

PM's meet with some NGOs

'Allegations against ADAB false, baseless'

UNB, Dhaka

ADAB, the apex coordinating body of NGOs, yesterday said discriminating attitude towards any NGO based on assumptions is not an indicator of the government's impartiality.

Referring to a recent meeting between the Prime Minister and some NGO chiefs, ADAB in a press release said, "Government has indirectly convicted some NGOs without giving them opportunity to participate in the meeting for self-defence, which is clearly subversive to justice."

The Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh said ADAB was not informed about the meeting. It said the meeting was unilaterally "convicted" some NGOs including ADAB, which were not present in the meeting, where "baseless and false allegations" were made against ADAB.

The release said ADAB did not write any letter to the donors regarding the harassment of NGOs, it only gave a press statement based on the information received

from members and on press reports.

The NGO chiefs who participated in the meeting by no means represented ADAB and the NGO sector as a whole, the release said adding that representatives from the NGOs who are not ADAB members were also present in the meeting.

"It is really painful that government has invited the director of ADAB in the meeting whereas ADAB leaders who are directly elected by the NGOs were not invited."

However, ADAB welcomed the call of the Prime Minister to the NGOs for not getting involved in party politics. As far as ADAB is concerned, NGOs were never involved in party politics.

"ADAB strongly believes that NGOs should not be involved in party politics."

ADAB also welcomed the Prime Minister's commitment to take NGOs' opinion in formulating the NGO Policy and hoped that it will be involved in the process of formulating the policy.



Visitors at a painting exhibition of Poliakov Vasily and Persidskiy Konstantin at the Russian Cultural Centre in the city yesterday. The cultural centre organised the exhibition to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and Bangladesh.

PHOTO STAR

Law & order situation improves, claims govt

BSS, Dhaka

The incidents of mugging, extortion, violence against women and children have sharply decreased as the 100-day programme of the present government is nearing completion.

According to Home Ministry statistics, 838 crimes, including hijacking, extortion, interference in tender process, were recorded in the last quarter (April-June) of Awami League regime last year. The number of such incidents came down to 394 in the first quarter (October-December) of the BNP-led four-party alliance government.

Simultaneous efforts made by the Home and the Law Ministries helped bring positive effect on the development of human rights as well as law and order situation, according to the officials.

The reported incidents of rape were fewer by 99 from the last quarter of Awami League rule to the first quarter of the alliance government. The number of rapes was 848 during April-June last year, which came down to 749 in October-December.

The number of recorded incidents of violence against women was 3,425 in the last quarter of

Awami League regime, which stood at 3,160 in the first quarter of the new government. Violence against women included rape, acid attack, and torture.

There were 127 crimes against children during the last quarter of Awami League tenure, which came down to 91 during October-December last year.

Besides, terrorist activities have reduced significantly in this short span of time.

According to the Home Ministry sources, the number of mugging came down from 281 to 145, extortion from 101 to 77, interference in tender process from 13 to 2, damage to vehicles from 127 to 26, kidnapping from 21 to 16, terrorist activities from 275 to 115, and false cases from 5 to 1.

The human rights situation in the country has also improved considerably. Three thousand political activists who were languishing in jails without trial were released.

On January 7, the cabinet approved a proposal to repeal the black law - Public Safety Act (PSA). The government hopes that the winter session of the Jatiya Sangsad, beginning on January 31, will see the death of the PSA.

Meanwhile, the government has received a list of 259 people who were killed in various political clashes during the five-year rule of the AL government.

According to the decision of a cabinet meeting, the four-party alliances would organise an anti-terrorism national convention in the capital. Collection of the list of the persons killed for political reasons or vengeance is a part of that move.

According to officials, police have seized about 1200 illegal arms and arrested 421 listed terrorists till January 12.

A home ministry report said even an MP of the ruling BNP, the son of a minister, the brother of an MP and local members of the BNP who were allegedly involved in different kinds of crimes have been arrested as the government is pledge-bound to curb terrorism.

"The law enforcement agencies have been directed to implement strictly all measures of legal actions against the violators," according to the report.

Officials said, the government has already started working to set up a permanent 'watchdog' body - Human Rights Commission - to improve human rights.

Bomb blast at CPB rally Punishment to killers demanded

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Communist Party (CPB) yesterday demanded exemplary punishment to the killers responsible for bomb explosion at the grand rally of the party during the rule of Awami League.

Four CPB workers were killed and 50 others injured in a powerful bomb explosion at a CPB grand rally at the Paltan Maidan on January 20 last year. One of the injured died later. The victims were Himangsu, Hashem, Majid, Bipradas and Moktar.

The CPB leaders raised the demand at a rally held at the city's Muktangan yesterday afternoon. CPB has been observing the countrywide demonstration day marking the incident.

Chaired by party president

Manzurul Ahsan Khan, the rally was addressed by General Secretary Mujahidul Islam Selim, president members Shahidullah Chowdhury, Morshed Ali, Abdul Malek, Manisha Majumdar, Abdul Wadud Nayan, Ruhin Hossain Prince and Hasan Tareq Chowdhury Sohel.

Manzurul Ahsan Khan said, Sheikh Hasina did not hold trial for the Paltan killings. She used the killing incident as a political tool while harbouring the terrorists, he said.

The CPB chief urged the people to observe hartal on February 2 to protest price hike of essential commodities including petrol, oil, gas, electricity and water.

A one-minute silence was observed in memory of the victims.



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WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi division and the region of Tangail, Mymensingh and Sylhet today.

Weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country Met office said adding that moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins and coastal belt and light fog may occur elsewhere over the country during the early morning.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, it predicted.

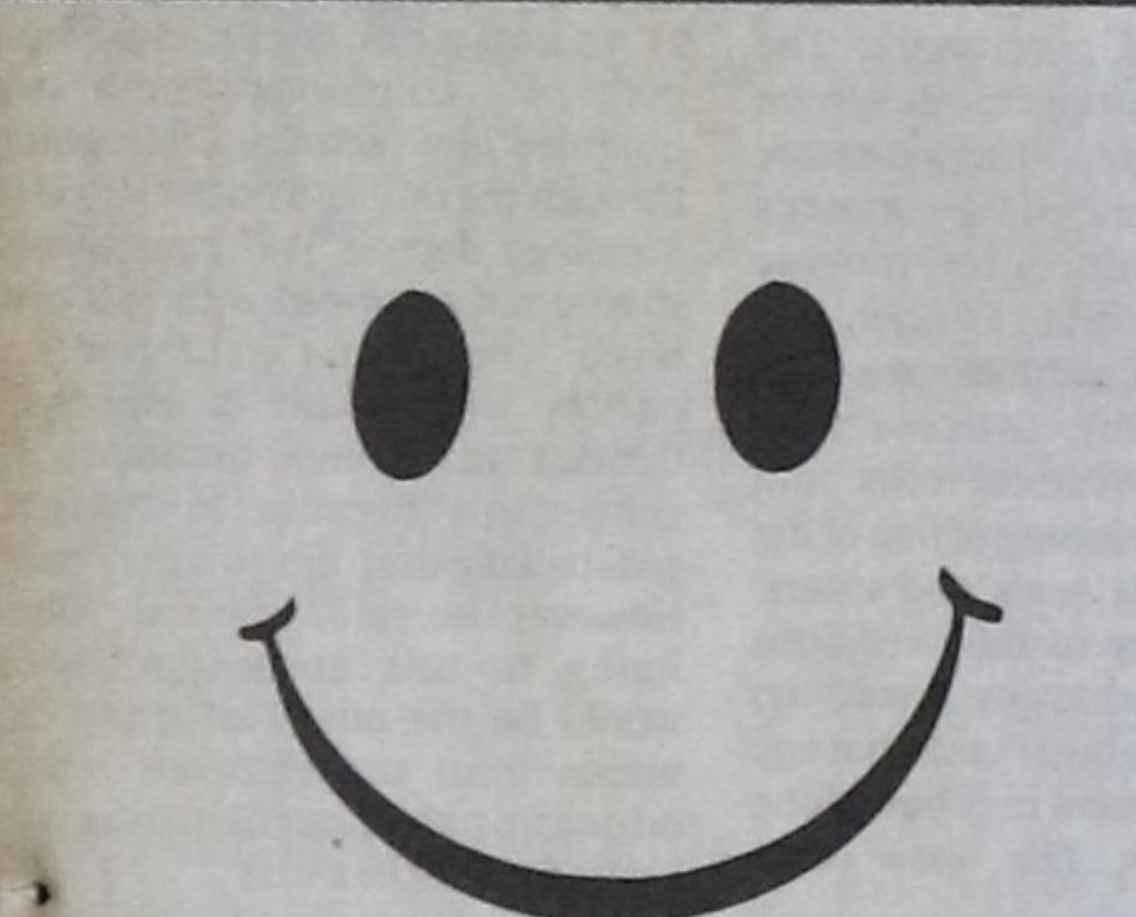
Country's highest temperature 30.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rangamati and Sitakunda and the lowest 11.2 degree also at Sitakunda.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5.37 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.43 am.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.5	17.6	96	72
Chittagong	29.2	15.5	80	83
Rajshahi	25.3	16.2	98	87
Khulna	29.3	17.0	96	74
Barisal	28.5	14.5	96	82
Sylhet	28.8	16.8	88	64

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3 muggers beaten up in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mob beat up three muggers who tried to flee after robbing two women of Tk 50,000 near Darus Salam police box at Mirpur in the city yesterday.

The muggers who were in an auto-rickshaw also hurled a cracker at a traffic sergeant, leaving him injured, as he tried to intercept the vehicle.

Local people caught the three - Mohammad Jasim, Osman Gani and Mohammad Milon - in Khejurbagan area and beat them up after other policemen started chasing them hearing the alarm.

The two women were travelling in a rickshaw when the gang attacked them.

The traffic sergeant, Minzanur Rahman Mizan, and the muggers have been sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

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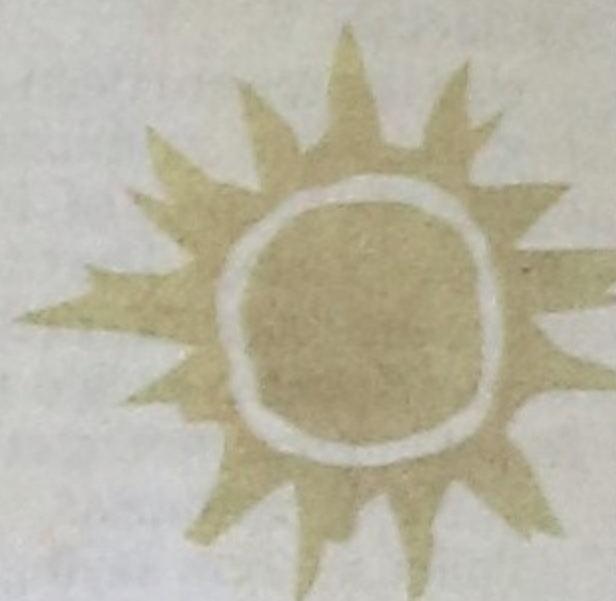
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