

YESTERDAY'S  
TEMPERATURES

DHAKA 33.7 | 26.6 MYMENSINGH 31.5 | 26.4 CHITTAGONG 32.5 | 25.6 SYLHET 32.8 | 25.6 RAJSHAHI 33.8 | 26.4

RANGPUR 33.0 | 26.2

KHULNA 34.0 | 26.5

BARISAL 33.3 | 26.8

COX'S BAZAR 31.3 | 25.8

Light to moderate rain/thundershower with temporary gusty wind may occur at many places over Chittagong division and at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rangpur, Rajshahi and Mymensingh divisions with moderate to heavy falls at places over eastern part of Bangladesh in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today. UNB said quoting the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:22pm and rises tomorrow at 5:39am.

## AIR POLLUTION

## Bangladeshis' lifespan most affected in the world, study finds

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The average citizen of Bangladesh loses 1.87 years of their lifespan due to air pollution, the highest in the world, according to a new study.

Bangladesh placed top among 185 countries in terms of average years of life expectancy lost due to exposure to PM2.5 (air pollutants smaller than 2.5 microns), in a study titled "Ambient PM2.5 Reduces Global and Regional Life Expectancy" published in the journal Environmental Science & Technology Letters on August 22.

Bangladesh was followed by Egypt (1.85 years), Pakistan (1.56 years), India (1.53 years), Saudi Arabia (1.48 years), Nigeria (1.28 years), and China (1.25 years) on the list.

Researchers from University of Texas, University of British Columbia, Brigham Young University in Utah, Imperial College London and the Boston-based Health Effects Institute in the research used data from the Global Burden of Disease project and actuarial standard life table methods to estimate global and national decrements in life expectancy that can be attributed to ambient PM2.5 for 185 countries.

The PM2.5 concentration in Bangladesh is at 98.6 microgrammes per cubic metre, compared to Egypt's 120, Pakistan's 73.6, India's 74.1, Chad's 81.7, Nigeria's 119 and China's 55.2, as per the report.

The paper also says as PM2.5 concentrations worldwide were limited to the World Health Organization (WHO) air quality guideline concentration of 10 microgrammes per cubic metre, global life expectancy would be on

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The largest hand-drawn portrait of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman is placed near Raju Bhashkarjo at Dhaka University. Created by Bangladesh Charushilpi Sangsad, the artwork was initially put beside a gate of Suhrawardy Udyana ahead of National Mourning Day. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Punish those liable for indiscipline on roads: Ershad  
UNB, Dhaka

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday urged the government to take action against those who have "failed" to restore discipline on roads, as some 100 people, according to him, were killed in road accidents across the country during the Eid vacation.

In a condolence message, he also demanded that family members of the victims be provided with due compensation.

"People's joy of Eid faded due to the huge loss of lives on unsafe roads. The reports in newspapers on road accidents have manifested how dangerous the country's road communication is," he observed.

Ershad expressed deep shock over the loss of lives of "over 100" people in recent road accidents, prayed for salvation of the departed souls and conveyed his profound sympathy to bereaved family members.

He also wished the injured speedy recovery.

## Rights bodies condemn rape of Tripura girls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A number of organisations, including rights bodies, yesterday condemned the rape of two Tripura girls in Lalaupazila of Bandarban.

In a statement, Chairman of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Kazi Reazul Hoque expressed his grave concern over the incident, and called upon the authorities concerned to conduct a fair investigation of the cases to ensure justice.

He said, "I call upon the authorities and law enforcers to take necessary steps to ensure safety of the women from ethnic minorities in Chittagong Hill Tracts."

Two Tripura girls, aged 12 and 17, were allegedly raped by two members of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Wednesday night.

In a case filed on August 23 with Lalaupazila Police Station, the girls said a third BGB man stood guard as they were raped in a bush not far from their village.

Meanwhile, Aino Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday demanded proper investigation into the rape of the two minors, UNB reported.

The human rights body, in a press statement, said, "The recent incidents of rape, torture and murder of children and girls in the hill areas made us extremely anxious."

"In many cases, there have been allegations against members of the security forces and we urge the authorities to bring the culprits to book," it added.

The rights body also urged the authorities concerned to ensure proper treatment of the two indigenous girls.

In another statement, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) strongly commended and expressed concern over the incident.

The statement, jointly signed by BMP President Ayesha Khanam and its Acting General Secretary Seema Moslem, demanded a fair investigation and proper punishment for the culprits involved in the incident.

Also in a joint statement, leaders of Parbatya Chattagram Mahila Samity and Hill Women's Federation sought exemplary punishment of the rapists and demanded

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## Elderly couple found dead in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An elderly couple was allegedly poisoned to death inside their Demra house in the capital yesterday, by a group of women suspected to be members of a doping gang.

The victims are Hazi Abdus Sattar, 75, and his wife Shahera Khatun, 60.

Police suspect the criminals poisoned them and fled with valuables, judging by an almirah broken open and their room in a mess.

Sattar owned a one-storey building at Purbobazar Nagar of Sarulia. His family lived in three rooms while they used to rent the other three.

