



No change in temperature

UNB, Dhaka

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

No appreciable change in day temperature is expected over the country, Met Office said predicting gradual increase of rainfall activities in next two days.

Country's highest temperature 41.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and the lowest 21.0 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital today at 6:37 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:13 am.

Highest and lowest 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	35.4	28.5	77	49
Chittagong	34.0	29.5	82	83
Rajshahi	36.6	29.0	66	83
Khulna	38.7	29.8	71	--
Barisal	35.0	29.4	77	74
Sylhet	26.8	21.0	98	91
Cox's Bazar	34.2	29.2	83	89

Mystery shrouds death of Sylhet JSD leader

UNB, Sylhet

Mystery shrouds the death of a leader of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) who was found dead at his residence in the town Monday night. Abdul Quaiyum Chowdhury, 52, organising secretary of JSD district unit, used to live alone at the house in Kashtaghar area of the town.

Police recovered the body at 4:00 pm yesterday and sent it to Osmany Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

The reason behind his death could not be known immediately but the male and female servants of the deceased went into hiding after the death, police said.

Police torture

FROM PAGE 1 police of Nayanaganj, said Fazlul was suffering from high blood pressure, which caused his death. He refuted the allegation of police torture.

Family members said they would field a case against the police officials concerned. Meanwhile, rickshaw-puller Mohammad Alam was picked up by the Detectives Branch of police from Baro Gram in the city's Kamrangirchar area and later he was handed over to the Kamrangirchar Police Station a week ago.

The victim was sent to the Dhaka Central Jail after allegedly being tortured in police custody. He was shifted to the DMCH as his condition deteriorated at about 12:45pm on Monday, but was declared dead on arrival, hospital sources said.

Jamil, brother of the victim, alleged that Alam died from police torture at the Kamrangirchar Police Station.

The duty officer of the Kamrangirchar Police Station told The Daily Star last night that the victim was arrested a week ago for his alleged drug addiction and was sent to the central jail.

He refuted police torture on the victim.

Jahangir murder

FROM PAGE 12 Jahangir. On the evening of March 18 of 1998, Ershad sent Jamai Faruque, Liaquat Lashkar and Noor-e-Alam to his residence, Swarnakamol, to bring Jahangir Master to ice factory at Skid ghat.

Jahangir was brought to Shikdar's office at Skid ghat at about 7:30 pm and strangled by Shikdar and his accomplices at about 8:30 pm.

The body was slashed into pieces and later dumped into Bhairab river as learnt from judicial confession of Noor-e-Alam recorded under Section 164 of CrPC in the court of CMM on September 2, 1999, only two days after his surrender to the police.

Abdul Mannan, father of Jahangir, filed a case with Khulna thana on September 28 of 1999 accusing Shikdar, Jamai Faruque, Liaquat Lashkar, Noor-e-Alam and Sultan Mahmud of killing his son.

The murder case was later transferred to DB of KMP assigning Inspector Shurawardy Khan as IO. After investigation, IO submitted the chargesheet to CMM's court on January 24, 2000 against all the five FIR-named accused.

The case was then put on trial in the court of Additional District and Session Judge (One).

The charge against the accused was framed on February 27, 2000. A total of 27 prosecution witnesses were examined during trial of the case.

Judges

FROM PAGE 1 eration, law ministry sources said.

However, the prime minister went through the file before and recommended the confirmation of one additional judge. Later, it was sent to the president.

The term for the five additional judges expires on May 27. The term of three of the additional judges were previously extended for one year in last October.

Meanwhile, the president and the secretary of the Bangladesh Supreme Court Bar Association in a statement said the traditional constitutional norms have been violated by not regularising the three judges as recommended by the chief justice.

