

WEATHER FORECAST



YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 29.1 L 14.5

MYMENSINGH H 27.6 L 12.7

CHATTOGRAM H 28.7 L 14.5

SYLHET H 29.1 L 14.4

RAJSHAHI H 27.6 L 10.1

RANGPUR H 27.5 L 11.1

KHULNA H 28.8 L 12.0

BARISHAL H 28.5 L 11.0

COX'S BAZAR H 30.7 L 15.0

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky till 6pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur at places during midnight to morning, reports UNB quoting Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:38pm and rises tomorrow at 6:42am.

THE PRICE OF ROAD RAGE

Escalating traffic chaos continues to take physical and psychological toll on Dhaka commuters. The capital has no shortage of drivers who frequently engage in altercation, at times over trivial matters. Such road rage often leads to violence and accidents. After a bus and CNG-run auto-rickshaw scraped against each other in Maniknagar area yesterday morning, in a fit of rage, the bus driver and his helper assaulted the auto-rickshaw driver. Soon, onlookers gathered and in an outburst of anger vandalised the bus. As the table turned, the CNG driver, with public support, beat up the bus driver and his helper. Due to the chaos, traffic was halted for over 30 minutes. Police later brought the situation under control.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH ASIA BBIN to play crucial role: foreign minister

DIPLMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen yesterday said regional connectivity will be a major instrument in promoting economic development in the South Asian region, and the Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) initiative for motor vehicle movement can play crucial role in enhancing trade and commerce among the four countries.

He was addressing a seminar on "Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal Regional Cooperation: Prospect and Reality" at Jatiya Press Club yesterday evening. Bangladesh Study Trust organised the discussion with its General Secretary Dr Mamun Al Mahtab in the chair.

"We have made substantial progress in cross-border energy cooperation with India and it helps us address the problem of energy deficiency," he said.

The minister also stressed early implementation of BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement and hoped Bhutan will resolve its internal procedure to make the sub-regional deal effective.

Former ambassador MA Hannan in his keynote paper said Saarc is "in a coma", due to tensions between India and Pakistan. In the last few years, intra-Saarc trade was around four to five percent, which is much lower than trade in other regional groupings like EU, Nafta and Asean.

'Selling off property to evade trial'

Court orders freezing of DGHS staffer, wife's assets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A special court yesterday ordered authorities concerned to freeze properties of Abzal Hossain and his wife Rubina Khanam, who came to spotlight for allegedly amassing a huge amount of wealth illegally.

The move came after the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) pleaded to the court to attach the couple's immovable properties and freeze moveable ones, saying that they are now trying to sell off some of their property to evade trial. They might also attempt to flee the country, it said.

Abzal is an administrative officer of Institute of Health Technology (IHT) and his wife used to be a stenographer of the Medical Education and Health Manpower Development project under the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

ACC has found out that the couple has 17 plots in Dhaka, Khulna, Rajbari and Faridpur, five houses, two shops

and an SUV.

In a letter, ACC urged the court to give order to district registrars of Dhaka, Faridpur, Rajbari and Khulna, chairpersons of Rajuk and BRTA, managing directors of First Security Islami Bank Ltd, Agrani Bank Ltd and AB Bank Ltd and registrar of joint stock companies and firms to attach and freeze their properties.

ACC also attached a list of their properties with the letter.

According to it, Abzal has a tin-shed house on a 2.5-katha land and a duplex on 10.5-decimal land in Faridpur; a six-katha plot in Mirpur; two three-katha land in Uttara; three-katha land in Khilkhet; four-katha land in Badda; 13.5-decimal and 113.27-decimal land in Faridpur; and 5.45-katha, 3.34-katha and 229.25-decimal land in Rajbari.

His wife Rubina owns two six-storey buildings on two three-katha land in Uttara; a tin-shed house in Mirpur; a duplex on a five-decimal land in Faridpur; two three-katha land in

Bashundhara residential area; 2.5-katha land in Mirpur; 15-decimal land in Savar; three separate land (8, 9 and 5.3 decimals each) in Faridpur; two shops at Khaza Super Market in Keraniganj and an SUV.

ACC said they also learned that with the help of one Lokman of Banani, Abzal and his wife bought a house in Sydney, Australia spending more than US\$ 200,000. He sent the money through illegal channels.

Abzal joined as office assistant at a project of DGHS in 1995. He is now working as administrative officer at IHT. His wife joined as a stenographer in 1998 and went to retirement in 2000.

"In the inquiry, a huge amount of wealth has been found in Abzal and Rubina's name, which is incongruent to their income," read the ACC letter.

ACC has also asked the couple to submit their wealth statements before the commission within the next seven working days.

SC affirms HC verdict against Osman Gani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday affirmed the High Court verdict that upheld a lower court judgement convicting and sentencing former chief conservator of forest Osman Gani to 12 years' imprisonment in a corruption case.

A three-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Muhammad Imman Ali passed the order, dismissing an appeal filed by Osman Gani challenging the High Court verdict in the case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

ACC lawyer Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that Osman Gani has already got released from jail after serving the 12 years' jail sentence.

Therefore, he needs not to go to jail following the SC order, he said.

The HC on December 15, 2015 upheld the lower court verdict that convicted and sentenced Osman Gani to 12 years' imprisonment for amassing illegal wealth and concealing information in his wealth statement submitted to the ACC.

A team of joint forces arrested Osman from his Uttara residence in the city on May 29, 2007, and seized Tk 1 crore from his house.

On June 5, 2008, Judge AKM Arifur Rahman of the

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With a damaged concrete slab partially covering a sewer, walking along this footpath has become a balancing act for pedestrians. The photo was taken in Bangla Motor area on Monday.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

'ANTI-STATE PROPAGANDA' Mohila Dal leader arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

Rab arrested a Jatiyatabadi Mohila Dal leader in Chattogram on Monday for "spreading anti-state propaganda" on social media.

Dewan Mahmuda Akhter Lita, 32, is the publication secretary of BNP's women wing. She was arrested from GEC intersection, said Mashkur Rahman, assistant director of Rab-7 media wing.

On information, Rab detained her in Khulshi area around 10:30pm, he said.

"After going through her two cellphones, we found fake photos of government high-ups and fabricated information. She used to spread such propaganda against the government from her Facebook account."

A case was filed under the Digital Security Act with Khulshi Police Station in this regard, he added.

REHABILITATIVE HEALTHCARE

Lack of coordination keeps patients in wait

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Due to a lack of information and coordination, a person on an average starts taking rehabilitative healthcare services around 880 days after they first suffer from health complications, according to preliminary results of a study.

The study also found that absence of "formal referral system" among health and rehabilitation professionals costs a patient heavily, before starting to receive rehabilitation service.

National Disability Foundation and Handicap International-Bangladesh (HIB) conducted the study, titled "Coordination of care between Health and Rehabilitation Services in Bangladesh" between January and November 2018.

Golam Mostofa, project manager of HIB, yesterday disclosed the outcome of the study at a roundtable on "Role of Professionals and Organisations in Inclusive Health Service and Rehabilitation".

Bangla daily Prothom Alo organised the

roundtable at its Dhaka office.

"Based on data from 396 respondents in six districts, we found that rehabilitation service receivers took a long time to come for the service, and they didn't get information from any formal channel," Golam Mostofa told The Daily Star.

According to the study, health professionals also have a lack of knowledge about rehabilitation services, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy, speech and language therapy and prosthetics and orthotics.

Referring to another study, Golam Mostofa said some 60 percent patients in Kurigram district and 28 percent in Narsingdi are deprived of healthcare; the numbers are 83 percent and 47 percent respectively, when it comes to rehabilitation services.

In this case, a lack of proper arrangements and relevant information were the biggest obstacles, according to the study.

Moderated by Abdul Quayum, associate

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Rab takes responsibility of orphaned girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) in Gazipur has taken the responsibilities of five-year old girl Sathi, whose mother was killed by her father recently.

Lt Col Sarwar bin Kasim, commander of Rab-1, on Sunday handed over a cheque of Tk 2 lakh for her education and rehabilitation. Besides, her maternal uncle, who is now looking after her, has been given a job, according to a Rab press release.