Five women in Burqas entered the room of Sattar around 5:00pm posing as

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## WORLD WATER WEEK

## River pollution in Bangladesh will be unbearable by 2050

Says researcher of Wageningen University

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA, from Stockholm

Faced with the grim reality of more villagers pouring into the overcrowded cities, life will become even more difficult in Bangladesh's cities.

With studies firmly predicting a higher number of people in the cities of the world, Dhaka is set to suffer from an impending water crisis and consequently increasing pollution.

Dr Maryna Strokal, a researcher of Wageningen University, Netherlands, which combines the Dutch agricultural research department, observed that since sewerage management in South Asia leaves much to be desired, it naturally leads to further river pollution in Bangladesh, one of the most densely

populated countries in the world.

If wastewater is not treated, the rivers will be polluted, she told The Daily Star. By 2050, the situation will be unbearable, she added.

The researcher said being downstream, Bangladesh naturally receives polluted water in many ways.

She indicated that with the global trend of increased urbanisation, issues like water treatment and river pollution will take centrestage by 2050.

Another report on groundwater management in coastal areas by Dr Thomas Himmelsbach from the German Federal Institute's Geosciences and Natural Resources division, said Bangladesh would be facing land subsidence, among other problems, because of its heavy

dependence on groundwater.

The study also predicted water scarcity in Bangladesh coupled with the demographic change due to the slight sea level rise.

The German study also noted Bangladesh's overwhelming use of groundwater for irrigation, remarking that it should rather be conserved for human consumption as it is always safe.

The obvious advice of using surface water for irrigation was also repeated by the study with a warning that continued exploitation of the resource might endanger Bangladesh in the near future.

The report said coastal regions host a large share of the world's population and economic activity, and a reliable

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A tripod is set up for filming in front of a store with a brand-new point of sale in Lalmaia. Below, a leaflet from the health ministry saying advertisements or publicity of tobacco products anywhere, including points of sale, is prohibited by law.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

British American Tobacco (BAT) Bangladesh apparently conducted promotional activities for one of its new products in Dhaka's Lalmaia area yesterday, defying the country's tobacco control act.

A group of 10-15 representatives of BAT Bangladesh set up a decorated point of sale, containing packs of the company's new cigarette, at a departmental store in block D of Lalmaia around 11:00am.

They also displayed branding of the cigarette and documented all their activities using a camera, an anti-tobacco activist [wishing to remain anonymous] who was present at the spot, told The Daily Star.

"They came to the area around 10:30am with a vehicle, which carried a number of such points of sale. They set up a point of sale at the store and recorded a video. They left the place around



Jote, an alliance of anti-tobacco organisations.

Following the incident, Tamak Birodi Jote issued a press release, in which it condemned such promotional activities and claimed that BAT Bangladesh has violated the existing tobacco control act.

Setting up a point of sale decorated with packs of cigarettes is prohibited according to section-5 of Smoking and Tobacco Products Usage (Control) Act of the country, Syeda Anonna Rahman, a programme manager of WBB Trust, told The Daily Star.

WBB Trust is one of the leading organisations of Tamak Birodi Jote.

The tobacco companies are currently conducting their promotional activities in various ways in Dhaka and other districts. This was one of the examples. They mostly do such activities through their dealers," said Anonna.

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## Driving young changemakers

Joy Bangla Youth Award on Oct 20

BSS, Dhaka

The third edition of "Joy Bangla Youth Award" -- aiming to showcase the champions of change through a comprehensive search and to bring them under one platform -- will be held on October 20-21.

This year 30 youth-led platforms, groups or clubs will be awarded under 10 categories -- including skills development, inclusive education, empowerment of differently-abled people, cultural awakening, innovation, sports and fitness, public awareness building initiatives, gender equality and other initiatives to scale up social development indices.

Youths, aged between 18 and 35, can now apply online through the Young Bangla website (<http://youngbangla.org/member-joy-bangla-youth-award-2018.php>).

This time, under the categories of public awareness building initiatives and gender

equality, a number of issues would be considered for the award.

Those who are working for generating awareness in making roads safer and for protecting the environment can take up this scope.

Besides platforms or clubs which are providing essential social services to children out of schools, those without families, street children, children or persons with disabilities, vulnerable women, elderly people, religious-ethnic minorities and refugees, extreme poor and other vulnerable people are also included in the list.

Those who are implementing innovative programmes for enhancing youth employability, disaster and climate risk reduction and sustainable environment management and sports or physical education for the youth are also being taken under consideration.

Applicants can fill in the form to describe

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## Road Transport Advisory Council's meeting today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport Advisory Council (RTAC), a forum for discussion and solving problems in the road transport sector, will hold its 42nd meeting today at the Secretariat.

The council's chairman Obaidul Quader will chair the meeting, says a press release.

RTAC, comprising government officials, representatives of transport owners, workers and experts, is supposed to meet at least quarterly. Its last meeting was held on October 25 last year.

The meeting will discuss road safety issues brought up during the recent student movement, among others.



A locally-made Ferris wheel installed on the premises of Rayerbazar memorial and the presence of several food carts there well explain how the historical site is maintained round the year, except on the occasion of Martyred Intellectuals Day (December 14). The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN