

**WEATHER FORECAST**

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

<b>DHAKA</b> H 28.2 L 16.9	<b>MYMENSINGH</b> H 27.2 L 14.7	<b>CHITTAGONG</b> H 27.8 L 15.5	<b>SYLHET</b> H 27.1 L 15.0	<b>RAJSHAHI</b> H 27.2 L 14.3	<b>RANGPUR</b> H 26.8 L 14.5	<b>KHULNA</b> H 28.0 L 15.2	<b>BARISAL</b> H 27.8 L 13.9	<b>COX'S BAZAR</b> H 28.2 L 15.7
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Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today, says the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:11pm and rises tomorrow at 06:29am. Highest and lowest temperatures recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:



Youths take an oath to curb corruption and to be vocal against graft in all spheres of the society, at an anti-corruption oath-taking programme at Central Shahid Minar in the capital yesterday. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) organised the event marking International Anti-Corruption Day to be observed on Saturday.

PHOTO: STAR

### Youths take oath against corruption

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of youths yesterday took an oath to curb corruption in the country, and to be vocal against graft in all spheres of the society at an anti-corruption oath-taking programme in the capital.

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) organised the event marking International Anti-Corruption Day to be observed on Saturday at the Central Shahid Minar.

On July 11 this year, the government decided to observe the day nationally.

Thanking the government for the move, Dr Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of TIB, said, "The government should encourage institutions who are working to curb graft..."

He also urged the government to take effective initiatives for raising awareness against corruption among people.

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### I deserve acquittal

Claims Khaleda in her last day's self-defence statement in Zia Orphanage Trust graft case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Denying the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption allegation, BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday claimed that she did not commit any offence and give any benefit to anyone by abusing power during her tenure.

"I am innocent. I am worthy of being acquitted of the graft charges," Khaleda said in her last day's self-defence statement during hearing of the graft case before a special judge court in Bakshibazar area of Dhaka.

"The allegations brought against me are totally politically motivated, fabricated and unproven," said Khaleda, also a former prime minister.

Claiming that she was not a member of the trustee board of the Zia Orphanage Trust, Khaleda said, "I was not personally involved in forming the trust, raising its funds and other activities."

"I did not gain personally by forming the trust and help anyone do so immorally rather when I was prime minister, I discharged my duties with honesty," said Khaleda.

"The case was filed against me only to keep me away from politics," she said while completing her self-defence statement.

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## What happened to hilly land?

ACC asks Cox's Bazar DC for complete report on Uttaran cooperative housing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has asked the Cox's Bazar deputy commissioner for a comprehensive report on Uttaran cooperative housing in Kolatoli of the hilly beach town.

They sent a letter in late October in this regard.

The report at length would focus on how much khas (public) land has been leased out to Uttaran, how much they occupy and whether they have handed out the government land to private individuals, Md Ali Hossain, deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar, told The Daily Star.

The district administration has formed a committee headed by Additional Deputy Commissioner Abdur Rahman and Assistant

Commissioner Nazim Uddin as member secretary to prepare the report.

The committee is scheduled to visit the housing scheme and hold a hearing of the parties concerned there today.

"Primarily, our report will focus on hill cutting for housing and whether the society has transferred ownership of the leased khas land to private individuals," said Hossain. "One foremost question will be on what basis, if at all, they have sold khas land and where the money is."

The money in exchange for a public property must go to the public treasury, said the deputy commissioner.

It has always been an intriguing question how a recorded hilly area

was leased out for housing, he said.

The housing estate has built buildings on both sides of the Kolatoli Bypass Road, which itself was built across hilly land, he said. It is public knowledge that structures are being built on hilly khas land on both sides of the road, he said.

The Daily Star carried a report on the housing scheme headlined "Hills lost to housing" on July 7 this year.

On anonymity, an ACC director general said, "We wanted to know from the deputy commissioner the exact status of the Uttaran housing and what has happened to the hilly khas land."

ACC Director AKM Zayed Hossain Khan, who signed the letter, said they have a practice of calling for a report, where necessary,

prior to launching an enquiry into an allegation.

Usually, they wait for a month for such a report. And on getting the report, they either request relevant authorities for a legal action or initiate one by themselves, said the ACC director.

"We would look into, among other issues, whether public land has been sold to private individuals," said a member of the committee seeking anonymity.

The committee head Abdur Rahman said, "We are yet to get our findings and prepare the report." He declined to say anything else on record.

Assistant Commissioner Nazim Uddin, member secretary of the committee, said they would look into all aspects of the issue.



The customs authorities dump perishable goods, left abandoned by importers at Chittagong port for years, in the city's Bijoy Nagar area yesterday. Locals complained that the rotten goods were spreading malodour in the locality.

