

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 33.5 L 27.1	MYMENSINGH H 33.0 L 26.5	CHITTAGONG H 34.2 L 25.3	SYLHET H 34.5 L 24.9	RAJSHAHI H 34.0 L 27.2	RANGPUR H 34.1 L 27.5	KHULNA H 34.0 L 25.2	BARISAL H 32.5 L 26.0	COX'S BAZAR H 32.0 L 25.5
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Light to moderate rain/thundershowers with temporary gusty wind may occur at many places over Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Mymensingh and Sylhet divisions with moderate to heavy falls at places over southern part of Bangladesh in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today. UNB reports quoting the Met office. The sunsets in the capital today at 06:12pm and rises tomorrow at 5:42am.



A rough day for Laguna passengers

As no alternative transport available

MATHEWS CHIRAN

After Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) chief's announcement of banning Lagunas on the major roads, the regular users yesterday underwent immense sufferings across the city, which virtually does not have a proper public transport system.

Visiting Jigatola, Sankar, Asad Gate, Mohammadpur, Farmgate and Manik Mia Avenue areas, it was seen that people were walking or waiting for buses to go back home after work because there were no Lagunas, which they used to depend on.

For the regular Laguna passengers, it came as a shock. "Today I was one hour late for work because there was no Laguna," said Mrinal Azim, a private firm employee, while talking to this correspondent at Farmgate where he was waiting for a transport to return to his residence at Mohammadpur. "Now I've been waiting for more than half an hour but still there is no Laguna," he said, before starting to walk.

Lagunas suddenly going off the road was also a setback for Mohammad Nafis, a Mohammadpur resident who tutors a student at Monipuri Para of Farmgate.

"Laguna was the most convenient transport for me to travel from Asad Gate to Monipuri Para. But now it has become difficult for me," he said.

Because of the crisis, people had to go for rickshaws or buses, but those were not available as well, and most of them remain packed.

Female passengers are the worst victims. They cannot usually board the bus because of overcrowding, and even if they want to, the drivers often refuse to take them in.

"It is very difficult to get into a bus jostling with the crowd. Whenever a bus arrives, all those waiting rush towards it elbowing each other. Being a woman, it is nearly impossible for me to do that. In this sense, Laguna was

City polls in Barisal, Sylhet, Khulna 'govt-controlled': Sujan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Sujan), a civil society platform for good governance, yesterday alleged that the recently held three city corporation elections to Barisal, Sylhet and Rajshahi were "government-controlled".

The Election Commission (EC) should play a stronger role for holding a free and fair national election, said Badiul Alam Majumder, secretary of Sujan.

"The polls that were held on July 30 failed to meet our expectations," he said, asking the EC to take coordinated plans ahead of the upcoming national election.

The press conference titled, "What kind of public representatives we have got in Rajshahi and Sylhet city corporations' polls", was held at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

Badiul suggested that the EC take opinions of all concerned stakeholders including the government,

Passengers have to spend long hours on the road as a traffic jam paralyses Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in Dhaka yesterday. The major thoroughfare suffered the gridlock amid the ongoing drive to bring discipline in the transport sector. To improve road safety and ease traffic jam, Dhaka Metropolitan Police and Bangladesh Road Transport Authority have taken a series of initiatives. As part of the campaign, they are penalising jaywalkers, owners of unfit vehicles, and unlicensed drivers. The DMP chief on Tuesday also made city roads off-limits to Lagunas.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Ensuring free flow of rivers key objective of Delta Plan

Says Prof Shamsul Alam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Senior Secretary Prof Shamsul Alam yesterday said ensuring free flowing of rivers will be a key objective of the government's Delta Plan 2100.

He said this while addressing a seminar on "Climate Change Impacts at River Basins: Upstream and Downstream Linkages" at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka.

"Our main theme in the delta plan is 'let the rivers flow, let the rivers live'," said Prof Shamsul, also member of the planning ministry's General Economic Division (GED).

Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) in association with Himalayan Adaptation, Water, and Resilience (HI-AWARE) arranged the seminar.

The Delta Plan, which aims to provide food and water security and fight natural disasters, was approved at the National Economic Council (NEC) meeting on Tuesday. The Ganges Barrage project has been included in the plan as a top priority project.

The GED has prepared the draft of the plan with assistance from the Netherlands government and World Bank.

Prof Shamsul, who placed the plan at Tuesday's NEC meeting, said at the first stage the government will be implementing about 80 projects at an estimated cost of US \$37 billion by 2030.

As per the plan, rivers would be channelised and sediments would be removed, he said, adding feasibility studies will take place to know whether channelising of rivers and removal of sediments will accelerate river erosion. The plan has been made based on scientific data, he added.

BCAS Executive Director Dr Atiq Rahman said unlike many other deltas the sedimentation rates at the Bengal delta are relatively high while these sedimentations are also creating new lands.

