in Bangladesh, retains others

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The South Korean embassy yesterday lifted its "special travel alert" for its nationals in Bangladesh.

However, it retained a Level 3 alert (reconsider your need to travel) for the southeastern regions of Chittagong Hill Tracts as the public security situation in those areas remains the same as before.

A Level 2 alert (exercise a high degree of caution) for the country as a whole will also be in place, says a press release of the country's foreign affairs ministry.

The special alert was issued following the July 1 terrorist attack on a Gulshan restaurant which left 22 people, including 17 foreigners, dead.

South Koreans residing in or planning to visit Bangladesh are advised to check travel alert levels and follow the guidelines at the

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LAND GRABBING CASE Court orders confiscation of Ragib Ali's assets

UNB, Sylhet

A Sylhet court yesterday asked the authorities concerned to confiscate the assets of fugitive accused industrialist Ragib Ali in a case filed over grabbing the land of an endowment property.

The court also ordered publishing the names of fugitive accused in the case in newspapers.

Besides, the court granted bail to Pankaj Kumar Gupta, one of the accused and current caretaker of Tarapur Tea Garden.

Earlier on August 10, a court issued arrest warrants against six people, including Ragib and three of his family members, in two cases filed in September 27, 2005 over grabbing land of an endowment property. Following the court order, Ragib Ali managed to flee to India.

Sylhet city no longer free from traffic jam

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

Seldom was traffic gridlock seen in Sylhet city in the past, but now it has taken such a severe turn that commuters are often heard castigating it for their failure to reach destinations on time.

The major causes identified by residents include inadequate parking lots in buildings, indiscriminate parking, encroachment and occupation of footpaths, and protracted negligence of the authorities concerned.

According to Sylhet City Corporation (SCC), there are 52,000 buildings in the city, and among them, 10,000 to 15,000 buildings (both commercial and residential) have no parking lots.

During a recent visit to the city's different areas, this correspondent found 20 minibus, 12 human hauler and 30 auto-rickshaw stands built on roads, and most of which are not, according to SCC, authorised.

Moreover, excessive traffic mobilisation, encroachment of major footpaths by vendors and hawkers, and

lack of awareness among drivers are not less responsible for the gridlock.

Razib Rasel, a resident, alleged that the authorities have taken no heed of the problems for many years despite being aware of them, compelling them to unbearably suffer.

Apart from the causes aforementioned, the residents also said because many educational institutions and restaurants built beside major thoroughfares have no parking lots of their own, people park their vehicles on the roads, intensifying the sufferings.

While talking to this correspondent, Nikulin Chakma, additional deputy commissioner (traffic) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police, agreed with the residents on the causes, adding that collectively efforts need to be undertaken by the city corporation, district administration and police so as to purge the city of the problems.

Alleging that the authorities had never taken the problems seriously, Faruk Mahmud Chowdhury, president of the Sylhet chapter of Shushashoner

Jonno Nagorik (Shujan), said, "Now is the time to heed and solve them."

"SCC asked all to make sure their buildings have adequate parking spaces while constructing them," he said, adding, "Though many keep on violating the instructions, the authorities are now in oblivion."

"We are permitting the construction of buildings only after getting assured that they have adequate parking spaces," said Enamul Habib, SCC chief executive officer (CEO), underlining the need for bringing the old ones that have no parking spaces under the building code.

Conceding that they were yet to take steps with regard to parking lots, he said, "We have taken serious actions against indiscriminate parking and occupation of footpaths. Our work is going on to reconstruct the roads narrowed."

The CEO added that they along with the district administration and traffic department of police would shortly take all-out measures to mitigate the gridlock woes.

cards is now going on in full swing in 10 machines imported from the USA. Each machine can produce 950 cards an hour.

The smart cards and machinery to take fingerprints and photographs of irises have already been sent to 10 thana election offices of the capital. Some 75 makeshift camps will be set up in the capital to provide the smart cards from 93 wards of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) and Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC).

Two lakh cards will be distributed a day from the camps. The voters who have laminated the NID cards need to submit the laminated ones to get the smart NID cards.

Alongside distribution of the smart cards in the capital, the Commission is also continuing its preparation to provide such cards among other voters across the country. The production cost of each smart card is some US\$ 2 that will have the 10-year validity.

The 10-digit smart cards will be distributed free among the country's voters initially under the EC's Identification System for Enhancing Access to Services (IDEA) project. But the service takers will need to pay fees to avail of services in the case of renewal, damage and losing of the cards.

50 lakh Dhaka voters to get smart NID cards from Oct

UNB, Dhaka

Some 50 lakh voters in the capital are going to receive smart national identity (NID) cards from the next month replacing the existing laminated ones.

Election Commission (EC) has already completed all the necessary preparations to start the distribution of the high security featured cards on October 2 next in the capital.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is expected to inaugurate the distribution programme.

As per the EC's plan, the voters of Dhaka city and Rowmari upazila of Kurigram district will be provided with the smart cards in the first phase. Subsequently, all other voters across the country will get the cards in phases by December 2017.

"We're ready to distribute the smart cards," Director General of National Identity Registration Wing of the Election Commission Brig Gen Sultanuzzaman Md Salahuddin told UNB.

Prints of 10 fingers and photographs of (eye) irises of voters will be taken during the distribution of the smart cards, he said.

EC officials said the printing of the smart

Nirmala Rao new VC of AUW

CITY DESK

The Asian University for Women (AUW) has appointed British political scientist Professor Nirmala Rao as its vice chancellor effective from February 1, 2017, said a release yesterday.

Prof Rao, an expert on governance of cities, has served as pro director of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

She has extensive experience of public service and served as an adviser to a range of bodies including UK Audit Commission.

Anti-terror bodies harassing BNP men

Alleges the party at press conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday alleged that the "administrative committees" the government formed around the country solely with Awami League leaders and activists to resist militancy were harassing its men by implicating them in false and politically motivated cases.

Addressing a press conference at BNP's Naya Paltan central office, Standing Committee Member Nazrul Islam Khan said the government was "hiding" the real militants and extremists instead of arresting them.

He said many BNP leaders and activists were arrested in Satkhira, Thakurgaon and Feni.

Nazrul said the government ruined the prospect of a mass resistance against terrorism by ignoring BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's repeated appeal to forge national unity.

"It has already been proved that militancy can not be tackled only by the administration or different forces. So, it is necessary to forge a national unity with all parties as militancy can be eliminated only by people's strong and united resistance," he said.

On Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's speech in Canada over her government's zero tolerance to repression on women, Nazrul said the same day media reported a sexual scandal concerning a lawmaker's son.

He also accused the government of failing to ensure safe journeys centring Eid-ul-Azha.

NETRAKONA SUSPECTS ICT asks for submission of charges Nov 28

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday directed the prosecution to submit formal charges, if any, on November 28 in a case filed against three Netrakona men for their alleged crimes against humanity committed during the 1971 Liberation War.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Huque fixed the date following a prosecution petition for two months' time.

Prosecutor Mukhlesur Rahman Badal said they received the probe report against the trio on Sunday and needed two months'

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An underground pipe leaks gas on the waterlogged Agamasi Lane in Old Dhaka, causing waste of the natural resource on one hand and creating the likelihood of accident on the other. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON