



Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Chittagong, Khulna and Barisal divisions during the next 12 hours till 6pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 36.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 21.6 degree Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6.49 pm today and rises at 5:20 am tomorrow.

The 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	33.3	25.8	80	74
Chittagong	30.4	27.0	79	66
Rajshahi	36.3	28.4	83	75
Khulna	35.0	28.5	88	80
Barisal	34.5	24.8	89	81
Sylhet	29.0	21.6	96	85
Cox's Bazar	33.3	27.2	86	95

Rape case filed against SI of Badda thana

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A rape case against a sub-inspector (SI) of the Badda Police Station in the city, - Nuruzzaman - was filed with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka, yesterday.

After hearing, Magistrate A K M Abdus Salam Miah took the 'complaint case' into cognizance and directed the officer-in-charge (OC) of Badda thana to take legal action against the accused after proper investigation.

The victim, Mosammat Lovely Akhter of South Badda, complained to the court that at about 10:30 pm on June 26, Nuruzzaman entered her residence. He raped her and also threatened her not to disclose this to anyone.

But ignoring the threat, the complainant said, she screamed for help. At this, Abdus Samad, a neighbour, rushed there. But the SI sent message to the thana to send a police team to the spot. On arrival there, the police team arrested her and Abdus Samad and filed a cheating case against them, the complainant added.

PBCP cadres abduct engr in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Armed cadres of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP) have abducted Assistant Engineer of Koyra upazila.

The incident took place on Thursday evening in front of Hatiadanga Public School while engineer Milon was supervising construction of a culvert.

Contractor Abdul Mannan, 40, and supervisor Rafiqul Islam Pachu, 34, were injured in an armed attack by PBCP cadres when they tried to free engineer Milon from being abducted. Police could not trace him till 7 pm yesterday.

Earlier on Wednesday, PBCP cadres demanded toll of Tk 2 lakh from Milon. But he refused to give in to their demand.

Apparel exporters stage hunger strike today

UNB, Dhaka

Owners of garment and knitwear industries will observe hunger strike today as part of their ongoing agitation for release of pipelined cash incentive and allowing yarn import through back-to-back L/Cs in land ports.

They will assemble in front of the BGMEA Building at Karwan Bazar to stage the hunger strike from 10 am to 5 pm.

Three associations in apparel manufacturers and exporters - BKMEA, BGMEA and BTTLMEA, and association of specialised textile manufacturers - BSTMPIA - announced the action plan on July 9 as all their previous appeals "fell on deaf ears."

The government owes around Tk 450 crore to textile sector as cash incentive, disbursement of which has remained suspended for years. The associations earlier met the Finance and Commerce ministers on several occasions demanding release of the funds. They also marched towards the Prime Minister's Office to get the funds released.

Restriction on yarn import through land port also came as a blow to apparel manufacturers as the seaport imports take time and extend their lead-time for exports.

An FBCCI-brokered negotiation for an amicable way out of the impasse has also failed.

Another association in textile sector, BTMA, however, remains out of the agitation programme.

Bus plunge

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21, of Rangunia and Shah Alam, 41, of Pahartoli area in the city.

Local people recovered two other bodies from Dangerchar, about 700 yards from the accident spot. One of the bodies has been identified as that of Choton Chowdhury, but no details could be known. The other body could not be identified.

Police said bodies of the identified victims have been handed over to their relatives and the unidentified one is with them.

The divers continued their search for bodied in the area when the report was filed yesterday evening.

The bus with about 50 passengers fell into the canal from a bridge after a head-on collision with another vehicle.

Most of the passengers were workers of Young One garments factory, survivors said.

Meanwhile, Peter Bower, Chairman of Young One Group which owns the factory, is learnt to have said that compensation would be given to the injured garment workers and families of those who died in the accident.

Settlement time

FROM PAGE 1

However, the government has decided to disburse Tk 165 crore in provident funds during the second week of August.

Earlier, there was a plan to complete all sorts of payments for the AJM officials, employees and workers within August 7.

Government officials said the initial plan has been changed in order to complete the entire process of payments properly.

State Minister for the Ministry of Industries Rezaul Karim said yesterday, "We have decided on it so that the audit is done correctly and any complaints regarding the payments can be reviewed during the first phase." He is the convener of the golden handshake committee for the AJM.

The Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) has already appointed six chartered accountant firms for the pre-audit of gratuity, provident fund and other benefits of the employees. The audit and payment of gratuity and other benefits would be done simultaneously. Authorities have decided to disburse the money for the provident fund after the audit is complete, the BJMC officials said.

Meanwhile, during the last two days thousands of workers of the recently liquidated AJM have returned to the mills premises for their payments. Most of the workers left the Adamjee area after getting their wages for the last week of June and a month's house rent on July 7.

A cabinet committee meeting on June 24 decided to close down the AJM and put a cap on the huge losses the enterprise had been incurring each year. Its accumulated losses was no less than Tk 1,200 crore. Its current liabilities stand at Tk 750 crore.

From today, all the AJM officials, employees and workers will receive

all their payments through account payee cheques.

According to sources, today's payments will start at 9:00am and continue until the 3,800 retired AJM personnel are paid.

From tomorrow, 472 officials, 1,384 employees and 17,237 workers will receive their gratuity and other benefits. The amount of other benefits would be disbursed on the basis of their service length.

The AJM authorities have classified the workers into five categories on the basis of their service period. Workers serving for more than 25 years would get 13 per cent of their gratuity as other benefits.

Workers serving for 20 to 25 years will get 18 per cent; from 15 to 20 years 22 per cent; from 10 to 15 years 27 per cent; and five to 10 will get 29 per cent of their gratuity as other benefits.

Tomorrow around 1,800 workers of mill No. 1 will get their money of gratuity and other benefits in two separate cheques. Another 1,800 workers of the same mill will be getting their payments on Tuesday and the rest 1,200 on Wednesday.

The golden handshake committee for the AJM at its meeting yesterday decided to stick lists containing the names of the workers and the amount they would get at different points of the AJM, a day before the payment is made. Such a list of the first 1800 workers of mill No. 1 will be stuck today.

The workers of mill No. 2 would start receiving payment from July 18 till July 20 and the workers of mill No. 3 would get paid between July 21 and 23.

The committee yesterday also decided to clear all the payment of the AJM officials and workers who are on LPR on July 31. A committee member told The Daily Star that the number of such officials and workers are not more than 100.

The committee yesterday also decided to provide the workers with transport facilities so that they could get with their money safely.

When contacted, Jute Minister Hafiz Uddin Ahmad told The Daily Star that they have taken all preparations to clear the payment of the officials, employees and workers of the AJM properly.

According to him, the amount for golden handshake would range between Tk 20,000 and Tk 9.5 lakh per person.

12 UPDF men abducted in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Twelve supporters of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) have been abducted allegedly by the activists of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) from five villages under Perachhara Union of Khagrachhari district, said a UPDF press release yesterday.

The abducted UPDF men are Bimal Kanti Chakma, 40, Kujh Bihari Chakma, 46, Neel Ranjan Chakma, 45, Kalabo Chakma, 38, Tuka Chakma, 35, Kala Chakma, 37, Anitya Lal Kheesa, 48, Gyanendu Chakma, 30, Montu Gul Chakma, 40, Neel Purna Chakma, 50, Shakra Kalpa Chakma, 25, and Bin Dhar Tripara, 27.

Of them, Bin Dhar Tripara was abducted on July 9, while the rest 11 were abducted yesterday (Saturday) morning.

New turn in politics

FROM PAGE 1

the MP anticipatory bail and asked to him to appear before the trial court by July 23.

Ali was later shifted to a hospital in the district headquarters as he fell sick at the jail.

A report from Shariatpur said Ali was implicated in the case filed regarding the killing of one Kazi Delwar Hossain in a clash between his supporters and those of an independent candidate, Sultan Mahmud Simon, on August 29 last.

Another case was also filed accusing Simon and others of the killing. Both sides then claimed the dead to be their activist.

Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad and AL President Sheikh Hasina slammed the government for arresting her party member from Milon. But he refused to give in to their demand.

At a hurriedly called press briefing at the party's Dhanmudi office in the evening, Hasina asked the authorities to release Ali before the parliament resumes its session this afternoon.

"We want to see him (Ali) in the parliament before tomorrow's (today's) sitting starts at 5.30pm. Only then will we decide whether or not to go back to the House," an angry Hasina told reporters as the news of Ali's arrest reached Dhaka in the evening.

The opposition leader wondered how the government could arrest Ali, who is a member of the parliamentary standing on private members' bills and resolutions, while the parliament is in session. "They did

not take permission from the Speaker," she said, adding that the law restricts arrest of an MP without approval by the Speaker.

Hasina termed the arrest a fresh assault on the opposition that she alleged has been under continued repression by the coalition government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

Referring to her party's contact with acting Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui, the opposition leader said the Speaker did not know anything about the arrest made at a time when the government invited her party to sit for a dialogue aimed at resolving the political crisis.

"We received the report of arrest when I was meeting my senior colleagues in the party to discuss the matter (the government's fresh offer for a dialogue). Do they at all want us to be in the parliament?" Hasina questioned.

She said the offer of talks was a deception. "It's has been a heinous act that an MP has been arrested while the parliament is in session." The opposition leader also questioned "how many governments were working within the government." "One quarter is seeking discussion with the opposition while the other has an MP arrested..."

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, parliamentary affairs adviser of the prime minister, told the BBC Radio last night that it was not the government but a court that ordered Ali's arrest.

Chowdhury said arrest of an MP does not require permission of the Speaker. "As per law, the court is

supposed to inform the Speaker after a member of parliament is arrested if the parliament is in session," he said, adding that a lawmaker has the immunity not to appear before a court when a parliament session is ongoing.

Referring to his talks with the acting Speaker, Chowdhury further told the BBC in the evening that latter was not informed about the arrest until then.

Terming the arrest a judicial matter, he said: "As far as I know, there was not any order by the government to arrest him (Ali)."

Asked about Hasina's demand for Ali's release, the PM's adviser said they were yet to know the details of the incident. "I myself is trying to contact the local administration."

Meanwhile, the arrest has made the AL's return to parliament uncertain. The opposition party staged a stormy walkout from the parliament Thursday night protesting the Chair's 'biased' role. It later said it would not rejoin the House unless the Speaker allowed it to speak about issues of public concern.

This prompted the acting Speaker to invite the opposition party to a joint meeting with the ruling BNP yesterday morning. But the proposed meeting did not take place as the AL said it would meet the acting Speaker only after the opposition leader gave her nod to the offer on return to Dhaka from her ancestral home in Gopalganj.

Mirpur Road

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Cantonment Sadar Road will remain open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm for light transports under the third diversion.

Moreover, the authorities concerned will hold talks with the authorities of Dhaka Cantonment so that public transports can pass through the cantonment area during peak hours from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

"We took the decisions in view of the temporary sufferings in public life during the period of construction of the fly-over," Sadek Hossain Khoka told the BSS after the meeting.

Referring to the Demonstration Corridor, the mayor said it would require some political involvement to make the long route from Gabtali to Azampur free of non-mechanised transports.

"So we will talk to the elected representatives of the localities. The MPs and ward commissioners of the areas concerned will be invited to the July 22 meeting where the date will be fixed for implementing the Demonstration Corridor project," he added. According to an official source, the DCC was under pressure from the World Bank to implement the Demonstration Corridor project from July 15.

To improve the traffic system in Dhaka city, six routes were selected to make them free of non-mechanised transports. However, the route from Azampur to Gabtali has been selected for implementation first. If this Demonstration Corridor project comes out successful, other routes will also be made free of non-mechanised transports in phases.

The five other routes are: (1) Gabtali-Kalabagan-Sonargaon Hotel Intersection - Shahabagh-Matsabhaban-Gulistan, (2) Mirpur 12-Rokeya Swarani-Taltala-Farmgate-Sonargaon Hotel Intersection-Shahabagh-Gulistan, (3) New Airport Road-Mohakhali-Farmgate, (4) Bangla Motor-Moghbar-Mouchak, Kakrail-Fakirepool-Motijheel, and (5) Progati Swarani-Rampura-Mouchak.

An adequate number of motorised public transports, particularly double-decker buses, will be intro-

duced in every route before stopping the movement of non-mechanised transports through it.

Besides high officials of the DCC, the meeting at Nagrhaban was attended by representatives of the World Bank, Roads and Highways Division, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC), Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (RAJUK), Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) and Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

9 Europeans hurt in grenade attack in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, AFP

At least 12 people, including nine Europeans, suffered minor injuries in a grenade attack in Pakistan's North Western Frontier Province yesterday, police said.

The victims had stopped near an archaeological site in the district of Mansehra, 150 kilometres (93 miles) east of here, when an unidentified man lobbed a grenade at them, a police official told AFP.

The wounded were rushed to a local hospital released after treatment.

"All the injured persons are out of danger," a doctor at the Mansehra District hospital told AFP.

The victims included seven Germans, one Austrian and a Slovak national. A Pakistani national and two Pakistani children were also injured.

Accused in Ratan Sen murder case held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Aminul Islam Shagar, 34, a listed criminal and chargesheeted accused in CPB leader Comrade Ratan Sen murder case was arrested at midnight on Friday.

Acting on a tip-off, Khulna thana police led by SI Belal raided a house at Mirzapur road and arrested Shagar from there.

Six general directors (GDs) were filed against Aminul Islam with Khulna thana in the last two months, OC said.

Promotion of dy secys stayed for 3 months

BSS, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the government to show cause within seven weeks why the promotion of 170 deputy secretaries to the post of joint secretary should not be declared illegal.

The court also asked the government to explain why the impugned SRO/Notification on the basis of which those promotions were given effect would not be declared illegal. It directed the government not to take further steps for promoting deputy secretaries to the post of joint secretary of the basis of the said SRO/Notification for a period of three months.

The court further ordered that the secret policy along with related documents should be produced before the court. A Division Bench comprising Justice Shah Abu Nayeem Mominur Rahman and Justice Mohammad Arayessuddin passed the order upon a writ petition moved before the court, said a press release issued by the lawyers concerned.

Split gas body

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the country's annual export earnings.

But this analysis was not acceptable to three members - Prof M Tamim and Dr. Ijaz Hossain of the Chemical Engineering Department of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and Prof Momenul Hossain of Dhaka University. They said anti-export policy would dishearten the oil companies and so, there should be an option for limited export.

The BUET professors yesterday further argued that the country would need around US\$ 15 billion in the next 20 years to purchase IOC gas and the government is not in a position to ensure the payment. In addition, the country would need huge investment to augment its own energy production. Payment to the IOCs is already a problem for the country, they said, as there is a continuous backlog of at least five months' arrears with the oil companies.

Their arguments were countered by some members who said that the payment backlog was created due to an unforeseen macroeconomic downturn last year. They also said the current situation is comfortable enough to pay the IOCs.

They further said the payment backlog still persists because of Petrobrangla's difficulties in collecting its sales revenue. But this is mainly a governance problem, which needs to be addressed simultaneously.

The committee also comprises of Petrobrangla Director (Finance) SR Osmani, Petrobrangla Director (Operations) Dr M Ismail, chartered

accountant MA Hafiz and BIDS Research Director Dr KAS Murshid.

The committee has laid down its options based on a proven gas reserve of 15 trillion cubic feet (tcf) and the internal gas demand growth till 2020 and other complex economic analyses.

BCL calls strike at edu instts today

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has called a strike at all educational institutions across the country today demanding immediate release of its leaders including president and general secretary.