PHOTO: MD RAJIB RAIHAN

### DISPOSAL OF GOODS Malodour fouls local air

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Customs' initiative of disposing of perishable goods, which have been left abandoned by importers for years, yesterday faced locals' agitation amid complaints of contaminating the area with obnoxious odour.

Disposing of goods started on Monday. Yesterday morning, a group of some 200 locals first took to the streets in Patenga 15 no Ghat area chanting slogans through a loudspeaker against the initiative.

At least 3,000 people reside in Bijoy Nagar 15 no Ghat area where the abandoned goods were being burnt. On Monday, a pungent odour spread along two square

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## Ayman, Zaiba win Queen's award

STAR REPORT

For their exceptional achievements in transforming lives, Ayman Sadiq and Zaiba Tahyya of Bangladesh have won The Queen's Young Leaders 2018 Award.

Ayman and Zaiba are among 60 others who have won prestigious award from 37 countries across the Commonwealth.

The Queen's Young Leader Award recognises exceptional people, aged between 18 and 29, from across the Commonwealth, who are using their skills to transform lives, according to the official website.

Founder of 10 Minute School, Ayman is improving access to education for young people throughout Bangladesh. 10 Minute School is a free online educational platform

providing interactive videos, live classes, quizzes and smart books to students.

The school is run by Ayman and a team of 52 others, most of whom are students themselves. With over 40 million active users across all its channels, 10 Minute School is the largest free-learning platform of its kind in Bangladesh, according to the website.

Meanwhile, Zaiba works to promote equality in society and reduce violence against women in Bangladesh. With a degree in criminology, her experience as a researcher in the police gave her unique insights into the problems of mobility and vulnerability among women in low-income areas of the country. Since being selected as a Global Shaper 2017-2018 by the World

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Ayman Sadiq



Zaiba Tahyya

### 'Democracy Day' today

CITY DESK

Different political parties and socio-cultural organisations have taken various programmes to observe "Democracy Day" today, marking the fall of autocratic ruler HM Ershad in 1990.

On December 6, 1990, military dictator Ershad stepped down in the face of a mass uprising and handed power over to a caretaker government ending his nine years of autocratic rule which began through grabbing power in a coup on March 24, 1982.

On the occasion, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia issued separate messages.

In her message, the prime minister said December 6 is a remarkable day in the history for reclaiming democracy.

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SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Worried, nine-year-old Ismail spends most of his day sitting on a bed at the neurosurgery department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

At times, he walks around the ward. Watching him wandering aimlessly, some of the relatives of the patients offer him food, which he takes but not without thanking them for their kindness.

Ismail was admitted to the hospital after falling down from a train in Gazipur on October 15.

Though he has recovered from the injury he received in the head, it did little to ease his worries. He is worried that he would be released from the hospital soon.

Ismail Jabiullah Labbaik, son of Billal Hossain, a rickshaw-puller in Mymensingh, wants to go back to his mother but he cannot remember the exact address. "My father died a few years back... I used to live with my mother and stepfather in Haluaghat of Mymensingh. He used to scold me often."

Ismail was narrating his story to this correspondent yesterday at room 204 of the neurosurgery department.

He said he fled home last Ramadan by boarding a Dhaka-bound train. Since then, he had been surviving as a

ragpicker and staying in the Kamalapur Railway Station area along with other children.

On October 15, along with three friends, he boarded a train to go to the airport. They missed the station and reached Gazipur as they were playing amongst themselves. At one point, one of his friends accidentally pushed Ismail and he fell off the train.

"Two boys brought Ismail to the hospital in a senseless state. He had no guardian with him. I had to admit him to the hospital," Md Shaheen, a ward boy at the DMCH, told The Daily Star.

Isma Azam Zico, registrar at the neurosurgery ward, said, "For around 15 days, Ismail remained senseless. Some of the bones of his head were broken and we had to conduct two surgeries on him." As no one took his responsibilities, the hospital authorities and the doctors bore his medical expenses.

When asked, he said they would not discharge Ismail alone. "If we can't find his guardians, we will seek help from the hospital's social welfare department and hand him over to them."

Meanwhile, the worried nine-year-old continues to miss his mother. "I want to go back to my mother. All I know that she lives in Haluaghat of Mymensingh," he said.



Nine-year-old Ismail at the neurosurgery department of Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Sunday.

PHOTO: SHAHEEN MOLLAH

### 'I want to go back to my mother'



DANGER LURKING AROUND: Iron rods, stored on this portion of a footpath, sticking out. The mindless practice not only halts the smooth movement of pedestrians, but also can cause an accident in no time. The photo was taken from the footpath opposite BGMEA building near Karwan Bazar in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN