

Heat wave, water-power crisis disrupt life in northern dists

Mercury rises to 39.4 degree Celsius in Rajshahi: Weathermen say no respite in sight

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

The persisting heat wave, coupled with power load shedding and water crisis have disrupted life in northern districts.

The heat wave may continue a couple of days more, weather men said yesterday.

The mercury rose to 39.4 degrees Celsius in Rajshahi while humidity in air was recorded at 12 per cent yesterday, sending people on streets panting for water and cool air.

Shahidul Islam, a senior weather observer said, "Such low humidity reduces possibility of rain".

Meteorologist Sadekul Islam at the Met office here said, "Possibility of rain in next three days is bleak".

Quoting from monthly weather report, weather forecast officer SM Mahmudul Haque said, two 'medium heat waves' with a temperature range of up to 40 degree Celsius were due to occur in April. One swept over the area in the second week of April and the other is continuing.

The hot spell is also sweeping Khulna, Barisal, Faridpur and Dhaka regions with temperature hovering between 36 and 38 degree Celsius, he said.

The scorching heat has made



PHOTO BY ASAD
Weary of the scorching heat, buffaloes stream in towards the Padma River to quench their thirst and have a relishing bath. The photo was taken from Steerampur in Rajshahi yesterday.

city life miserable and is also hampering Boro paddy harvest as labourers are unable to stay in fields for long.

"It's too hot for me. I am drinking several glasses of water in an hour but still can not bear the heat," said rickshaw-puller Merajul in Shalbagan area in the city.

"I have been drinking saline water every hour to survive in the hot spell," said a traffic sergeant at Bormali intersection.

Acute water crisis in many

areas increased sufferings of the people.

Out of 226 lakh gallons needed, the city corporation supplies only 106 lakh gallons. Most of the 6500 tubewells in city are not functioning as the underground water level went down.

Moreover, many water pumps are also not working due to load shedding.

One of the two Barapukuria power generation units tripped on Friday, causing around 200 MW load shedding in 16 districts of

Rajshahi division.

The authorities allocated 460 MW power today but for safety of the lone running Barapukuria power generation unit, we are told to supply only 403 MW", an official at Rajshahi regional Power Development Board (PDB) office said yesterday.

Doctors have advised people to drink enough water, if possible cold water, particularly during daytime to avoid dehydration.

RAJSHAHI

EXTORTION, VANDALISM 8 labour leaders get 3yrs RI

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Gaibandha Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court yesterday sentenced eight labour leaders including secretary of Gaibandha Motor Sramik Union to three years rigorous imprisonment for extortion and vandalism.

They were also fined Tk 10 thousand each, in default to suffer six months more imprisonment.

The convicts are Jamalur Rahman, general secretary of Gaibandha Motor Sramik Union, Khokon Chowdhury, Md Salim, Hasen, Md Momin, Sheik Farid, Uzzal Mia and Nikhil Chandra Das.

The eight people on December 25 last year demanded toll from employees of local transport agency Rohan Paribahan, goes the prosecution.

Angered over refusal, they ransacked a coach of Rohan Paribahan at Gaibandha bus terminal, injuring passengers on board.

The court acquitted two of the charge-sheeted accused as the prosecution failed to produce adequate evidence against them.

TEXTBOOK SCAM 2 education staff remanded in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Police yesterday took detained Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila education officer Nazrul Islam and office assistant Shahidul Islam on two days' remand in connection with selling primary books in the open market.

Rangpur District and Sessions Judge's Court granted the remand.

Joint forces caught Shahidul Islam on April 11 red-handed with a truck loaded with 18,000 sets of primary school books meant for free distribution among students.

Upon information from Shahidul, police arrested the upazila primary education officer.

Lalmonirhat district primary education officer wrote to the director general of the Directorate of Primary Education to take official action against the officials and employees who were involved with the stealing of 18,000 sets of books.

Land surveyors held for bribery

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Three land surveyors of Panchagarh land office were caught while allegedly taking bribe from a farmers during land survey at Baniapur village in Debiganj upazila, police said.

The arrestees are Golam Khybar, Rezaul Karim, and Moshidul Haque.

Debiganj police said the three were caught red handed while they were taking bribe from farmer Md. Hasibur Rahman. Police also recovered Tk 8640 bribe money from them.

Officer-in-Charge of Debiganj police station Md. Abdul Latif said they were produced before court, which sent them to Panchagarh jail.