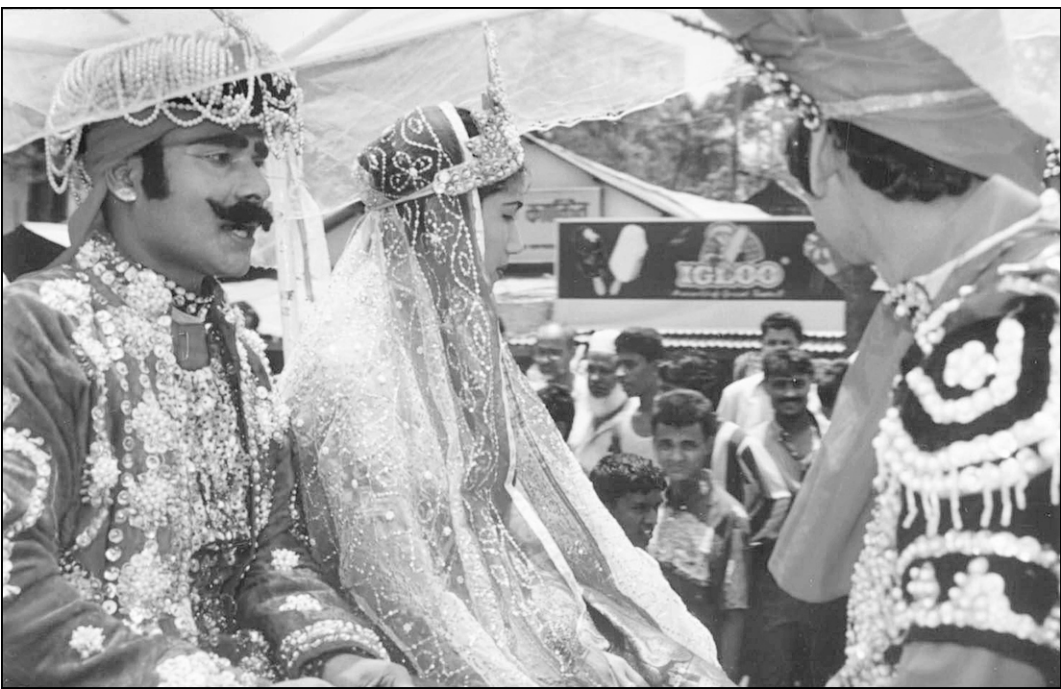
They said it is the chief justice who evaluates the performance of the judges and disregard to his assessment has acted against the independence of the judiciary. They demanded immediate regularisation of the judges recommended by the chief justice.

Phone charge

FROM PAGE 1 19,000 crore will have Tk 7540 crore in project aid and Tk 11,460 crore in local currency. This year's project aid component is Tk 9590 crore.

"If the donors do not provide fund or withdraw projects, we will frame the budget with our own resources on the basis of people's participation," Saifur reportedly told his colleagues.

The meeting also decided to expedite the recruitment of 20,000 teachers, some policemen and army personnel.



Students of the Chittagong Medical College in a colourful procession on the campus on the rag day yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Petrobangla refutes

FROM PAGE 12 contact (PSC) on January 11, 1995. This PSC was naturally terminated on January 11, 1998 for failure to fulfil the minimum work commitment.

Following the blowout, a four-member probe committee which included an expert of Occidental looked for the cause of the devastating blowout that burnt all the gas in that structure for three months. The committee found Occidental's negligent operation and faulty gas well design as the main causes of the accident.

The fire of the blowout was so intense that it could be seen even from Sylhet.

But soon after the probe committee report was submitted, a section in the government backed the company to get away with its fault. The report was kept strictly shelved also from those who investigated and even the members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Energy.

After the Occidental PSC was terminated, the US company lobbied and persuaded the government to give the PSC an extension—though there was no such contrac-

tual provision.

After eight months, the government 'extended' the contract adding some new clauses through a Supplementary Agreement. Under these new clauses, Petrobangla gets five per cent more share of gas if it is found in the same geological structure of Magurchara. These clauses were added as a bonus to Petrobangla for allowing Occidental to work in the same area even after its failure to fulfil the contract.

A similar scenario prevailed as regards the environmental damage claim. When the government was delaying the signing of the Supplementary Agreement, the environment ministry claimed an environmental damage compensation of Taka 612 crore. At one stage, Occidental agreed to pay the compensation if a third party expert assessed the damage.

But later, the government did not go ahead with the environmental damage claims or the probe committee report for mysterious reasons.

When Unocal took over Occidental's concerns, it automatically inherited the latter's liabilities. The government did not do anything

to make Occidental accountable about Magurchara when it left the country.

Meanwhile Petrobangla made no compensation claim for gas damage as the probe committee report on Magurchara was given a 'classified' status by the then energy secretary Toufiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury.

Whether Petrobangla demanded any compensation or not, Unocal itself generated controversy by making an arbitrary claim that till August 31, 2000, it paid a total of Taka 332.32 crore as compensation for the Magurchara blowout.

Upon a clarification sought by Petrobangla, Unocal then said a major chunk of this 'compensation' was supposedly paid through the supplementary agreement which said that an additional five per cent share would be given to Petrobangla if gas was discovered in the same geological structure of Magurchara.

The matter was closed after exchange of a couple of letters in which Petrobangla asked Unocal to refrain from making any fictitious claims as regards compensation.

2 arrested in Ctg with 'hundi' worth Tk 21 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two persons were arrested for carrying a consignment of 'hundi' (money sent through informal channel) amounting to Tk 21 lakh at Sugandha under Panchlaisha thana yesterday afternoon.

The arrested persons are Imran, 24, of Mollapara under Patiya upazila, and Nazrul, 16, of Rupnagar under Satkania upazila in Chittagong.

Following their statements, police summoned three other persons to the police station for interrogation. They are Abu Taher, a businessman at the Reazuddin Bazaar in the city, and his two friends—Alamgir and Faruki Azam.

Sources said a police team on patrol intercepted a rickshaw carrying Imran and Nazrul at the entrance to the Sugandha Residential Area at around 2.00pm. After a search, police seized Tk 21 lakh in 500-taka notes from them.

Police believe the arrested persons are members of a 'hundi' syndicate. Imran and Nazrul told the police that Abu Taher, the businessman, owned the money.

Interrogated by police in the room of the officer-in-charge, Abu Taher said the money was meant for business purposes.

Investigation into the matter is on, police said.

Injured Dyer

FROM PAGE 1 Newcastle United's Dyer has made a spectacular recovery from a knee ligament injury suffered on the final day of the English Premiership season this month against Southampton.

He was originally told he would need a 'miracle' recovery to make the World Cup finals in South Korea and Japan, which start May 31.

If teams suffer an injury between the FIFA deadline and their first matches, they can still replace a player.

In England's case that means Sinclair could return to the England squad in Japan as late as June 1 ahead of their June 2 Group F opener against Sweden in Saitama if Dyer fails to prove his fitness.

Editors on verdict

FROM PAGE 1 Manavzamin, Sangbad, Janakantha, Jugantar and Ittefaq—in the contempt case was ignored, they regretted.

"We preferred that the Supreme Judicial Council act for protection of transparency and image of the judiciary. We have a firm and unwavering belief in independence of the judiciary and express our highest respect for it. Equally, we have a firm commitment to the freedom of press and the people's right to know."

"The court and the press have common roles to play in many cases. And, the matter (taped conversation between Ershad and a High Court judge) was published by different newspapers being fully conscious of the judiciary's image. Our objective was not to undermine the judiciary but to help uphold its image by revealing the flaws."

In their statement, the editors hoped that the issue (contempt of court) would be considered, given the dignity of the court, freedom of newspapers and freedom of expression. "We're determined to protect the independence of the press at any cost."

Signatories to the statement are Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury of The Bangladesh Observer, Mahubul Alam of The Independent,

Moazzem Hossain of The Financial Express, AM Mofazzal Karim of The New Nation, Rahat Khan of the Ittefaq, Motiur Rahman of the Prothom Alo, Bazlur Rahman of the Sangbad, Golam Sarwar of the Jugantar, Atiqullah Khan Masud of the Janakantha, Kazi Shahed Ahmed of the Aker Kagoj, Benazir Ahmed of the Bhorer Kagoj, Motiur Rahman Chowdhury of the Manavzamin, Kazi Siraz Uddin Ahmed of the Dinkal, Md Zakaria Khan of the Banglabazar Patrika, Mahfuz Anam of The Daily Star and AMM Bahauddin of the Inqilab.

Road accidents

FROM PAGE 12 others travelling aboard the truck died on the spot.

In Sirajganj, three people were killed and three others injured when a jeep fell into a ditch from a bridge on Dhaka-Bogra highway yesterday.

Police said the mishap occurred when the Dhaka-bound jeep from Bogra fell into the ditch, breaking the railing of Kamarbari bridge in Raiganj upazila at 2:30 pm.

Jeep driver Mosharraf, passengers Partha and Bepari died on way to hospital. The injured persons were admitted to Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital.

Passport, air ticket snatched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Miscreants took away passport, air ticket, some Saudi rials and valuables from a Saudi bound person and two of his companions at Baku Shah Market in the city's Dhanmondi area yesterday.

The three persons—Moahmmad Yunus Ali, Shahid and Mojibur—came to the city yesterday from Kanta village in Savar. Yunus returned to the country from Saudi Arabia recently and was going there again last night.

They went to the market in the afternoon. The gang members offered them 'tea' which contained poisonous substances. As a result, they became unconscious and the elements then took away Yunus' passport (number—Q04040490) air ticket, some rials, gold chain and other valuables.

Police rescued the victims and sent them to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Hospital sources said their condition was 'critical.'

Morshed, Powell

FROM PAGE 12 campaign against global terrorism and wants to join the reconstruction process in Afghanistan.

Asked if Bangladesh would send soldiers to Afghanistan, Hasan Ahmed said Bangladesh was ready to send its troops anywhere under the aegis of the UN peacekeeping mission.

Asked if minority issue was discussed during the Morshed-Powell meet, the Ambassador replied in the negative.

He said the Foreign Minister was warmly received by the US Secretary of State and the talks held in a very cordial atmosphere were "very fruitful".

Private terminal

FROM PAGE 12 of commerce, shipping, finance and law and secretary to the president represented the government side at the negotiation, while Deputy Managing Director of the SSA Ashfaq J Rahman and other officials represented it.

Earlier in 1998, the government had signed a deal with the SSA for building two private container terminals at Patenga in Chittagong and at Pangaon in Dhaka. But the issue whipped up a debate and sparked agitation by trade unions at Chittagong port.

The deal for the container terminal at Pangaon was almost finalised with land lease and operating accords concluded. However, contract for the container terminal at Patenga could not be finalised due to opposition from the trade unions backed by Awami League and BNP.

11th PW cross-examined in Jail Killing Case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Mohammad Mocklesur Rahman, 11th prosecution witness in the jail killing case, was cross-examined yesterday at the special court set up near the Dhaka Central Jail.

After the cross-examination for about four hours by defence lawyers, Judge Ahmed Jamil Mostafa adjourned the hearing till May 28.

During the cross-examination, Mocklesur Rahman told the court that he is now working as a personal staff of the joint secretary (administration) in the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs.

"I was a personal assistant of the military secretary (Brig Mushrul Haq) to the then president. In the morning of August 15, 1975, I came to know that President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members and relatives were assassinated."

"At about 3 pm on the same day, I went to my office at Bangabhaban where I saw Khondakar Mushtaque Ahmed at his office room as president."

"At that time, I saw Taheruddin Thakur, KM Obaidur Rahman, Shah Moazzem Hossain, Mahbubul Alam Chashi, Maj Farook, Maj Rashid, Maj Dalim, Maj Huda, Maj Noor, Maj Shahriar, Maj Pasha, Maj Rashid Chowdhury and Risalad Moslem there. The army officers stayed at the Bangabhaban. Khondakar Mush-taque knew nothing but Mahbubul Alam Chashi."

"At the end of October 1975, tension was going on between the army officers staying at Bangabhaban and political leaders over leadership. It appeared to me that their conduct could create any serious incident at any time", Rahman said.

He further told the court that on the night of November 2, 1975, he was on duty at the Bangabhaban as a personal assistant of Military Secretary Brig Mushrul Huq. At about 7:30pm on the same night, Capt Moslem came to his (witness's) office and took him to a room

on the first floor where he saw army officers Farook, Rashid, Dalim, Noor, Huda, Pasha, Mohiuddin, Sharful Hossain, Maj Shahriar, Capt Majed, Capt Khairuzzaman, Lt Nazmul, Dafadar Marfat Ali, office assistant Abul Hashem Mridha, he said.

"They were discussing about the four national leaders—Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Mansur Ali and AHM Quamruzzaman—detained at the Dhaka Central Jail. Maj Dalim and Maj Rashid asked me to collect telephone numbers of the Dhaka Central Jail. They were also discussing that on that night (the night of November 2) the task at the Dhaka Central Jail would be completed", the witness told the court.

"At about 9 pm, Mushrul Haq called me at his office room where I saw Taheruddin Thakur, Obaidur Rahman, Shah Moazzem, and Nurul Islam. At about 11pm I left the office. On November 3, 1975, I went to my office and came to know that Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Mansur Ali and AHM Quamruzzaman were killed in Dhaka Central Jail", the witness said.

Special public prosecutors Sirajul Haq, Anisul Haq, Quamrul Islam and Mosarraf Hossain Kajol appeared for the state while Advocates Hazi Nazrul Islam, TM Akbar, Abdul Majid Munshi, Sharfuddin Khan Mukul and Arshadul Haq appeared for the accused.

Four of the 21 accused in the jail killing case, now detained at the Dhaka Central Jail, were produced before the court during the hearing. They are Taheruddin Thakur, Lt Col (dismissed) Syed Farookur Rahman, Lt Col (Retd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan and Maj (Retd) Bazul Huda.

Four other accused—KM Obaidur Rahman MP, Nurul Islam Manzoor, Shah Moazzem Hossain and Maj (Retd) Khairuzzaman—now on bail, were also present in the court during the hearing.

