



WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather forecast

UNB, Dhaka

Rain and thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Dhaka and Rajshahi division and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia, Comilla and Sylhet in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today.

Weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

The country's highest temperature recorded yesterday was 40.0 degree Celsius at Rajshahi and the lowest 19.8 degree Celsius at Srirangol.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:25 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:28 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	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	37.2	24.8	65	35
Chittagong	34.8	25.0	64	72
Rajshahi	40.0	20.6	62	34
Khulna	37.5	25.4	75	50
Birsa	37.6	24.5	59	52
Sylhet	36.2	23.4	41	41
Cox's Bazar	35.5	24.4	72	72

Life in Chhit Baraibari

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The situation is tense and worrying as there have been a massive build-up of BDR soldiers and heavy movement of Army troops along the borders with Assam, Tripura and Mizoram states.

Bangladesh officials and Army sources yesterday dismissed the claims by the official and a section of the media in India.

"The Bangladesh Army has not moved a single troop from any of its cantonments," a high official told The Daily Star last night.

Director General of Bangladesh Rifles Major General Fazur Rahman and Director General of BSF Gurbachar Jagat talked over telephone late Monday night on ways to defuse the border tension.

The BDR chief was learnt to have assured his counterpart that not a

Benazir

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unilateral moratoriums on testing after their tit-for-tat nuclear blasts in May 1998 triggered international economic sanctions against them.

Both countries are yet to sign the CTBT, which has been approved by more than 150 nations but which can only come into force once 44 nuclear-capable countries ink it.

"We (Pakistan People's Party) thought that Islamabad should have signed on May 28, 1998 right after the detonations saving us from the economic battering and crushing debt burden," Bhutto said.

Delwar

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Police said they fired on Delwar when he hurled bombs at them.

Family sources said although the victim's brother 'officially' received the body from the DMCH morgue at about 3:30pm yesterday, the police vehicle that was carrying the body to Delwar's Matuail residence from DMCH, disappeared after Delwar's brother got down from the vehicle on their way to Matuail to inform one of his relatives.

Later in the evening, a team of Demra police took the body to the Matuail graveyard for burial. Despite fervent requests by Delwar's brother at the graveyard, police refused to hand over the body.

Witnesses said police along with some local Awami League activists made arrangements for washing the body and asked local people to join the Janaza. The victim was buried at the graveyard in the presence of police, said a local resident.

AL activists and police misbehaved with photojournalists as they tried to take snaps of the victim's family and ordered them to leave the spot immediately.

Koizumi next PM

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change it has little support among the party leadership, and many analysts believe he will have a hard time carrying out the promises of reform that were the focus of his campaign.

Mamun

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number of policemen were deployed there.

Mamun who earlier lived in a slum near MES college, has reportedly amassed wealth worth over Tk 20 crore.

He was used by some influential people of the city and political leaders to take possession of lands and for anti-social acts, sources claimed.

He also collects monthly toll from shop owners from WASA crossing to Sholoshahar, the sources said.

He maintains a cadre known as 'Mamun Bahini'. He had reportedly demanded Tk seven lakh from BNP leader Morshed Khan MP in connection with the incident at hotel Misfalah at GEC crossing, where the lawmaker's son was assaulted by Mamun's cadres, the sources said.

Mock trial : 3 top opposition leaders sentenced to death at N'ganj

REPORT AGENCIES, N'ganj

A mock court here yesterday sentenced three top opposition leaders to death on various charges.

The mock court, chaired by a 14-year-old boy, Minhajul Haque Marzu, passed the order against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for "creating law and order situation in the country" and Jamaat leaders Prof Golam Azam and Matiur Rahman Nizami for collaborating with the Pakistani occupation forces in 1971.

Nineteen people including Shamim Osman, MP made their deposition before the mock court.

People from various parts of the district gathered in front of Ali Ahmed Chunka Pathagar to witness the trial. Processions were also brought out and effigies of the three leaders burnt after the verdict.

BDR families

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It would take almost one hour to reach Alubazar of Shariatpur from Harinaghat river port of Chandpur, he added.

He said Roads and Highways Department has already constructed 34-kilometer long link road at a cost of Tk 27 crore and the road was made open for traffic.

Rangamati

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Criminal activities have increased due to failure of the District Law and Order Committee, he alleged.

A retired government official at Kalindipur blamed law enforcing agencies for their inaction. People report incidents of crime to law enforcers, sometimes even risking their life, but desired results are not seen.

"If they are sincere, nabbing terrorists, most of whom are untrained, should not be much difficult," he added.

Some people say, hill top security installations in some areas is of little help as the criminals get enough time to flee after abduction or mugging before security personnel come into action.

When asked, a top police official denied that the law and order has deteriorated. "Free movement of people in CHF after the peace accord speaks of improvement in the situation", he claimed.

Another high official of a law enforcing agency seeking anonymity said it is difficult to check criminal activities in the forest-clad district with poor logistics, particularly vehicles. Poor road communication system is also a great obstacle, he said.

Nine journalists

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Daily Runner published from Jessore. They were killed in 1994 and 1995 respectively.

S M Alauddin, the editor of Dainik Patradut, Satkhira was gunned down in his office in 1996, while Saiful Alam Mukul, editor of The Daily Runner, Jessore was killed by miscreants in 1998.

Working journalist of Chaudanga's daily Din Badaler Kagoj Bazul Rahman and Rezaul Karim, secretary of Kaliganj Press Club of Jhenaidah district were also killed in the 1998.

Mir Elias Hossain Dilip, editor of Dainik Bir Darpan published from Jhenaidah was gunned down in the year 2000 and Shamsur Rahman, Bureau Chief of Dainik Janakantha was killed in his office in Jessore town on July 16 the same year.

Last Friday, gunmen shot and stabbed Daily Janakantha's Faridpur correspondent Probir Shikder. His right leg has been amputated.

Besides, about 50 journalists in different districts of south-western zone were severely injured in armed attacks by miscreants during the last six years, according to newspaper reports and police sources.

Attack on newsmen on rise

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pictures of some students being dragged by police officers near the Tangail press club on February 27.

Opposition activists beat up three newspaper reporters in the capital as they were covering hartal on April 2, and another at the Minto Road official residence of Leader of the Opposition in Parliament on April 13.

Last year, two journalists were murdered. They either died in the line of duty or were deliberately targeted for assassination because of the reports they had filed or their affiliation with a news organization.

On January 15, unidentified assailants gunned down Mir Elias Hossain, editor of the Dainik Bir Darpan, from close range in Jhenaidah. His friend, Alifaz Uddin, who was with him on a motorbike, died en route to the hospital.

Darpan had been vocal against left-wing militant activities in the south-western district, arguing that the underground leftist activists should abandon violence and engage in the democratic process. Hossain himself wrote numerous



Yussuf Abdullah Haroon, President of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) addressing a meeting on the present economic situation of the country organised by Bangladesh Dokan Malik Samity (BDMS) at Federation Auditorium yesterday. Among others Mohammad Ali, Vice President, FBCCI, Amir Hossain Khan, Chairman, BDMS, Alhaj Abdus Salam, President, BPDCCA, Abu Motaleb, Director, FBCCI, Akhtaruzzaman Manju, Director, FBCCI, Helaluddin Helal, President, Dhaka Dokan Malik Samity (DDMS) and Khoka Sikdar, Past President, BPSM are also seen in the picture.

Life in Chhit Baraibari

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diplomatic crisis.

Out of 217 houses in the village, some 50 houses were damaged in the fight, 35 completely. Most of these were destroyed when BSF charged mortar shells.

However, the border clash has left a deeper scar in the minds of the villagers. A sense of insecurity coupled with lack of belongingness now prevails in the shattered village.

"While border disputes have occurred often over the years, residents of Chhit Baraibari never witnessed such a bloody battle in the past," said a BDR official requesting anonymity. Following the April 18 fight, people escaped from their village and stayed away till Sunday, he added.

"Living here has always been troublesome," said Azimuddin, a middle-aged farmer of the village. "In Chhit Baraibari, we often face

Indo-Bangla border trade normal

BSS, Dhaka

Trans-border trade between Bangladesh and India remained unaffected with busy transactions in the major land ports despite the worst ever frontier skirmishes between the two countries, officials said.

"The trans-border movement at land ports Benapole remained normal despite the recent flare-up in Roumari frontiers," a customs official at the crucial Benapole land port said, yesterday.

He added that the movement of goods train between Bangladesh and India remained normal while buses carried their usual load of passengers in the Dhaka-Calcutta-Dhaka route.

"The operations here were not disrupted even for a day," an immigration official at Benapole said.

Similar reports were also received here from Sona Masjid land port at Shibganj in greater Rajshahi and Bhomra land port at Satkhira.

Reports from Sylhet, however, said activities of Tamabil land port near the troubled Padua village were disrupted for a week since April 12 when tensions flared up. But normalcy was restored quickly relieving particularly the coal traders as consignments continued to come from the Indian side.

Customs officials at Benapole said 268 Indian trucks moved into Bangladesh territory on April 19, 187 on April 20 and 276 on April 21 and 165 trucks on April 22. During the last four days 400 trucks carried jute to India.

Authorities at both sides of the border were very watchful so that no hindrance is created in import and export between the two neighbouring countries, they said.

Meanwhile, the border forces of

ECNEC

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ment of DC hill park, construction of officers' club auditorium in Dhaka, establishment of training academy and testing laboratory of Public Works Department, construction of Benapole Parjatan Motel and traffic sign supply and installation to facilitate traffic movement in Dhaka.

Finance Minister Shah A M S Kibria, Education Minister A H S K Sadique, Food Minister Amir Hossain Amu, Industries Minister Toifal Ahmed, Agriculture Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury, Science and Technology Minister Mohammed Nuruddin Khan, CHT Affairs Minister Kalpanarajan Chakma and State Minister for Religious Affairs Maulana Nurul Islam and officials concerned were present at the meeting.

Attack on newsmen on rise

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Billah had filed a news report claiming that doctors left a seriously injured patient waiting for seven hours two days back.

Journalists covering opposition-sponsored general strikes were often attacked, both by political activists and police.

Reporting on the country's highly politicised university campuses is also hazardous, as student activists routinely threaten and harass journalists who probe too closely into their affairs. In the southern districts, newsmen faced violent reprisals for their reporting on criminal syndicates and militant activities.

In February 1999, shortly after a BNP-led general strike during which several journalists were assaulted and harassed, the home minister sent a memorandum to the country's police chiefs asking them to guarantee safety and security of media people, and to "ensure that nobody should obstruct newsmen from performing their professional duties smoothly".

But the instruction apparently failed to protect the journalists.

Border tension: Vajpayee govt under fire

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Opposition Congress was much more muted. Leader of the Opposition and Congress chief Sonia Gandhi was careful in her remarks in Lok Sabha, lower house of parliament, and said government should probe if there was any intelligence failure or slackness in vigilance for the gruesome killing of BSF men.

She said acts of "criminal adventurism" should not be allowed to jeopardize Indo-Bangla relations.

Opposition leaders Mulayam Singh Yadav of Samajwadi Party and Raghuvans Prasad of Rashtriya Janata Dal accused Vajpayee government of trying to improve India's relations with neighbouring countries by "playing with" the lives of Indians soldiers.

But there is general appreciation in diplomatic and political circles here that the political leadership of India and Bangladesh displayed considerable restraint in dealing with a sensitive development at the border after the skirmish.

Meanwhile, Assam state Chief Minister Prafulla Kumar Mahanta met Vajpayee and Home Minister L K Advani on Monday and demanded strengthening of BSF presence along the border with Bangladesh following last week's stand-off. He also sought the setting up of more BSF border outposts with closer proximity to each other.

Kalidas Murder Case Babul Mollah remanded again

UNB, Bograhat

Babul Mollah, one of the accused in Advocate Kalidas Borol murder case, was again placed on a six-day police remand.

Babul Mollah was earlier placed on a two-day remand after his arrest on April 18.

RMCH intern docs continue strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Intens of the Rajshahi Medical College Hospital (RMCH) observed strike for the third day yesterday, demanding security of the doctors on the hospital campus.

The RMCH Intern Doctors Association went on a strike, when a female doctor's gold chain was snatched by some miscreants on the campus Saturday night.

Gen Stackpole visits Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Lt General (ret) Henry C Stackpole who commanded 'operation sea angel' in Chittagong after the cyclonic disaster of April 29 in 1991, yesterday arrived in the port city and visited a cyclone shelter at Patenga and other coastal areas here.

Talking to the press men here at Patenga Stackpole said that he was impressed to find a substantial increase of facilities here to face the disasters.

"In 1991 when I came here, these facilities were not available while there was more devastation than in a war," he said.

Replying to a question, Stackpole said "I have come to see the facilities and situation here."

Second day of hartal

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house at Natun Bazar slum under Mirpur Section 13 at 12:45 pm. They all were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) in a critical condition.

Hospital sources said, Badal and Karim lost their left eyes in the explosion while Sumon's left hand was blown away.

Four petrol bombs and bomb-making materials were also recovered from the spot. The bombs were being made to use during the hartal, police claimed.

Police constables Abdur Rashid and Mokhtar Hossain were injured when a bomb was thrown on them at Nababpur in Sutrapur thana at 7:45 pm. They were admitted to the DMCH.

DMCH arrested Shamim Mahbub and Jasin from Shabbagh area at 12:55 pm as they were carrying four bombs reportedly to throw on the running vehicles.

They also arrested Nahid, Mohammad Ali, Iqbal Akbar Robin and Ahsanullah with firearms during the hartal in the city.

Police recovered 24 bombs from Sramajibi Hospital compound at 1:30 am and another 15 from Agargaon Jahangir Slum at 3 am.

Yesterday's hartal passed off without any major incident of violence in and outside the capital where the presence of pro-hartal activists was much less than on

BDR-BSF clash Villagers start returning home

BSS, Roumari

Despite the reinforced vigilance of both Bangladesh and Indian border guards on the frontline at Roumari, the villagers, who fled their homes during the last week's skirmishes, started returning home.

"More than 70 per cent people of 35 border villages have returned home as the two sides have enforced a complete ceasefire since Friday," an official of the Roumari Upazila Administration said.

UNO of Roumari Abdul Quaium Malek Sardar said that his office had so far distributed four tonnes of rice for those who returned home.

The BDR officials said peace was prevailing in the area despite some tensions.

Meanwhile, BDR sources said they recovered some weapons including shells and wireless sets during searches in Baraibari village after the ceasefire.

They hinted that the war machines might be returned to the BSF during the next flag meetings.

Transfers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Badiur Rahman, Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division of Local Government and Rural Development and Cooperatives Ministry, has been transferred as Chairman of Land Appeal Board (LAB).

According to establishment division sources yesterday, former chairman of LAB Dhiraj Kumar Nath has replaced Rahman as the new secretary of the division.

Badiur Rahman was made Secretary, Rural Development and Cooperatives Division on October 22.