

Weather

Temperature may rise

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Rajshahi divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka and Sylhet divisions till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met office said day temperature may rise slightly over the country during the period.

The country's highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and the lowest 24.3 degrees at Chittagong.

The sun sets in the city today at 6.50 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.17 am.

Maximum and minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

| City/Town | Temperature in Celsius | Humidity in percentage |
|-------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Max | Min |
| Dhaka | 32.8 | 27.0 |
| Chittagong | 33.8 | 24.3 |
| Rajshahi | 33.6 | 27.0 |
| Khulna | 33.8 | 25.5 |
| Barisal | 32.0 | 25.5 |
| Sylhet | 32.8 | 25.3 |
| Cox's Bazar | 32.0 | 25.0 |
| | Morning | Evening |
| | 78 | 78 |
| | 67 | 77 |
| | 81 | 94 |
| | 84 | 82 |
| | 78 | 75 |
| | 78 | 85 |

Obaidul Quader tells Sangsad

Bangladesh expects test status in cricket by June

Minister of State for Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs Obaidul Quader told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that Bangladesh is expected to get test status in cricket by June next year, reports BSS.

Replying to a supplementary question by BNP lawmaker from Chandpur, Alamgir Haider Khan, the minister said five of the nine test playing countries have already supported Bangladesh's bid.

He said none had opposed Bangladesh's plea for getting test status. He said West Indies, South Africa and New Zealand cricket teams would visit Bangladesh to play with Bangladesh cricket team.

Obaidul Quader listed various steps taken by the government to improve the standard of cricket and said lump sum allocation of Tk 20 crore had been provided for this purpose. Besides, he said Tk 14 crore had been allocated for the develop-

ment of infrastructural facilities of cricket.

He said plan had been taken up to construct an international cricket stadium in Dhaka which was already approved by the executive committee of the National Economic Council. An indoor training complex at Kalabagan in Dhaka is being built for the development of cricket, he added.

The minister said the four divisional stadiums under construction would be earmarked for cricket and indoor training facilities would be created there. Besides, he said training for cricketers under 13, 17 and 19 was being taken at grass-roots level.

He said steps were taken to hire a good foreign coach to provide high standard training to cricketers. Inter school cricket competition would be introduced soon, he added.

Solar eclipse in Aug may help solve old mystery

The total eclipse of the sun, on August 11, will help scientists understand a question that has been puzzling them for 50 years: why the sun's outer atmosphere—the corona—is so hot, reports UNB.

According to a London Press Service (LPS) report, United Kingdom scientists have been investigating the corona's heat since the 1940s by using large ground-based telescopes and spacecraft but the exact reason remains elusive.

It is known that magnetic fields are involved but whether the heating process is by magnetic waves or tiny explosions called nanoflares is the subject of much debate.

The experiment relies on the latest electronic digital cameras linked to a specially adapted computer. The cameras are similar to those in video camcorders but are faster and more sensitive. The computer will "grab" and process data from the camera at ultra-high rates (50 frames per second).

The set-up, known as the solar eclipse coronal imaging system (Secis), will be the fastest digital astronomical camera in the world.

Prof Ken Phillips from Rutherford Appleton Laboratory, Oxfordshire, Southern England, and Peter Gallagher from Queen's University, Belfast, Northern Ireland, will take the equipment to the Black Sea coast in Bulgaria, where the total eclipse will last two minutes. They will be joined there by collaborators from Poland.

The experiment will investigate what causes the sun's atmosphere to be so hot—two million degrees Celsius—far hotter than the sun's surface, which comparatively is only 6,000 degrees.

Rapid changes in the sun's magnetic field are thought to be the source of the heating and the Secis instrument should be able to detect these oscillations for the first time. It is only during an eclipse that the sun's outer atmosphere, the corona, is visible from earth; usually,

the brightness of the sun obscures it.

Prof Phillips, who recently returned from testing the equipment in Poland, explained: "We only have two minutes of total eclipse to gather all the data so it is crucial that there are no hitches. We are going to the Black Sea coast because the chances of clear skies are very good but if we miss this one the next total eclipse in the world will be in Africa in 2001."