9 bombs, bullets, recovered in C'nawabganj

A CORRESPONDENT, C'nawabganj

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered nine bombs, 20 bullets, 10,000 Indian Rupees and 22 phenydi bottles from a clearing and Forwarding agent office at Huzurbari in Chapainawabganj town yesterday and arrested four persons.

The arrestees are Liakat Ali, Arif and Mithu, Rab sources said.

They said acting on a tip-off, a team from Rab-5 raided the office and recovered those.

After the recovery, Rab launched drives in different areas of the town, they said.

Sylhet JCD rallies demand release of Khaleda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Jatiyatatabadi Chhatri Dal (JCD) took out a silent procession, formed a human chain and held rallies at two educational institutions in Sylhet city yesterday to press home the demand for immediate release of former prime minister and BNP chief Khaleda Zia and others.

The MC college unit of JCD took a silent procession covering faces with black clothes on the campus in the afternoon. They held a brief rally after the procession.

The JCD men of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College organised a human chain and held a rally on the campus.

They demanded immediate withdrawal of the 'conspiratory cases' filed against Khaleda Zia, Tarique Rahman, JCD chief Azizul Bari Helal and others and immediate release of the leaders.

PHENSIDYL

recovered from underneath the clothes of Delwar during search, done following a tip-off, sources said.

Delwar was handed over to Kotwali police after interrogation by Rab.

During police interrogation, Delwar confessed that he regularly collected phenydi from the store of the court complex and that the two policemen there helped him in drug peddling, police sources said.

Deputy Commissioner of Barisal Metropolitan Police (BMP) Kazi Mortaz Ahmed ordered the suspension after Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) caught one Delwar along with phenydi from Barisal Collectorate compound.

Ten bottles of phenydi were

10 hurt as train derails in Lalmonirhat

A CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

At least 10 passengers including two women were injured when seven bogies of a Burimari-bound train from Lalmonirhat derailed at Dojilbari near Aditmari railway station yesterday.

The injured people were treated at the local upazila health complex.

Two of the injured—Romena Begum, 42, and Shamsul Alam, 35—were shifted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital with critical injuries while the rest were treated at the local health complex.

According to sources at Lalmonirhat railway control room, train movement on the route was stopped as all the seven bogies of the train derailed at about 2:45 pm yesterday.

A rescue train reached the spot at 5pm yesterday and was doing rescue work when the report was filed in the evening.

Railway Divisional Manager in Lalmonirhat DRM Kazi Rafiqul Islam told this correspondent that the train derailed due to lack of stones and slippers on the track.

They claimed that BDR personnel often interrogate Indian truckers at the border though Bangladeshi customs officials are there to do the job.

Indian truckers are allowed to unload coal on stack yards inside Bangladesh territory.

Other sources said BDR recently strengthened its monitoring along borders.

A few months ago, Indian traders stopped coal export because of alleged 'harassment' by Indian Border Security Force (BSF).

Coal traders in Sylhet called upon the authorities to take steps for resuming coal import.

BDR Sector Commander in Sylhet Col Obaid told The Daily Star yesterday that security measures along borders were tightened.

The border guards are doing their job, he said.

Checking and border vigilance should not affect bilateral trade, he said.

Customs official said the government is losing a revenue of Tk 15 lakh a day as coal import is stopped.

No coal import thru' Tamabil border for 4 days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

There was no coal import through Tamabil border for the fourth day yesterday.

Some Bangladeshi coal importers said Indian exporters stopped coal export through Tamabil-Dauki border alleged due to alleged interference by Bangladesh Rifles (BDR).

They claimed that BDR personnel often interrogate Indian truckers at the border though Bangladeshi customs officials are there to do the job.

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Phensidyl stolen from maalkhana

2 policemen suspended in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Sub Inspector Abdur Rahman and Constable Masum Billah, who were on duty at maalkhana (store) of Barisal court, were suspended yesterday after theft of seized phenydi from the store was detected.

The ICD men of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College organised a human chain and held a rally on the campus.

They demanded immediate withdrawal of the 'conspiratory cases' filed against Khaleda Zia, Tarique Rahman, JCD chief Azizul Bari Helal and others and immediate release of the leaders.

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During police interrogation, Delwar confessed that he regularly collected phenydi from the store of the court complex and that the two policemen there helped him in drug peddling, police sources said.

Deputy Commissioner of Barisal Metropolitan Police (BMP) Kazi Mortaz Ahmed ordered the suspension after Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) caught one Delwar along with phenydi from Barisal Collectorate compound.

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