

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

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| DHAKA H 30.1 L 19.3 | MYMENSINGH H 29.0 L 17.6 | CHATTOGRAM H 30.1 L 20.0 | SYLHET H 29.2 L 18.6 | RAJSHAHI H 29.6 L 16.7 | RANGPUR H 30.0 L 17.0 | KHULNA H 30.5 L 19.2 | BARISHAL H 30.5 L 17.2 | COX'S BAZAR H 30.0 L 22.1 |
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Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, UNB said quoting the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 05:13pm and rises tomorrow at 6:14am.

250 tons single-use plastic entering environment per month: study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some 250 tons of single-use plastic (SUP) are entering the environment per month across the country – causing public health hazard, according to a latest study.

Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) conducted the study throughout last four months (July-October). Siddika Sultana, executive director of ESDO, published the study yesterday at a press conference in its Lalmatia office, Dhaka in presence of experts.

Experts said these SUP products – polythene bags, drinking straws, plastic cotton buds, food packaging, plastic bottles and cups, plates etc. contain different types of toxic chemicals which are making their way into the food chain.

They also said that such kinds of chemicals, sourced from micro-plastics, have severe effects on respiratory, nervous and reproductive systems.

“It’s a preliminary survey on the amounts of SUP products sold from Old Dhaka (Begumbazar and Moulvibazar), from where around 85 percent of the total SUP products are supplied,” said Tanvir Hasnine, coordinator of the study.

According to the study, around 250 tons, out of 312 tons (estimated) of total SUP straws and plastics cutlery, are being sold per month from Old Dhaka.

The study also shows that around 9.75 lakh pieces of SUP, equivalent to 195 tons per month, are manufactured by only five companies.

The study claims, approximately 80 to 85 percent of SUP

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Clockwise from top left, A youth stomps on the bonnet of a police van in front of BNP's Nayapaltan central office during a clash between party supporters and police yesterday. BNP men gather there amid a festive atmosphere to collect nomination papers. However, when police asked them to clear the road, an altercation followed, and soon it snowballed into a clash. At one point, police used batons and tear gas. A party activist kicks away a tear gas cannister. BNP men retaliate by ganging up on a policeman.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Children with diabetes have right to a full life

Speakers say at discussion; call for free insulin

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tajul Islam and his family could not imagine that he would live beyond his teen years, let alone have the opportunity to get admission to Dhaka University and look forward to a long, healthy life, when he was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes at only 15.

Having been through an emotional roller coaster of a year, he along with his parents came to Dhaka for treatment. “After counselling at Changing Diabetes in Children [CDIC at BIRDEM], I understood what I should do to have a good life,” Tajul said yesterday at a roundtable on challenges of childhood diabetes and what role social partners can play to tackle them. The event, organised by

CDIC of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, Novo Nordisk and the daily Samakal, was held at Birdem General Hospital-2 (for women and children) in Segunbagicha, Dhaka.

Tajul is now part of a volunteers' team trying to raise awareness on childhood diabetes and remove the stigma attached to it.

There are now 6,000 diabetic children registered with Birdem, the only facility providing children with comprehensive care for diabetes. Almost 80 percent of them have type 1 diabetes, meaning their bodies don't produce insulin, and so they need insulin injection every day to survive, said Bedowra Zabeen, a specialist in children's diabetes, while giving a presentation at the programme.

Moreover, type-2 diabetes, which can be hereditary, is on the rise among children due to unhealthy eating habit and sedentary lifestyle. In most cases, it can be prevented if children eat less junk food and are physically active, the physician said. Type-2 diabetes means the patient's body doesn't use insulin properly and so they need medication or insulin to keep their blood sugar at normal level.

Ninety-two percent of children with type-1 diabetes are from disadvantaged families who cannot bear the treatment cost of nearly Tk 8,160 a month. They get free insulin and other medical support under two programmes – CDIC and Life for a Child – taken up by the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh.