On January 3, Sathi's father Shahjahan Mia strangled his wife, 26-year-old Afroza Begum, at Bhaoraid area in Gazipur city.

Rab arrested Shajahan eight days after the murder.

Medical board formed for Abul Bajandar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) yesterday formed a nine-member medical board for "tree-man" Abul Bajandar, who returned to the hospital on Sunday after "voluntarily" leaving last year.

Prof Md Abul Kalam, project director of Sheikh Hasina National Burn and Plastic Surgery Institute of DMCH will lead the committee, with the institute's coordinator Dr Samanta Lal Sen, who supervised Bajandar when he was admitted last time, is a member.

Bajandar was admitted to DMCH on Monday to the male ward.

The condition of Abul Bajandar, who left DMCH

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Yet another student dies in road accident

STAR REPORT

Only six days after a student was killed on the road, another young life was lost in Chattogram city yesterday.

Mahmud was going to his school by a human haulier. The 14-year-old started from his Chattogram city residence in Green View residential area around 9:45am.

Around 15 minutes later, the eighth-grader of Chattogram Collegiate School met a tragic end.

He was among six passengers of the vehicle that was about to get on Kodomtoli flyover. A CNG-run auto-rickshaw was ahead of it.

Police said the auto-rickshaw slowed down while it was going over a speed breaker. But the human haulier ahead did not.

"Eventually, the vehicle rammed the auto-rickshaw from behind," said Sub-Inspector Mostafizur Rahman of Double Mooring Police Station.

When the human haulier overturned, locals thought the student -- Kazi Mahmudur Rahman, son of Kazi Abdur Rahman -- was still alive.

They took the critically injured boy to Chittagong Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, said CMCH police.

Four other passengers of the human haulier and the auto-rickshaw driver, Mohammad Ismail, sustained injuries, said police.

Earlier on January 16, Suma Barua, an 11th-grader of Government City College, was fatally crushed under a delivery truck while she was crossing Kotwali intersection in the port city, on the way to her college.

In another accident, a teenage girl was killed as a picnic bus ran her over in Raozan upazila on Monday.

Reshma Akter, 18, from Dabua in the upazila, died on the spot, said police.

In Bagerhat, a bus and a truck collided head-on on Khulna-Mawa highway in Fakirhat area. Four people were killed and at least 30 others were injured in the accident yesterday, said police.

Three of the deceased are Kamrul Islam, 32, the trucker; Bipin Poddar, 55; and Mahmudul Hasan, 13; they are from Aronghata in Khulna, said Bagerhat fire service Deputy Assistant Director Masud Sarder.

The injured were rushed to Fakirhat Upazila Health Complex and Khulna Medical College Hospital. Three of the injured are in critical condition.

In Dinajpur, a tractor hit a rickshaw-van from the opposite direction in Haluaghat area of Nawabganj upazila yesterday, killing its puller instantly.

The victim -- Mofizar Rahman, 45, was from Raghunathpur village in Nawabganj, said police.

In Faridpur, a motorcyclist was killed and his co-rider injured as a truck hit the motorbike on Dhaka-Khulna highway in Pulia bus stand area under Bhanga upazila on Monday.