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An alarming level of clout

Bangladesh ranks second among 10 Asian nations for tobacco companies' interference in govt activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Interference of tobacco companies in government activities on tobacco control is the second highest in Bangladesh among Asian countries, according to a recent study.

Progotir Jonno Gyan (PROGGA), an anti-tobacco research organisation in Bangladesh conducted the study titled "Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2018" between January and April this year, with technical support of Thailand-based Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance.

The findings of the study were unveiled at a seminar jointly organised by PROGGA and Anti-Tobacco Media Alliance (ATMA) at Cirdap conference centre in Dhaka yesterday.

The companies mostly interfere in taxation and policymaking activities of Bangladesh government, and the ministries for finance, agriculture and industries as well as National Board of Revenue (NBR) get interfered with the most, said the study.

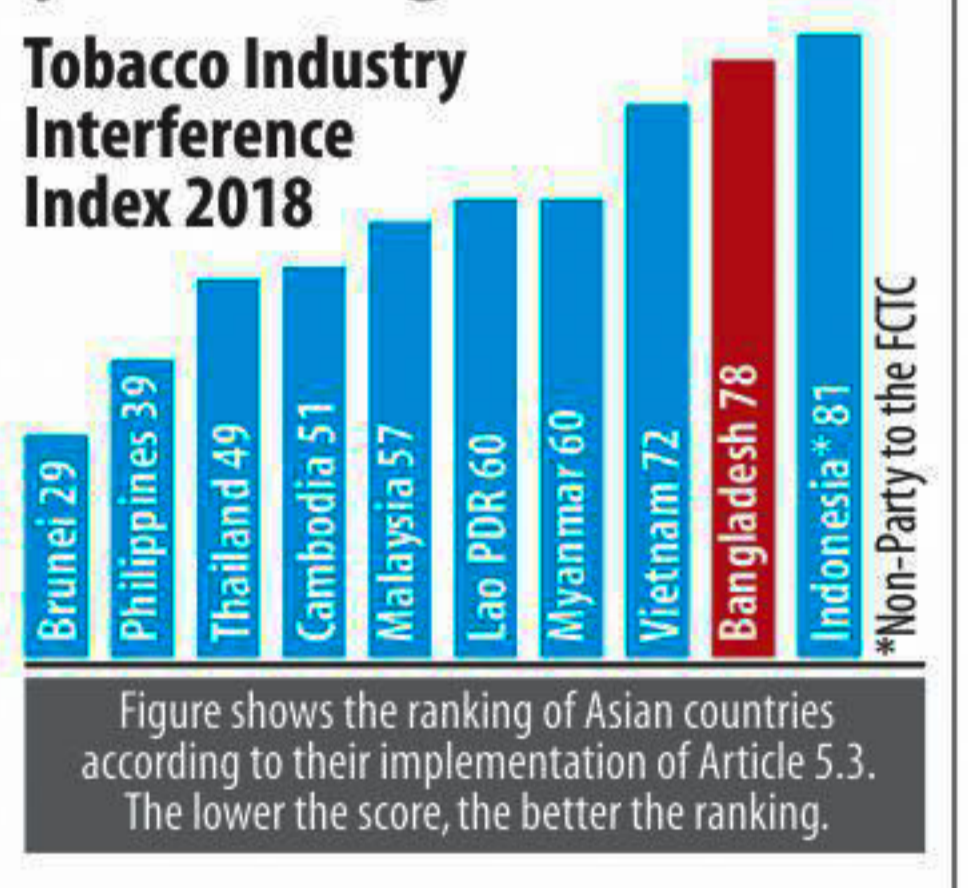
Among 10 Asian countries included in the study, Indonesia faces the highest interference, while Brunei is the lowest, it said. The other countries are: Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand and the Philippines.

PROGGA conducted the study analysing various events of interference done by tobacco companies over the government in 2016 and 2017. It also analysed what actions the government took to deal with the interferences.

Then, it prepared an index comparing recent data of the nine other countries, where such study has also been conducted. The organisation claimed to have conducted this type of study in Bangladesh for the first time.

The study said the interferences significantly hamper the progress of tobacco control initiatives of Bangladesh. If such situation continues, it will be tough for the country to achieve the goal of being free of tobacco within 2040.

The focus of the study was on the



CID arrests fake manpower brokers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Tuesday arrested nine manpower brokers from Khilkhet area in Dhaka for blackmailing and embezzling money from job-seekers.

The arrestees were identified as Shariful Islam alias Sajib, 38, Golam Mostafa alias Kamal, 50, Mokhesur Rahman, 40, Ashadul Haque, 38, Altaf Hossain alias Razib, 38, Asaduzzaman alias Aziz, 29, Jahangir Alam, 32, Abdul

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Bengal Family is very much happy and proud for his achievement. Our profound felicitations and congratulations to him on this happy occasion.