



## WEATHER TODAY

### Light rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over the country with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places 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 32.5 degree Celsius and the lowest temperature of 22.3 degree Celsius were recorded at Hatiya.

**The sun sets in the capital at 6:29pm today and rises at 5:35am 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	30.5	24.5	84	76
Chittagong	30.5	24.3	90	77
Rajshahi	31.0	25.7	96	76
Khulna	28.5	25.4	98	98
Barisal	30.6	25.0	88	83
Sylhet	29.5	25.6	93	98
Cox's Bazar	32.1	27.5	90	92

## BCL demands release of detained leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) has demanded release of its detained president Liakat Sikdar and general secretary Nazrul Islam Babu by September 10.

It also demanded release of its vice president Rafiqul Islam Kotwal.

Making the demand at a press conference in the city yesterday, BCL leaders warned that if their demand is not met, they would enforce strike at all educational institutions.

They alleged that the top BCL leaders were implicated in 'false cases' and arrested repeatedly from jail gate although court granted them bail.

The three BCL leaders were arrested from in front of the Dhanmondi residence of Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina when they were returning after exchanging Eid greetings with her on the

## Unfulfilled FF quota goes to merit list

STAR REPORT

If the job quota for freedom fighters and their children are not filled up, the government will select candidates from the merit list for the posts.

The cabinet committee on public administrative reforms yesterday took the decision at a meeting.

The committee has decided to retain the 30 per cent quota in government jobs for freedom fighters and their children but made the changes, as a large portion of the quota remains vacant, according to sources.

"We have taken the decision as hardly one-third of the quota meant for freedom fighters and their children is filled up," Industry Minister MK Anwar told The Daily Star yesterday.

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman presided over the meeting held at the cabinet division at the Bangladesh Secretariat.

LGRD Minister Mannan Bhuiyan, Industry Minister MK Anwar and Telecommunications Minister Barrister Aminul Huq attended the meeting among others.

A study of the Public Service Commission (PSC), presented at the meeting, said that hardly one-third posts under this quota are filled up. In the last 21st BCS, the authorities could get only eight per cent candidates from this quota.

In this context, the PSC is in dilemma whether to fill the vacant posts with candidates from the merit list or just keep those vacant.

The PSC proposed a change in the quota rule for freedom fighters and their children to the government two months back and the authorities

## Boat capsizes, Mother, 2 sons drown in beel in Sunamganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Mother and her two sons drowned in a boat capsizing in Kalinga beel in Madhabpur upazila of Habiganj district yesterday morning.

Taslima Begum, 30, along with her sons Sumon, 4, and Sohag, 2, went to the house of a quack (village doctor) at a nearby village across the Kalinga beel by boat.

While returning, the boat was caught in storm and sank in the beel with the three aboard.

All the three bodies were recovered in the afternoon, local sources said.

## Israel's plan

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blew himself up in a car next to an Israeli bus in Israel's north on May 6, killing 17 passengers.

Troops also knocked down the family home of Murad Abu Asa, who blew himself up on Jan. 30, wounding two Israeli soldiers.

Israel has been demolishing family homes of suicide bombers and suspected militants in an attempt to dissuade other Palestinians from carrying out attacks. The Palestinians denounce the practice as collective punishment.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz said on its Internet site that the army on Friday arrested suspected sniper Sudki Zaro, linked to the killing of 10-month-old Shalhevet Pass. The army refused comment. Palestinians and Israelis have been meeting for days to work out a plan for easing tensions, so far making little progress.

Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer was expected to continue his consultations with Palestinian Interior Minister Abdel Razak Yehiyeh on an Israeli proposal called "Gaza first," under which Israel would pull its forces back from the outskirts of Palestinian population centers in Gaza and turn security over to Palestinian forces as a test case. If successful, Israel would implement the same procedure in the West Bank.

## Pran closure

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Sarwar claimed that he is not involved in any incident leading to closure of the plant.

Ruhul Kuddus however told newsmen that he has asked Sarwar not to do anything that might cause any harm to the plant.

"Sarwar should not be blamed for anything he does for the welfare of the workers", he said without elaborating.

## Magurchhara

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to explain on what grounds the US oil company claimed the compensation issue on the Magurchhara gas blowout to have been settled.

The letter was sent to Unocal after Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at a high-level meeting Tuesday asked Energy Minister AKM Mosharraf Hossain to get an explanation in that regard from the international oil company.

Earlier, Unocal had turned down a claim of Petrobangla for US\$ 685 million equivalent to Tk 3,900 crore in damages for burning 245 billion cubic feet of gas at Magurchhara in the explosion.

In rejecting Petrobangla's claim, the Unocal sent a short letter saying the compensation issue was resolved through a supplementary agreement for two other blocks by awarding Bangladesh five per cent extra gas.

Since there were no explanations by the Unocal as to how the issue was resolved, Petrobangla, being instructed by the highest office, had sought the clarification. But again Unocal remained very brief.

The Environment Ministry has also claimed Tk 609 crore in compensation for destroying the environment of Magurchhara. Unocal agreed to make the compensation by determining the amount through a third party.

The Magurchhara blowout took place in June 1997 when another US company, Occidental, was drilling there. Later Unocal took over Occidental with all the liabilities.

## DCC inertia

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Hospital on Saturday morning.

With the latest victims, the number of deaths in dengue infection rose to 28 in the country during this season. The total number of dengue infected patients so far recorded with various hospitals is 2231.

Among the new dengue patients, 30 were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital, six to Mitford hospital, one to Sohrawardi hospital, two to Bangladesh Shishu Hospital, six to BIRDEM, five to National Hospital, 15 to Holy Family Hospital, two to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital, 26 to various clinics and private hospitals.

Among the private hospitals, Ibne Sina received four patients, Comfort Nursing Home five, Central Hospital seven and Nibedita Shishu Hospital four.

According to the control room sources, 461 dengue patients are now receiving treatment at various hospitals.

Meantime, the DCC's so-called anti-dengue programme has been almost non-existent with most areas still waiting to be sprayed with insecticide.

## Indian FM

FROM PAGE 1

minister respectively.

Ever since taking over the external affairs ministry, Sinha has taken moves to, what many observers feel, further improve New Delhi's relations with its South Asian neighbours.

Sinha has already visited Sri Lanka and the Maldives and will come to Bangladesh after visiting Nepal.

Sinha was involved in the Agra Summit, held between Vajpayee and Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf.

He is a member of the Indian Cabinet Committee on Security and has served in diplomatic postings in Bonn and Frankfurt.

During his visit, New Delhi and Dhaka are expected to discuss bilateral and regional issues.

## Top criminal kills 3

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Alauddin and his accomplice. Police later recovered the blood-stained shorts of both the criminals.

Reinforced police forces cordoned off the entire area and continued their hunt for the killers. They conducted search in the area including the Rampura Lake as the criminals were said to have jumped into it. A number of suspects were arrested in the search, police said.

In their desperate hunt for the killers, police alerted all hospitals, clinics and police stations across the city.

Later, a mob caught Alauddin and Akkas, as they swam out of the lake near the Rampura Mohanagar Project at around 8.30pm. Hundreds of angry people beat the two to death in presence of the police.

Alauddin and his gang had asked Nizam to pay a toll of Tk 10 lakh a fortnight ago. As he declined to give the money, the gang kept him confined in his residence, but let him free following assurance of payment by his family.

Since then, Alauddin had been threatening to kill the businessman and the delay in the payment prompted them to kill the man, relatives said.

The triple murder left the neighbourhood in a state of shock and panic.

Bodies of the three victims were sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Alauddin, facing various criminal charges including those of murder and smuggling, contested the Dhaka City Corporation elections in April this year. Reports have it that he campaigned in the polls with assistance from the police. However, he lost the contest.

Police said the slain businessman had irked a shady person in Uttarbari, an area close to Kunipara in Tejaon, as he formed an anti-terrorism committee two-and-a-half month ago.

Alauddin also gave frequent death threats to him. Since then, police had been guarding the businessman's residence, but the

security was withdrawn only two days before his killing.

Alauddin left behind his wife, two sons, a daughter and parents, among others.

## Termination order of Haroon Habib stayed for 4 months

UNB, Dhaka

The High Court yesterday stayed for four months the termination order of Haroon Habib, Chief Editor of Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) and asked the authorities to show cause why the action would not be declared illegal.

The rule came upon a writ, which is returnable in 2 weeks.

Amirul Islam, counsel for the petitioner, submitted that the termination order issued ignoring two relevant writ petitions that are still pending with the High Court was subjudice.

## Checking fund misuse

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Sources said the LGRD minister drew her attention to the problems obstructing various development activities and stressed that the ministry needed adequate funds because its activities are directly related with public welfare.

The ministry is now facing serious trouble as 50 percent of tubewells in the country have become unfit for use due to arsenic contamination of water. Thus it needs adequate funds to provide arsenic-free tubewells to ensure supply of safe drinking water to the common man, Bhuiyan pointed out.

Due to shortage of funds, Bhuiyan mentioned, the Dhaka WASA has failed to properly build sewerage system in the capital. The water crisis in the city can be solved if two projects are implemented, he said and sought funds for this.

Mannan Bhuiyan later told newsmen that he reminded the prime minister her commitments to the people to construct roads and bridges in rural areas and asked her to provide funds for realising the pledges.

The LGRD minister urged the prime minister to turn the Cooperatives Bank into a schedule bank. Besides, he suggested expansion of the Milk Vita as it has a bright. The minister was asked to immediately submit a proposal to turn the bank into a scheduled bank.

Mesides, Bhuiyan informed Khaldi that the BRDB loan to farmers has been stopped for long and demanded Tk 100 crore for introducing the loan programmes.

The prime minister assured the LGRD minister of looking into the matters. She also asked him to take up massive programmes for building rural infrastructure across the country.

Bhuiyan said the meeting also discussed the issue of reintroduction of Upazila system.

About Upazila system, sources said, the PM asked whether it would create conflicts between the MPs and the Upazila chairmen. Bhuiyan replied that the question of conflicts does not arise at all because it has made a complete arrangement so that MPs can be involved in all development activities and any sort of conflict can be avoided.

The PM then asked the LGRD Minister to submit to the cabinet meeting a cabinet sub-committee report on local government soon.

The PM also wanted to know the proposed structure of Gram Sarkar as well as its necessity. Bhuiyan also briefed her about it.

The PM gave instructions to further strengthen the local government bodies and enhance their income.

About the 522 posts lying vacant in the Rural Development and Cooperatives Division, the LGRD minister sought the PM's approval to fill up the vacant posts. The PM instantly gave the approval, meeting sources said.

Khaleda directed the Chief Executive Officer of Dhaka City Corporation, who was present at the meeting, to take urgent steps to eradicate aedes mosquito that causes dengue and to launch a massive cleanliness drive in the city.

Those present at the meeting included political secretaries to the prime minister MA Harris Chowdhury and Mosaddek Ali, Principal Secretary to the prime minister Dr Kamal Uddin Siddiqui and secretaries of Local Government Division and Rural Development and Cooperatives Division AYNi Siddiqi and Dhiraj Kumar Nath.

## AL public rally in city today

UNB, Dhaka

Awami League will hold a public meeting at Paltan Maidan in the city at 3pm today demanding execution of the killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

AL President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina will address the meeting organised as part of the national mourning day programme, said a party press release.

## Road accidents kill 5 in Bogra

BSS, Bogra

Five persons were killed in four separate road accidents in different areas of the district yesterday.

Police and hospital sources said Moulana Abu Taleb and his wife Shewly Begum died on the spot when a minibus hit an auto rickshaw at Banani Lichutola on the Dhaka-Bogra highway at about 4:30 pm.

Delwar Hossain, 26, a truck helper was killed on the spot at Kakul on Bogra-Rangpur highway at 11 am when a stone loaded truck knocked him there. He was checking the tyre of his truck at that time.

An unidentified man was killed at Dhupchachia upazila here yesterday when a bus hit him.

