

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 28.2 L 15.4	H 27.1 L 13.4	H 28.5 L 15.0	H 29.9 L 14.7	H 26.2 L 12.2	H 26.8 L 12.6	H 27.0 L 13.0	H 27.8 L 12.0	H 30.2 L 16.8

Light to moderate fog may occur at places over the country, reports UNB. Night temperature may rise slightly and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged, says Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:40pm and rises tomorrow at 6:42am. Country's highest temperature 30.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Cox's Bazar and lowest 9.5 in Sreemangal and Tentulia.

Freight vehicle owners call off strike
STAR REPORT

Freight vehicle owners and workers yesterday withdrew their indefinite strike in 21 south-western districts following the government's assurance to consider their 12-point demand including a stop to harassment by law enforcers.

The decision came at around 4:30pm following their four-hour meeting with ministers and senior officials at the home ministry.

"We withdrew the strike as the government assured us of necessary measures to fulfill our demands shortly," said Abdul Gaffar Biswas, convener of south-western regional freight vehicle owners and workers association. "The goods vehicles already started operating," he told The Daily Star over phone around 5:00pm.

Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan, State Minister for LGRD Mashiur Rahman Ranga, senior officials concerned, transport owners and workers, among others, attended the meeting.

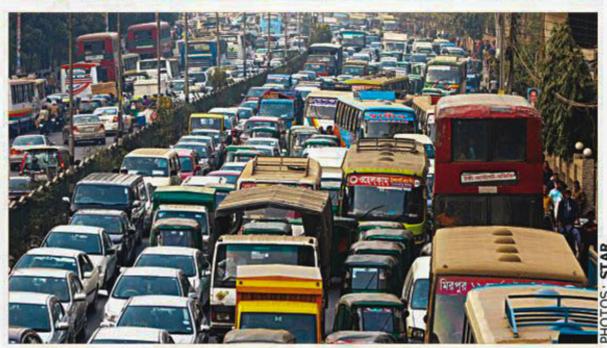
Talking to The Daily Star, a home ministry official said, "From the government's side, assurance was given to fulfill some of their demands, while discussion will be going on over some others."

The strike started at 6:00am on Monday over demands that include a stop to extortion on highways and ferry ghats, withdrawal of the government decision to remove extra bumpers, side angles, and hooks of trucks and covered vans and revision of the vehicle registration fees.

The strike, covering all the districts of Khulna and Barisal divisions and greater Faridpur caused sufferings to traders.

"We buy vegetables from the nearby upazilas and send them to Dhaka for sale. In the last two days a huge quantity of tomatoes perished because I could not send them to the capital," said Gazi Hasan, a businessman in Khulna.

A REUNION THAT HURTS



Clockwise from top, members of law enforcement agencies stand guard after putting barricades on a road in the capital's Shahbagh area. The blockade was due to a reunion programme of Bangladesh Chhatra League at Suhrawardy Udyan, which ushered in long tailbacks in many streets including on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. Since many streets were off-limits to regular traffic for facilitating the movement of the VIPs, there was a chronic shortage of public transports, forcing dwellers to scramble to get onto the handful of buses that ran yesterday.

Building roof collapse kills worker, hurts two

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A construction worker was killed and two people were injured as the roof of a building collapsed in Hawapara of Sylhet city yesterday.

The deceased was Shahab Uddin, 25. Of the injured, Rumman Ahmed, a resident of the area, is undergoing treatment at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital with a broken leg. Another injured Abdul Muhit Jahed, a local councillor, left the hospital after primary treatment.

Witnesses said Shahab was demolishing some parts of the old building but suddenly the roof collapsed injuring three of them. Rumman and Jahed were watching the demolition work standing nearby.

They were rushed to the hospital where doctors declared Shahab dead.

12pc face arsenic risk

LGRD minister tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 12 percent of the country's population are now facing the risk of getting exposed to arsenic contaminations, LGRD Minister Khandker Mosharraf Hossain told parliament yesterday.

Replying to lawmakers' queries, the minister said in 29 percent of tube-wells of the country, arsenic concentration was found to be exceeding the acceptable level (above 50 parts per billion-ppb). In a scripted answer, he said arsenic test was conducted in 50 lakh tube-wells in 271 upazilas in 2003. Of these, 14.5 lakh tube-wells (29 percent of 50 lakh) were found extremely affected (above 50 ppb), he added.

"But now, 12 percent of people face the risk of arsenic contamination after the government implemented various measures."

Besides, a project titled "Arsenic Risk Reduction Project for Water Supply" involving some Tk 1,865 crore is now awaiting approval, he said.

PUBLIC TOILETS IN DHAKA

In reply to another query, the minister said there were 53 public toilets in Dhaka South City Corporation. There are also toilet facilities in 57 out of 59 petrol pumps and CNG stations in the city corporation, he said.

WaterAid signed a memorandum of understanding to set up 15 modern toilets in the DSCC area, said Mosharraf.