The research is funded by the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC), the UK's national astronomy funding body, as well as the Leverhulme Trust.

PPARC is government funded and provides researchers from UK universities with access to world-class facilities and funds the UK membership of international bodies such as the European Laboratory for Particle Physics, CERN, and the European Space Agency.

Screening of English films banned in 3 cinema halls

Three cinema halls in Dhaka and Narayanganj have been barred from screening English films for screening uncensored obscene packed films violating the rules, reports UNB.

The halls are 'Neptune' and 'Atithi' of Dhaka and 'Chhayan' of Narayanganj.

The certificate of feature films, 'Hell Hole' distributed by M/S Cinecom International, and 'Final Score' by Heart Films International, have been cancelled for exhibiting the obscene ignoring the censor board rules, said an official handout.

2 held from DU Surya Sen Hall

By DU Correspondent

Police arrested two students from DU Surya Sen Hall of Dhaka University in the early hours yesterday for illegal stay at the hall. The arrested however were released at about 11 am.

They were identified as Ehteshamul Haque Ripon of Management Department and Abul Kalam Azad Lavlu of Islamic History Department. Both are the activists of a faction of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of ruling Awami League.

Campus sources said police went to the hall about 11 pm and asked Ripon and Lavlu to leave the dormitory saying them outsiders of the hall. But police again went to the hall at about 2 am and picked them up as they had not left the hall. The arrested were taken to the Ramna thana at night.

Both Lavlu and Ripon were earlier ousted from Mohsin Hall on June 19 by Shafiqur Rahman, the BCL hall unit president.

When contacted, Provost of the Surya Sen Hall Prof AFM Yusuf Haider said that he was concerned about yesterday's arrest of two students from his hall.

Pakistan

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India today reaffirmed that it would continue its military operation in the Kargil sector "until the aggressors are cleared out, and the status quo ante" on the LOC fully restored.

In a statement in Delhi an official spokesman said that India had seen the US-Pakistan joint statement issued in Washington yesterday. "Our interlocutors have informed us that concrete steps referred to in the statement means withdrawal of Pakistan of their forces from our side of the Line of Control in the Kargil sector."

He said India had also noted the sequencing of steps agreed to in the statement, that only after withdrawal is completed will other contemplated steps be initiated.

The spokesman said India hoped that Pakistan will heed this call immediately. "We will be watching developments on the ground," he added.

The spokesman referred to the Lahore Declaration made by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif and said there was no place whatsoever for any third party involvement.

PPP spokesman Farhatullah Babar said the Farhatullah agreement was for a withdrawal, it would mean a reversal from Islamabad's previous stand on the Kargil fighting and would bring a political backlash against the government.

"We demand that the matter, being of utmost importance and of national security, it must be discussed in parliament."

The Lashkar-e-Taiba, one of four groups fighting Indian forces in the northern Kargil Drass sector of Kashmir, refused to withdraw as long as India kept its army in Kashmir.

"Pakistan may withdraw, but the mujahideen will not withdraw," Lashkar chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed told Reuters.

"Pakistan should not accept any responsibility on behalf of the mujahideen because those peaks are not in Pakistani army or Pakistani government hands, but in our hands."

The Harakat-ul-Mujahideen, another group fighting in Kashmir, said the agreement would have no impact on the battlefield.

"No (Pakistani) government has ever survived if its actions are damaging to the cause of Kashmir. Nawaz Sharif's fate would not be different if he chooses to intervene in our affairs," said Harakat chief Fazalur Rahman Khalil.

Uzbekistan Airways celebrate one year in Dhaka

Benison International CSA (Cargo Sales Agency) of Uzbekistan Airways in Bangladesh celebrated the 1st anniversary of Uzbekistan Airways in Dhaka on Sunday at The Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel, says a press release.

Country Manager of Uzbekistan Airways, Allayar Hasanov, Consul general of Uzbekistan in Dhaka, Ahmed Khakinov, also distinguished guest from Biman, Civil Aviation & Freight Forwarding companies were present at the ceremony.