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Health Minister Mohammed Nasim speaks at a roundtable on “Challenges of Childhood Diabetes and Role of Social Partners” at Birdem General Hospital-2 in Dhaka, marking World Diabetes Day yesterday.

HC to hear Shahidul's bail petition today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court is set to hear the bail petition of internationally-acclaimed photographer Shahidul Alam today, in the case filed against him under section 57 of ICT Act.

The bench of Justice Sheikh Abdul Awal and Justice Bishmadev Chakraborty fixed the date yesterday after Assistant Attorney General Mohammad Ali Jinnah sought time for the hearing.

He told the court that Attorney General Mahbubey Alam, who was scheduled to place argument on the petition, was sick.

Meanwhile, Shahidul's lawyer Barrister Sara Hossain yesterday prayed to the court to continue the hearing.

On November 1, the bench of Justice AKM Asaduzzaman and Justice SM Mozibur Rahman dropped the same petition from their hearing list.

Following this, Shahidul placed the petition before the bench led by Justice Sheikh Abdul Awal.

Shahidul Alam filed the petition with HC on September 18, after he was sued under Section 57 of ICT Act for “spreading propaganda against the government”.

He was picked up from his home on August 5.

NAYAPALTAN CLASH LDA urges EC to play neutral role

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Left Democratic Alliance (LDA), a coalition of eight left-leaning political parties, in a press statement expressed concerns over yesterday's clashes between political activists and police in front of the BNP central office in Nayapaltan, and urged the EC to play a neutral role.

“When the ruling party [AL] men demonstrated massive showdown while collecting their nomination forms, the EC didn't

consider it a violation of election codes. But when the oppositions did so, the EC addressed it as a violation issuing a circular,” said LDA Coordinator Shah Alam.

“Such biased role of the EC has raised question about its neutrality... After the incident, it seems that the EC is not playing a neutral role,” said Shah Alam, also general secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB).

He also said such incident would hamper the environment to hold a fair election.

Amendments to constitution shrunk people's rights

Says Shahdeen Malik in solo lecture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The amendments to the country's constitution have so far shrunk people's fundamental rights, eminent jurist Dr Shahdeen Malik said yesterday.

“Our amendments [of the constitution] took place without scrutiny and discussion. No one felt the need to inform people,” he said.

He was delivering a solo lecture on “The Culture of Amendments: (Contentious) Reflections” at the Supreme Court Bar Association auditorium in Dhaka.

Banglar Pathshala, a non-profit organisation, arranged the lecture as part of its regular activities. The lecture also marked the “Constitution Day”. The constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was adopted on November 4, 1972.

So far, the country has seen 17 amendments of the constitution, said Shahdeen Malik, also a SC lawyer, in his written speech.

These amendments have touched, changed and sometimes reverted to the original texts in several instances, he said.

“The saddest aspect of all our amendments is that, none of the amendments have endowed us with any new or more expanded rights than those initially contained in part III of the constitution.”

On the parliament's role over the amendments, he said the treasury bench did the amendments “at its will” which came from the attitude “It's my power, I will apply it”.

He said if a party has two-third majority in parliament, it is all they need to amend the constitution within the shortest time.

The eminent jurist also said while amending the constitution, the primacy of the state was over its citizens.

Therefore, the state would strengthen the executive, even if it means people's rights are

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New job portal for migrant workers

IOM and Bjobs sign MoU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The UN Migration Agency (IOM) has partnered with Bjobs.com Ltd, the largest online job portal of Bangladesh, to provide latest information on overseas employment opportunities to jobseekers and to connect them directly with employers.

The two agencies signed a memorandum of understanding on Sunday to create a new online portal that is set to go live within six months, IOM said in a statement yesterday.

The portal will have some unique features, particularly designed for Bangladeshi migrant workers.

The android app will offer Bangla/English language preferences and will allow jobseekers to create profiles. The profiles will be integrated with a search engine through which government, foreign missions, employers and recruiting agencies will be able to identify suitable candidates, IOM said.

“Overseas opportunities, job requirements and the terms and conditions of their employment are the bare minimum that migrant workers should know to make conscious choices,” said IOM Bangladesh Chief of Mission Giorgi Gigauri.