BCL also enforced a strike at the Dhaka University yesterday on the same demand. No classes and examinations were held at the university during the strike.

Additional police were deployed on the campus during the strike. No untoward incident, however, took place.

All university vehicles were off the road. However, central library remained open and other administrative activities were carried out partially.

BCL brought out a procession on the campus and held a rally on the Aparajeyo Bangla premises.

Chaired by BCL DU unit president Marufa Akter Poppy, acting general secretary Shaifuzzaman Shikhor and presidents and secretaries of different hall units.

Arafat starts talks

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Israeli forces must be pulled back to the boundaries of September 2000, when the Palestinian uprising began.

In an Associated Press interview Friday at his headquarters in Ramallah, Arafat sidestepped Bush's demand for his removal.

Without saying whether he would seek re-election in January, the 73-year-old Palestinian leader said: "I have been elected by the people. I am not a coward. I am not ready to betray the people who elected me."

Bush said the international community will begin working with the United States next week on creating institutions necessary for a Palestinian state.

Powell will talk about reforming Palestinian institutions during meetings Tuesday in New York with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, European Union diplomat Javier Solana and Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, State Department spokesman Richard

Boucher said.

They'll be joined at a second session that day by foreign ministers Ahmed Maher of Egypt and Marwan Muasher of Jordan.

Egyptian, Jordanian and Saudi ministers are expected to come to Washington next week for talks at the White House - according to administration and diplomatic sources. Bush said they'll be working step-by-step toward a Palestinian state.

DESA

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But then, instead of publishing the tender in newspapers, the DESA officials printed fake newspaper copies showing that the tender was printed.

However, the Department of Films and Publications (DFP) unearthed that the DFP reference number shown in the DESA tender notices was false. The DESA documents mentioned that the advertisements were published in The New Nation, Dainik Rupali, Bhorer Gagoj and The Independent on various dates in 1998 bearing DFP No. 642-12/1. But the DFP said this advertisement number originally belong to a Forest Department notice published in Giri Darpan, Azadi, Bhorer Kagoj and Probhati.

BAC has alleged that the fake tender was designed by these DESA officials to award the job to Masseur SA Rahman, a contractor. The firm was awarded the contract showing that it was the lowest bidder for the trolley-mounted substation at Tk 9.95 lakh. But DESA had estimated the price for each sub-station at Tk 6.69 lakh, 48 per cent lower than the purchase price.

Had the bidding really taken place, DESA would have gone for re-tendering the project because of higher than estimated price quoted by the firm. But DESA did not do so.

Those who have been accused in this case are Superintendent Engineer Ataul Masud, former general manager Abdul Hye, Member Abdul Mannan Mollah, Deputy Director Jahangir Hossain, Additional Chief Engineer ATM Faizul Karim, Executive Engineer Ataul Haq, Assistant Director Jashimuddin Ahmed, General Manager Biswas Harunur Rashid, former member (finance) Syed Enamul Haq and the owner of M/S SA Rahman, Syed Ataur Rahman.

Commercial wings

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dials in missions have a vital role to play, although export volumes rise on the basis of performance by the businessmen.

The ministry has fixed export targets for each mission abroad for the next financial year. It warned the commercial officials of being called back if the target is not achieved.

The government's total export target for the current fiscal year is fixed at US\$6.75 billion.

10 hurt as rival groups clash in Laxmipur

BSS, Laxmipur

A clash between two rival groups yesterday left at least 10 people injured, eight of them seriously, at village Char Pol Con in Ramgoti upazila of the district.

Police said the clash erupted as one of the groups resisted the other while cultivating on a disputed land.

Of the injured, Abdul Wadud, 70, Kohinur Begum, 40, Mohammad Hanif, 45, Rafiqul Islam, 35, Nur Nabi, 50, Mohammed Hossain, 40, Al Amin, 20, and Khurshed Alam, 20, were admitted to the Laxmipur Sadar Hospital.