On the occasion, the country manager announced the starting of the Second Frequency from July 9 according to which Uzbekistan Airways will operate two flights a week, one on Sunday and the other on Thursday night.



Allayar Hasanov, Country Manager of Uzbekistan Airways in Bangladesh, (L) and Moin Rashid, Managing Partner of Benison International CSA Uzbekistan Airways in Bangladesh, (R) celebrate the 1st anniversary of the airlines at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel recently.

HERE and THERE

DU Economics Dept Alumni Assoc

A general meeting, election and reunion of the Dhaka University Economics Department Alumni Association was held on Sunday, says a press release.

Shabbir Ahmed, Managing Director of the Bangladesh Krishi Bank presided over the function.

Former students of the Department of Economics A M Abdullah Siddiqui, Bangladesh High Commissioner in India, Md Faruk Mohammad, Abbas Uddin Alsari, Fazlul Haq Mia and Secretary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Moshed Hossain took part in the reminiscence session.

It was also addressed by Dr Mohammad Ali Rashid, Dr Faridul Haque and Professor Farid Uddin Ahmed. A cultural function was also held. A council of executives for the year 1999-2001 was elected. The members of the council are: President Dr Mohammad Faruque, Vice-Presidents Shoaib Ahmed, Zaheduzzaman Farouk, Prof Farid U Ahmed, Mr Syed Mahmudul Haque, treasurer Dr Faridul Haque, general secretary Dr Ali Taslim, joint secretary Shafiqul Islam Khan, Monowar Hussain, members Prof A H Wahiduddin Mahmud, Prof Ayubur Rahman Bhuiyan, Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury, Syed Manzur Elahi, Mushfiqur Rahman, Badiur Rahman, Abdul Khaleque, Prof Mamtaz Uddin Ahmed, Prof M A Rashid, Golam Rahman, Dr Kazi Shahabuddin, Prof Abu Ahmed, W Hussain, Prof Abu Ahmed, A M Masur Ahmed, Habibullah Bahar, Abbas Uddin Alsari, Anisatul Fatema Yusuf, Nurul Amin, Ziaul Haque Khandker, A S M Rashidul Hai Shameem, Fatem Zohra, Bilkis Ara Shireen, Kamaluddin Talukder, Delwar Hussain Malder, Mosud Mannan.

The decision was taken at a general meeting of the executive committee of the association held at its temporary office at Gulshan in the city with association Chairman Syed Mosharraf Hossain in the chair, said a press release yesterday.

Mosleh Alam Chowdhury, Principal Mozibur Rahman, Lutfur Rahman Khan, Dr MA Mannan, Sheikh Salahuddin, spoke in the meeting.

The Meritorious and interested students have been requested to collect the scholarship forms from the temporary office of the association (60/D Gulshan (South, Road No-131) within July 30. The last date of submitting the form is August 10.

Smuggled sarees recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Smuggled sarees worth about Tk ten lakh were recovered from old city's Patuati area yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, a preventive team of Customs, Excise and VAT of Dhaka (South) in cooperation with police seized the smuggled sarees from a shop at Patuati area, said a press release last night.



Rotary Club of Dhaka North opened a Rotary Library at Community Centre School at Teigaon in the city as their Rotary Year Launching Project. The picture shows President Rtn. Dr. Hafiz G A Siddiqui Pro Vice Chancellor North South University handing over books to the Principal of the School, while IPP Rtn. Mehboob Chowdhury, Director GrameenPhone looks on.

Two flyovers to be built in city soon

Construction of two flyovers would start soon and few more overbridges will be built to lessen the traffic jam in the capital, reports UNB.

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister, Zillur Rahman said this in Parliament yesterday, replying to Abul Kalam Azad Siddiqui (BNP-Tangail).

Acknowledging that the city was facing severe traffic jam, he said the government had taken steps to withdraw all illegal rickshaws from the city roads.

However, the minister said, the government has no plan to make the city completely free from rickshaws.

He informed the House that some 79,000 licenced rickshaws have been plying in the capital although Abu Lais Mubin Chowdhury (JP-Sylhet) claimed the number to be 5 lakh.

"But, it is true that a huge number of illegal rickshaws ply in Dhaka city and the government has taken steps to catch those illegal rickshaws," the minister said.

To eliminate permanent traffic jam at Jatra Bari, the entry point to Dhaka, the government has decided to set up a bus-truck terminal on the other side of Kanchpur bridge, he told M Fazlul Azim (BNP-Noakhali).

Scholarships for working students

The government has undertaken a scheme to provide scholarships to working students for their higher education through the Children's Welfare Trust, reports BSS.

Nearly 500 students will be selected in the first phase under the programme beginning in January 2000, said an official handout today.

Regular students to be chosen on merit from primary level will get Tk 400 per month while Secondary School Certificate (SSC) level students Tk 600. Money will also be provided separately as fees for SSC examinees.

Bangladesh Scouts staff management confce ends

A two-day 4th Staff Management Conference of Bangladesh Scouts was held at the National Scout Training Centre, Mouchak, Gazipur recently, says a press release.

Manzoor-ul-Karim, Chief National Commissioner, Bangladesh Scouts, Saiful Islam Khan, National Commissioner (Public Relations & Publications), Md Zainul Abedin (Planning & Implementation) were present on the closing ceremony and exchanged views with the participants.

The conference was inaugurated by Md Abdul Quayyum Thakur, National Commissioner (Administration), while Habibul Alam, Bir Pratik, National Commissioner (Programme), Deputy National Commissioner Md Rafiqul Islam Khan, Jahangir Habibullah were present in the afternoon, 49 professional scout executives from all over Bangladesh were present at the conference and chalked out action plan for the year of 1999-2000, the press release added.

4th Berger Young Painters' competition

Berger Paints has announced its 4th Berger Young Painters' Painting Art competition '99 to promote the young painters of our country, says a press release.

The 2000 Berger Corporate Calendar will incorporate the six award winning paintings of the competition. The prizes for the competition are: First prize Taka 25,000, second prize Taka 20,000, third prize Taka 15,000 and Taka 10,000 each for 4th, 5th, 6th positions.

There is no select topic for entry into the painting competition, size of the oil based painting will have to be 24"x24". For preliminary entry 5R size colour photographs of the paintings are to be sent. The participants must be Bangladeshis, between 18-35 years of age. 5R sized colour photographs of the paintings should be sent for the preliminary selection. Participants must submit a copy of their SSC certificate certified by a first class gazetted officer along with a colour photograph.

One participant can submit more than one work. 40 paintings will be selected in the preliminary selection. The preliminary selected painters will be notified by mail after which they have to send the main paintings at their own expense.

All paintings have to be properly framed and submitted. The participant must write his/her name, father's name, address, age, at the back of the painting. In addition, the painter's bio-data and name in English must also be submitted.

The final selection will take place from the 40 paintings and six winners will be selected from an exhibition will be arranged with the selected 40 paintings. The 40 selected painters will be given a certificate. The 6 winners will be invited to the prize giving ceremony by mail. The six award-winning paintings will be treated as property of Berger Paints Bangladesh Ltd.

The last date for sending the 5R colour photographs is September 15 at the following address: Sharmista Rahman, Unitrend Ltd, Sharief Mansion (6th & 7th Floor), 56/57 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. Phone: 9561991, 9552487, 9569484, Fax: 9568642.

DU MA students demand change of exam date

By DU Correspondent

A section of MA class students of Dhaka University brought out a procession on the campus yesterday morning demanding rescheduling of their final year examinations.

Meanwhile, sources in the university told The Daily Star that there was no possibility of shifting the date of examinations as the authorities had already shifted the date back by one month due to the BCS written examinations. The MA final year examination is scheduled to begin from early next month.

The students demanded rescheduling of their examinations by at least one month so that they could prepare for the examinations properly.

Hasina hailed for granting money for repressed women

NARAYANGANJ, July 5: Different organisations of the town today hailed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for granting Taka two crore for rehabilitation of repressed women and children including those being displaced from Narayanganj red-light areas, reports BSS.

In separate statements, the leaders of the organisations also congratulated AKM Shamim Osman, MP, General Secretary of Narayanganj District Awami League, for taking lead initiative to rehabilitate the repressed women and children of Narayanganj red-light districts.

The signatories to the statements include Advocate Kazi Ahmed Ali and Advocate Mohammad Asaduzzaman, President and General Secretary respectively of Narayanganj District Bar Association, Anisur Rahman Dipu, Member Secretary of Narayanganj District Awami Ainijibi Parishad, Advocate Khokan Saha, General Secretary of Narayanganj City Awami League, Alhaj Maulana Mahbubur Rahman, President of Narayanganj Imam Samity.

Meeting of Advisory Academic Council of BRAC held

Academic cooperation with universities and institutes abroad was discussed at the first meeting of the Advisory Academic Council of BRAC Information Technology Institute (BITI) yesterday at the BRAC Centre. The meeting also reviewed the course design and contents, says a press release.

Presided over by Prof Jamilur Reza Chowdhury of BUET, the meeting was attended by Prof M Lutfur Rahman of Dhaka University, Prof M Kaykobad of BUET, Dr L Haque of North South University, SM Quader, MD and CEO, Southtech and Sahool Afzal, Director BITI.

BITI was set up to impart high quality multi-access training and education in the field of Information Technology (IT) and develop human resources in Bangladesh.

Youth training begins in Ctg

CHITTAGONG, July 5: State Minister for Religious Affairs Moulana Mohammad Nurul Islam inaugurated a three-month training course for unemployed youths at the Pahartali Youth Training Centre here today, reports BSS.

The youth will be given training on poultry, livestock, pisciculture and first-aid.

Speaking as the chief guest Nurul Islam said the government has taken up programmes to train up the unemployed youths at thana and district levels in phases to make them financially solvent.

Computer training for youths in 29 youth training centres of the country has already started and the computer training will begin in 69 more centres, he said.

Presided over by the Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong Mohammad Hasan, the function was addressed, among others, by Director General of the Directorate of Youths Mohammad Sirajul Islam and Divisional Commissioner ASM Mobaidul Islam.

EU bid to broker political dialogue in Myanmar

YANGON, July 5: A special European Union (EU) mission is due to arrive here Tuesday to try to broker a political dialogue between the Myanmar junta and the opposition party of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, diplomats said, reports AFP.

Envoys attending a US Independence Day celebration here Sunday night said the EU delegation had arranged meetings this week with both sides of Myanmar's political morass, including opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

But sources said the National League for Democracy (NLD) leader would "not necessarily" be included in the "initial stage" of the talks being considered.

The NLD won a large parliamentary majority in 1990 elections but the junta has refused to yield power or negotiate a handover with Aung San Suu Kyi, whom it ridicules as a lackey of the West.

NLD deputy co-chairman Tin Oo told AFP the party's leadership including Aung San Suu Kyi would meet the special EU mission Tuesday at a "British residence".

The mission includes repre-

sentatives from Finland, which took over the EU's rotating presidency from Germany at the start of July, sources said.

Diplomats were reluctant to expand on the meeting, saying publicity could jeopardise the process already on tenterhooks amid the bitter rivalry which has scarred Myanmar politics for a decade.

EU ambassadors in Manila on Friday said formal talks were possible but reiterated the need for the junta to improve its abysmal human rights record before channels could be opened.

"We are seeking new ways to approach the Myanmar government and we hope a dialogue on the political situation" can be started, said Finnish ambassador Pertti Majanen.

Previous talks between the junta and the NLD broke down in acrimony and distrust, leaving the elected government unformed and the junta firmly in power.

The EU has imposed aid sanctions and other restrictions on Myanmar in protest at the political impasse and widespread allegations of human rights abuses.

City corpn, UZ polls

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Bench members also demanded the same.

But problems arose when the Chair put the motions to 'voice vote'. The opposition sought a 'division vote' to see whether the two ruling party members concerned vote for their motions, violating article 70 of the constitution. According to the article, an MP loses membership if s/he votes against his or her party position.

The deputy speaker refused to give the division vote on the ground that it was apparently visible to him that the number of Treasury Bench members present in the House was much higher than that of the opposition members. Failing to get the floor even, the opposition staged its first walk-out.

The opposition members returned to the House immediately. But the Chair refused to give floor to those submitting the bills on the ground that they were absent from the House.

At this stage, he, according to a rule relating to the division vote, asked the members of the House to stand so that he could count them to examine whether the *prima facie* of the opposition demand for the division vote was there. The ruling party MPs stood up, while some opposition members were demanding floor to say something.

The Chair announced that the Treasury Bench members outnumbered their opposition counterparts, and quickly went for passage of the bills.

At one point, he gave floor to the Opposition Chief Whip Khandaker Delwar Hossain who said that it was unprecedented that the opposition members were not allowed to speak on their proposed amendments and announced their second walkout. 'In protest against running the House in Bakshalite manner by the Chair.'

After the opposition members went out of the House, the deputy speaker read out a letter sent to him by the opposition chief whip that requested the Chair to begin the afternoon sitting of the House yesterday evening so that the opposition MPs could attend a public rally of the party in the afternoon.

Referring to another letter 'from a BNP whip', the deputy speaker said that he was requested to complete yesterday's business by 3:30 p.m. to enable the opposition MPs to attend the public rally.

"I have gone for quick disposal of the legislative business, in line with the opposition request," the deputy speaker told the House immediately before adjournment of the House at 2:00 p.m. "They have staged the walkout to attend their party rally. But they are now blaming me. It is unfortunate."

The deputy speaker further said looking at the Treasury Bench members: "Well, they have gone to attend their rally, we have done our business quite satisfactorily."

The LGRD Minister and the Chief Whip of Parliament echoed the Chair.

Earlier, the opposition members argued that the government of Sheikh Hasina could not hold free and fair elections. Besides, they found Chief Election Commissioner Mohammad Abu Hena to be biased towards the ruling Awami

League. They also alleged that the ID cards prepared under the supervision of the present EC are faulty, while the cards are being distributed only among ruling party supporters.

The opposition MPs told the House that their parties would go for the elections if they are held under caretaker governments, the EC is reconstituted and the problems related to ID cards removed.

In reply, the LGRD minister praised the BNP lawmakers 'for realising the importance of elections under a caretaker government, a concept that was once ignored by the government of Khaleda Zia'. But he rejected the idea, 'as the polls in question were those of local bodies—not national level elections'.

On the demand for reconstitution of the election commission, the minister said that it was beyond the power and jurisdiction of the ruling party.

About the faulty ID cards, the minister said: Yes, there are some faulty cards. But there is scope are there for correcting them.

W Bank

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grammes elsewhere have involved making the sector operate more like a business and deepening the private sector's involvement.

The World Bank urged the government to articulate its own strategy to solve the institutional problems of the power sector. Strong commitment to reforms would not only address the complaints of electricity consumers, but also would attract further donor finance for an expanded investment programme. For financial support from the World Bank to the power sector in the future, there should be measures necessary to insure the success of a 'home grown' reform programme, it said.

The WB cited some successes, particularly the rural electrification co-operatives which have low levels of theft, over 95 per cent recovery of electricity bills, and high levels of customer satisfaction. Other important progress has been the creation of the Power Grid Corporation of Bangladesh, necessary in a fair, competitive electricity market, and the Haripur and Meghnath private power stations which have some of the lowest prices for privately generated power in the world. A World Bank mission was currently in Bangladesh to complete the appraisal of a partial risk guarantee for the Haripur project. The World Bank Group is also considering further financing for the Haripur project by the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the press release said.

The World Bank discussed the potential for large foreign exchange earnings through the export of natural gas. Furthermore, gas exports could generate foreign exchange which would help insure a sustainable external account.

While the Government and Opposition expressed concerns about the adequacy of gas reserves to support future demand for gas in Bangladesh, there was also understanding that oil companies needed to anticipate a large gas market before they drilled the wells that would prove