A minor girl Mita, 9, daughter of Montu Miah of Mohish Batan village under Sadar upazila, was killed when a motorbike hit her at Baghpora.

Separate cases were registered with the respective police stations.

## Tk 4.51 lakh snatched at Jatrabari

BSS, Dhaka

Muggers took away Tk 4.51 lakh from a distributor of RC Cola at Sanir Akhra in Demra police station yesterday morning.

Towhid Ahmed alias Sarwar, distributor of RC Cola and BRAC Dairy, came under attack by a gang of armed muggers while he was going by a rickshaw to the Jatrabari branch of NCC Bank to deposit the money at about 9-15 am.

The gang stopped the rickshaw in front of Chantak Madrasah and snatched a bag containing the money from Towhid at gunpoint.

A case was filed with Demra police. None, however, was arrested in this connection till yesterday evening.

## DU hall attack 3 more days for judicial probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday extended the time by three days for the judicial commission to submit its probe report on the July 23 police atrocities on students of Shamsunnahar Hall of Dhaka University.

The one-member commission headed by sitting judge Justice M Tafazzul Islam was scheduled to submit its report today. The commission sought the time extension yesterday. Earlier, the time was extended by two weeks.

The commission was formed on July 25 on orders from the prime minister.

The commission began its work on August 2.

The commission so far recorded statements of 74 people including the immediate past vice-chancellor and proctor of DU, former provost of Shamsunnahar Hall, its house tutors and four assistant proctors, students and employees of the hall, journalists and policemen involved in the July 23 action.

The commission also took opinion of two former VCs of DU - Prof Emajuddin Ahmed and Prof AK Azad Chowdhury - acting VC Prof AFM Yusuf Haider and Inspector General of Police (IGP) Modabbar Hossain.

## Ratna's 'killer'

FROM PAGE 12

the Dhaka Central Jail.

In his statement, Rubel told the magistrate that he along with three others killed Ratna in an act of revenge over a feud with Ratna's family.

Five-year-old Ratna was brutally murdered on August 9 over a trivial matter.

Victim's father rickshawpuller Enamul Khan filed an abduction and murder case with Sabujbagh thana on the day of the murder accusing five people.

## Hartal

FROM PAGE 12

Hafez Maulana Abdus Sattar, cashier of the Baitul Azim mosque filed a case with the Ramna police Friday following the indiscriminate shooting by Ansar personnel that left four people dead at Mallibagh.

When contacted last night Ramna police said they were investigating the matter, but no arrest had been made so far.

It is learnt higher officials at the Ansar headquarter are questioning the 19 personnel who were closed for the shooting.

## Burglaries in five houses at Rampura

UNB, Dhaka

Like many areas of the city, Ulan and adjoining areas of Rampura in Khilgaon thana too have become a safe haven for criminals who feel free to raid houses in daylight and decamp with booty.

On Friday afternoon, they swooped on five residences on Ulan road and looted valuables, including cash and electronic goods.

They conducted their three-hour operation from 4.00pm in the residences when the inmates were away from their houses.

Local residents said they know the muggers but they do not dare to file cases against them for fear of reprisal.

They alleged that police patrol teams are hardly seen in the areas these days.

## Hasina

FROM PAGE 12

She observed that during its ten-month rule the BNP-Jammal alliance unleashed unprecedented torture and repression on the people. She mentioned the midnight police attack on the female students of Shamsunnahar Hall of Dhaka University.

Hasina said the poor lost their right to seek justice during the rule of this "autocratic" government and bitterly criticised the government for price spirals.

The ex-PM said the government, by closing down the Adamjee Jute Mills, pushed its workers as well as jute growers of the country into a deep crisis while trying to create all possible means of increasing earnings of the rich.

Hasina, who reached Tungipara Friday afternoon to pay respects to the country's founding father, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, on his 27th death anniversary, said this government was also trying to destroy the spirit of independence.

"Since winning the October 1 election through rigging, this government has been trying to sell out gas resources to satisfy its foreign masters," she told her workers.

She alleged that the government is blocking all ways of development and called upon the people to stand up to all misdeeds and injustices of the ruling alliance.

Local Awami League leaders, including District Awami League President Muhammad Ali Khan Abu Miah and General Secretary Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, also addressed the meeting.

A group of Gono Forum (GF) leaders and workers under the leadership of local GF President advocate Ahmed Nowsheer Ali joined Awami League at the meeting.

## Graft case against Alamgir Wrong address in FIR: IO asked to explain

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court, Dhaka yesterday directed the complainant and investigation officer (IO) of a graft case against former state minister for planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir to explain within September 16 as to why the address of Dr Khan in the FIR of the case was written incorrectly.

Magistrate Mohammad Nurul Karim Majumdar passed the order upon a petition submitted by the defence lawyers on behalf of the accused.

In the petition, advocates Syed Rezaur Rahman, M Sajwar Hossain, Quamrul Islam, Sahara Khatun and Khondaker Abdul Mannan stated that Dr Khan's permanent address is Village: Gulbahar, Police Station: Kachua, District: Chandpur. But in the FIR of the case, the complainant wrote the permanent address as Village: Mulapara, Police Station: Faridganj, District: Chandpur. Therefore, the lawyers prayed for issuing a show cause notice upon the complainant and IO of the case in that regard.

After hearing both sides, the court gave the order.

The court however rejected Khan's bail petition in connection with the same graft case.

Khan was shown arrested on

## Two criminals held with arms at N'ganj

UNB, Narayanganj

Police arrested two criminals along with a rifle from Pagla Friday night.

Kamrul Islam, 22, and Abul Hasan, 24, were arrested with the foreign made gun from a house.

Meanwhile, Mithu, 22, an alleged extortionist, was caught from Hajeeganj area and handed over to police yesterday.

Mithu snatched Tk 4,500 from Majid Khandoker when he was returning home at Tall from his chamber.

## Dark side of the deal

FROM PAGE 1

of Food over such a last-minute target revision. "It is not unlikely. We are looking into it as well."

The head of the highest-level inquiry committee is also reported to have proposed that discussions at the procurement committee level be held before a target is fixed.

Interestingly, these are already there in the food ministry's books. There are committees at every level and there are certain bindings on grassroots food officials too for routine inspections of the quality of food grains.

However, allegations are there that these rules are being routinely flouted. Had there been strict compliance of these rules, the ongoing wheat procurement scam issue would not have arisen in the first place. Rather, purchase of feed-grade imported wheat would have been detected by district- and thana-level food officials during their routine checks (once in 15 days), sources pointed out.

Because of delayed procurement, the very spirit of the procurement drive - giving price support to local farmers - has been defeated, as profit-mongering political toots took advantage by selling off their cheaply imported wheat to the government.

While feed-grade Indian wheat is

available at Tk. 6,100 a tonne, the government price for food-grade local wheat is Tk 9,000 a tonne.

The biggest challenge now facing the official probe committees is to find an alternative to the 'bureaucracy or the political line-up' through which information of fresh wheat targets reaches the grassroots.

While many members of the official procurement committees are coming up with their ignorance about the last-minute procurement process, there must have been an alternate channel of operation throughout this whole process of wheat scam, sources noted.

The recruited female workers are trained in different centres before they are posted with their employers.

Sources observed, Bangladesh can set up training centres to give first hand knowledge to the female workers, and improve the country's human resource export potential.

## Frigate scam Two (ret) navy Officers get anticipatory bail

UNB, Dhaka

Retired navy officers AKM Azad and Harunur Rashid were yesterday granted anticipatory bail for 10 weeks or till submission of police report, in frigate purchase scam case.

Granting anticipatory bail, a division bench comprising Justice Gour Gopal Shaha and Justice Abdu Salam also issued rule upon the government to show cause why the petitioners should not be granted regular bail.

The Bureau of Anti-corruption (BAC) on August 7 filed a case with Tejaon police against five people including former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina accusing them of taking kickback in frigate purchase deal with South Korea's Daewoo Company.

Earlier, former Navy Chief Nurul Islam and a business tycoon Abdul Awal Minto, accused in the case, secured anticipatory bail from