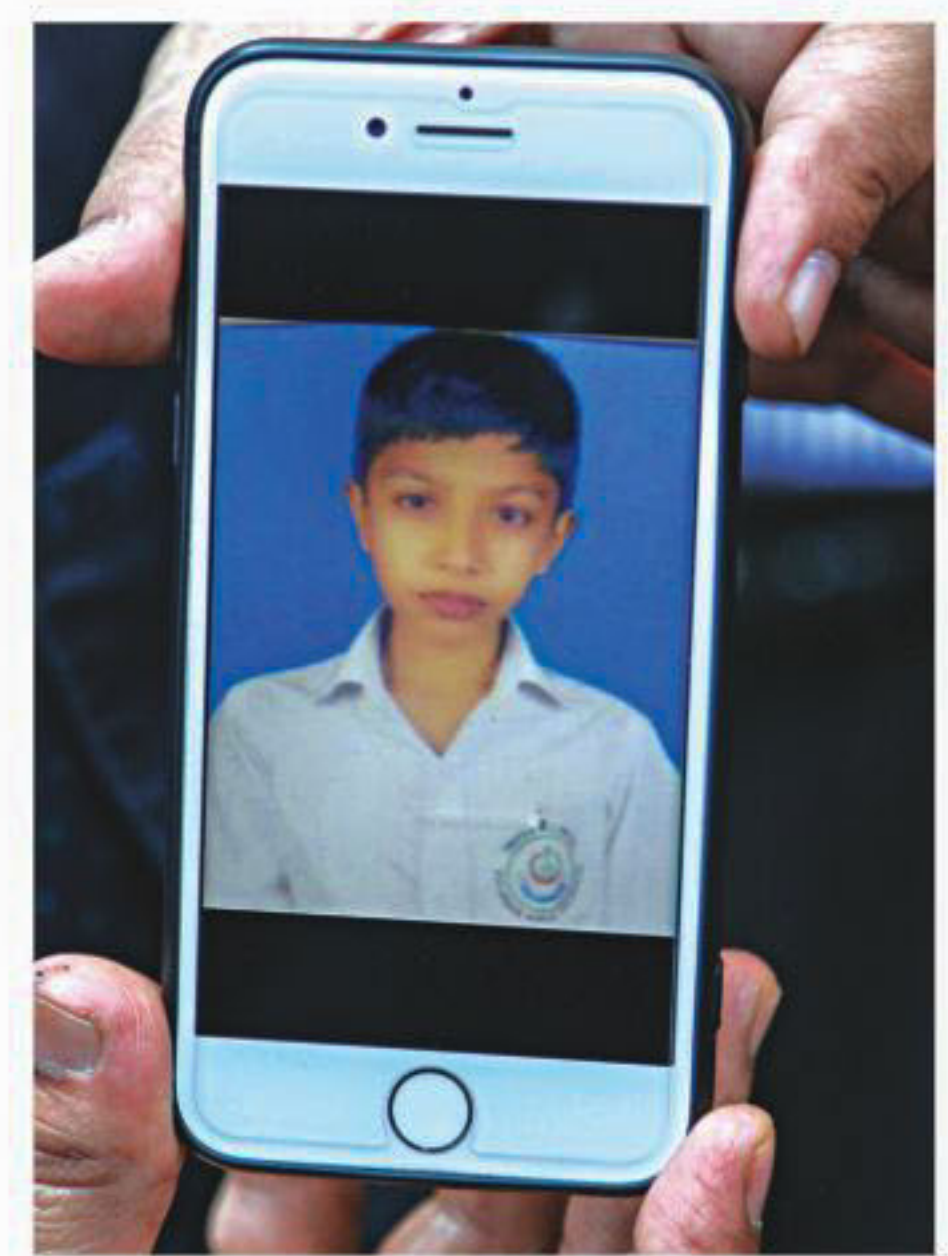
Mohammad Robin, 28, from Madaripur, died on the spot.

Injured Sabbir Hossain, 30, from the same area, was taken to Faridpur Medical College Hospital.

TRAIN HITS LORRY IN TANGAIL

A lorry driver was killed after a train hit the vehicle in Tangail around 5km away from Bangabandhu Bridge link road early yesterday.

Rahamat Ali, 55, from Ramdia village in



A photo of Kazi Mahmudur Rahman

Sadar upazila of Kishoreganj, died on the spot, said police.

The accident happened in Analiabari area of Kalihati upazila as the goods-laden vehicle skidded off the road after another truck hit it from the opposite direction, injuring his helper, they said.

The helper managed to get off the truck after it had got on the rail track but the driver could not, said Mosharaf Hossain, officer-in-charge of Bangabandhu Bridge East Police Station.

Two people of the other truck sustained injuries in the head-on collision, he added.

Traffic remained halted on the busy road for half an hour, said locals.

[Our correspondents from Chattogram, Bagerhat, Dinajpur, Faridpur and Tangail contributed to the report]