Business interest

FROM PAGE 12 some time by gaining distributorship of certain channels. Those quarters, in connivance with certain cable operators, allegedly persuaded the authorities concerned to impose ban on some popular channels on the pretext of erosion of moral values by alien cultures.

However, the option of revoking the ban was kept open as evident from the information minister's statement that the government would reconsider the channel issue if members of the public demand so.

Sunday's ban on 13 channels and 'free-to-air' (FTA) pays had immediate and tremendous reaction in various sections of the society, including high ups in the government.

Sources said some senior ministers had talks with Minister for Information Tariqul Islam on the issue and two distributors also protested the ban and called for immediate review of them decision. Some cabinet members felt that when there was no public demand for banning any channel, such a move should not have been taken by a ministry. Rather, if the issue was so pressing, it could be raised at a cabinet meeting.

A representative of Nationwide told The Daily Star yesterday that by bringing allegations of rate increase and VAT evasion against the distributors, certain cable operators had long been lobbying for closure of the popular channels. Nationwide is the distributor of 27 channels belonging to Star, Sony and Zee groups.

Humayun Majid, Proprietor of Translink, distributor of three other channels—ESPN, Star Sports and HBO—said "HBO (Home Box Office), an American channel, is the world's number one in home entertainment. Certain quarters were vying for distributorship of HBO for quite some time, but I was awarded its distributorship recently." This led them to 'conspire', he said without giving details.

Majid said that if the government really wanted to preserve and uphold moral values of the society, it should have banned all channels airing obscene programmes, no matter whether those are American or Indian or Bangladeshi channels. It may be pointed out that President of the Cable Operators Association of Bangladesh (COAB) SM Anwar Parvez expressed disap-

pointment at what he said snapping of channel lines by a distributor out of vengeance. But in Sunday's meeting, he supported banning of the channels while the distributors opposed it.

M/S Nationwide Communication snapped connection of Dhaka Cable Vision (DCV), one of the largest cable operators, on Monday night. DCV proprietor, Md Arif told this correspondent yesterday that some 8,000 households in Dhanmondi, Lalmita, Kalabagan, Elephant Road, Azampur, BUET and DU areas could not view the channels because of connection snapping.

The same thing happened in Lalbagh, Kotwali, Sutrapur areas in the old part of the city.

An official of Nationwide said they snapped connections as some of the cable operators did not pay their dues.

While cable operators in old Dhaka have been asking for tailor-made package of channels, distributors argued that they should subscribe the channels under the existing package system. Package system means, one cable operator has to take a certain number of channels in one package and pay for the whole. However, some cable operators prefer to take one or two channels from one package and two or three other channels from another package.

In the context of rapid change in government decisions regarding satellite channels, the COAB convened a meeting of its executive body on Saturday.

Its president Anwar Parvez said if uncertainty persists and distributors continue to press for more pay channels, "We have to quit this business."

On-arrival visa

FROM PAGE 12 In the absence of written communication on the matter, the immigration officials have to depend on newspaper reports and in case of doubt, call up relevant senior officials.

Some foreign nationals got visa after they obtained entry permission and necessary papers from departments concerned following intervention by senior officials, the sources said.

Heat wave kills 7

FROM PAGE 1 ment forecasts no relief today as there would not be any appreciable change in the day's temperature.

Yesterday, the highest temperature was recorded in Jessore at 41 degrees Celsius. The lowest temperature of 21 degrees Celsius was recorded in Sylhet.

But the Dhaka city, which remained under a canopy of clouds, had traces of shower totalling a negligible 0.5 mm. It, however, failed to make any dent on the sultry weather.

Citizens continued to suffer under the twin onslaught of heat wave and frequent power failures.

The capital recorded a maximum of 35.4 degrees Celsius and a minimum of 28.8 degrees Celsius yesterday.

The met office forecasts that rainfall may increase gradually

during the next two days, which may cool down the weather.

Doctors said during exercise or work in a hot environment the body tries to cool off by sweating and dilating the skin's blood vessels. Dilation of the blood vessels brings blood to the skin surface and increases the rate of radiation of heat from the body.

"When these mechanisms are overwhelmed and the body is no longer able to put up with the excessive heat, heat exhaustion comes into play," explained Prof. Mahmudur Rahman, a doctor of medicine.

He also said when body temperature exceeds 39-40 degrees Celsius, a person suffers hypercisia— as the body cannot cope with heat any longer—and collapses.