Students of Enayet Bazar Women's College in Chittagong city demonstrate before the Deputy Commissioner (DC)'s office yesterday, demanding immediate nationalisation of their institution. They also submitted a memorandum to the DC in this regard.

NAVAL BASE MOSQUE ATTACKS Investigation starts

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg

Police have started investigating the alleged involvement of militant suspect Abdul Gaffer in a case filed for grenade attacks at two mosques inside Bangladesh Navy's Issa Khan Base in Chittagong in 2015.

Police said Abdul Mannan, his younger brother, carried out the attack after being instigated by Gaffer, also a JMB leader in Tangail.

Gaffer, now in Kashimpur jail, was involved in the killing of former PDB chairman Khizir Khan in Dhaka, and in the murders of six people in Gopibagh, said police.

EPZ Police Station Inspector (Investigation) Javed Mahmud, also investigation officer (IO) of the case, yesterday said Gaffer involved Mannan with JMB.

According to the FIR, Mannan, a civil staff at the Navy, threw two grenades upon the devotees at the mosque. Another militant Ramjan was also detained while he carried out another attack at a nearby mosque. Some 24 people were injured in the attacks.

Bangladesh plans 5-year visa for Indian seniors

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Bangladesh is planning to give five-year multiple-entry visa to senior Indians aged between 65 and above to visit divided families across the border, said Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Syed Muazzem Ali at a gathering in New Delhi on Monday.

The 1947 Partition of the Indian sub-continent, and the 1971 Liberation War forced many families to cross over to India whose relatives are still in Bangladesh.

NEWS IN brief

'Poor' performance of cricket, football teams irks lawmakers
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A few lawmakers at parliament yesterday expressed their frustration over poor performance of both cricket and football teams, and demanded that the government take measures to improve their performance.

New Zealand whitewashed Bangladesh cricket team in two tests, three one-dayers and three T-20 matches in the just concluded tour.

In October 2016, Bangladesh football team failed to qualify for the Asian Cup.

Referring to the New Zealand whitewash, AL MP AKM Rezaul Karim Tansen in his written question asked the State Minister for Sports Biren Sikder: "What steps would be taken to improve the performance of cricket?"

Another AL MP Habibur Rahman also expressed his frustration over the performance of male football team. In reply, the minister said the government would take necessary actions in this regard.

IMCAB gets new committee
CITY DESK

Bashudeb Dhar of the Daily Statesman (Kolkata) and Dip Azad of Times Now TV have been elected president and general secretary respectively of Indian Media Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (IMCAB) for 2017-18.

Other office-bearers include Advisor Haroon Habib (The Hindu), Vice-President Quddus Afrad (Daily Anandabazar Patrika), Joint-Secretary Anwarul Karim Raju (Daily Sambad, Agartala and Daily Eastern Chronicle), and Treasurer Rafiqul Islam Sabuj (Daily Desher Katha).

Death anniversary of Altaf Mahmud
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pataakhali

First death anniversary of Altaf Mahmud, former president of Bangladesh Federal union of Journalists (BFUJ), was held at his village home in Dakua under Galachipa upazila of Pataakhali yesterday.

A memorial discussion and a milad and a doa mahfil were organised by Sangbadik Altaf Mahmud Smrity Sangsad.



Meeting on proposed citizenship act held in Italy
CITY DESK

The Campaign Committee to Review Nationality Act of Bangladesh has organised a meeting in Milan, Italy on the proposed "The Citizenship Law 2016", draft of which has already got the cabinet's clearance.

Barrister Nazrul Khasru and barrister Nazir Ahmed, both from London, along with journalists KM Abu Taher Chowdhury, from the UK, and Abdul Quayum, from London, attended the meeting at a restaurant on Sunday moderated by Jamal Ahmed. As per the draft, the new law expands scopes for dual citizenship for Bangladeshis only living in the US and UK. The speakers stressed the new law should include all expatriates living in every foreign country which Bangladesh has diplomatic relations with.



Participants at a meeting on the proposed "The Citizenship Law 2016" in Milan, Italy on Sunday.

Nasim asks BSMMU VC
FROM PAGE 3

has come to the fore centring the recruitment. Prof Sharfuddin and Prof Swapan confirmed The Daily Star about the outcome of the meeting.

"I have been asked to sit with the VC and the pro-VC [academic] today when the VC will say sorry to the pro-VC," said Sharfuddin. He said he hoped the VC would apologise for the sake of a congenial atmosphere in the university.

Asked about the opinion of the pro-VC [academic] in this regard, he said as the pro-VC was in the meeting and did not oppose, the pro-VC would accept apology. The minister also expressed his condemnation to the VC as he failed to attend the meeting.

The Daily Star

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CELEBRATING LIFE GALA NIGHT 2016 EPISODE 02

Award Giving Session
Keep your Eyes on

CHANNEL 7

at 5.30 pm on 25 January, 2017

Partners: **Showbiz**, **LAZARUS MUSIC**, **CHANNEL 7**, **আনন্দধারা**