“Credible information need to

become more accessible, not only to potential migrants, but also migrants living abroad and those willing to re-migrate,” he added.

According to the statement, every year nearly two million people in Bangladesh join the working age population, while only 200,000 jobs are created locally.

This phenomenon, coupled with pull factors -- including peer influence, expectations of higher income and the perceived social status attached to living abroad -- often lead working age people to migrate for jobs overseas.

But prospective migrants frequently find themselves misled by middlemen when it comes to signing contracts and confronting working and living conditions different from what they were promised before migrating.

Some jobseekers even become victims of human trafficking and end up facing extreme exploitation and abuse.

“The changing market dynamics are driving us to focus more on technical jobs, which are filled by a large number of migrant workers,” said Bjobs.com CEO AKM Fahim Mashroor.

“We believe this initiative will definitely help migrant workers get more accurate and timely job information for safe and regular migration,” he said.

'Tree-man' Bajandar wants to come back to DMCH

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

“Tree-men” Abul Bajandar, who “voluntarily” left Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) earlier this year, after being treated there for two and a half years, is appealing to authorities concerned to give him another chance at a full recovery.

Bajandar, 28, got the nickname for massive bark-like warts on his hands and feet as a result of an extremely rare skin disorder. He came under national spotlight when media reports were published following his admission to DMCH on January 30, 2016. At the time, he was the fourth person recorded in the world to have the disease.

Health condition of Bajandar, who left the burn unit of the DMCH on May 26 to his village home in Paikgachha of Khulna after giving up hope of a full recovery, is getting worse day by day. He cannot hold anything properly in his hands any more.

“I made a mistake at that time; I should have stayed at the hospital to continue my treatment and I am realising it now,” said Bajandar, who is now suffering from pain in his hands and legs.

Bajandar left the hospital in May, just before his 26th surgery, claiming that he was not getting proper attention from the hospital authorities.



The current condition of Bajandar's limbs. The photo was taken yesterday.

Of the warts which were uprooted through operations, 15 percent did not come out again, but others are now more than half inches long, he said.

“I hope if authorities concerned resume my treatment, I will be in a better

condition as a modern burn and plastic surgery institute is going to start operation soon, with more specialised treatment facilities,” he said.

“I cannot take my medicine and food regularly due to poverty, and it is not possible for me to continue my treatment with my own money,” said Bajandar, who has no source of income.

He said he purchased 10 decimals of land with the money that he got from a patron, and built a tin-shed house with Tk 2 lakh he received from others.

“I will remain grateful to DMCH authorities if they give me another chance and start my free treatment at their newly inaugurated modern burn unit, as I may become totally disabled without treatment,” he said.

Dr Samanta Lal Sen, co-ordinator of Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, who was supervising the treatment of Bajandar when he was at DMCH, said they also want to resume his treatment.

“If he comes to the hospital, we will continue his treatment,” he said.

The warts, which first started appearing when Bajandar was a teenager but began spreading rapidly four years ago, have been diagnosed as epidermodyplasia veruciformis.

'Akashbeena' makes maiden London flight

BSS, Dhaka

Akashbeena, the Boeing Dreamliner of Biman Bangladesh, yesterday made its maiden flight to London prior to its regular operation to Europe scheduled to start from December 10.

“The maiden Dreamliner London flight BG-001 left Hazrat Shahjalal Airport at 11:20am today, carrying 251 passengers,” Biman's General Manager (PR) Shakil Meraj said yesterday.

The national flag carrier usually operates Dhaka-London-Sylhet-Dhaka flights by its Boeing 777-300ER aircraft four days a week.

Earlier, Biman decided to increase flight frequency to six flights a week instead of four on the London route from December 10.

Biman received the brand new Boeing 787-8 known as the “Dreamliner” in August. The new aircraft, fifteenth in Biman's fleet, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who named it as “Akashbeena”.

Until now, the aircraft is being used to operate flights from Dhaka to Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.