

## End dialogue soon to hold polls within timeframe

Dr Kamal urges govt

UNB, Dhaka

Gono Forum President Dr Kamal Hossain yesterday said the government's dialogue with political parties should find a quick finale in order to hold the national elections within the declared timeframe.

He called on the caretaker government to complete the ongoing trial of the corrupt as soon as possible as per the law of the land as the previous governments had remained inactive towards curbing corruption.

"The election should not be delayed and the dialogue process has to be completed quickly to hold the election in the specified time," said Dr Kamal, also an eminent jurist, in reply to a question at an opinion exchange meeting at his Bailey Road residence.

Gono Forum organised the meeting with teachers' representa-

tives from the city's non-government schools and colleges.

Dr Kamal, one of the proponents of massive socio-political reforms in the interim period, presided over the meeting.

Describing the government's ongoing dialogue with the political parties as a democratic process, he said the dialogue should not be disrupted, as the opinions of all parties would be known to all through the talks.

Dr Kamal said the people would choose their representatives to determine their future through election. "The eight crore voters will choose the representatives to determine the fates of the 15 crore people of the country."

He stressed the need for creating awareness among the people about their rights and also emphasised empowering them to build a consensus on national interests. "This initiative should be taken to protect the greater interest of all."

Awami League and BNP have taken an identical stance that they wouldn't go to the dialogue or election unless their detained party chiefs and former premiers - Sheikh Hasina and Begum Khaleda Zia - were set free to lead their

respective sides.

Gono Forum president also said meaningful changes in different arenas through mopping up corruption, partisanship, terrorism and use of black money would come through a free and fair election. "Our aim is to get a free and fair election held."

Describing the government's ongoing dialogue with the political parties as a democratic process, he said the dialogue should not be disrupted, as the opinions of all parties would be known to all through the talks.

"If the process of dialogue is disrupted, the objective of the election can be disrupted," he said replying to a question.

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## Provide job opportunities for char dwellers

Experts tell govt at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should introduce an array of job opportunities in char areas in a bid to change the lot of the char dwellers, speakers suggested at a seminar yesterday.

They also urged the government and development organisations to introduce crop varieties that grow well in charlands.

The Institute of Microfinance organised the seminar titled 'The Wretched of the Earth: A Look into the Dimensions of Poverty in Island and Chars of Northern Bangladesh' at PKSF Auditorium in the city.

Five to six millions of people live in char areas, of which 77 percent are extremely poor, the speakers said.

"We know that rice don't grow well in char lands, but there are many crop varieties which grow in plenty in those areas. The persons and organisations concerned should take initiative for growing the char-friendly varieties," said Dr Mahabub Hossain, an expert in agriculture economics.

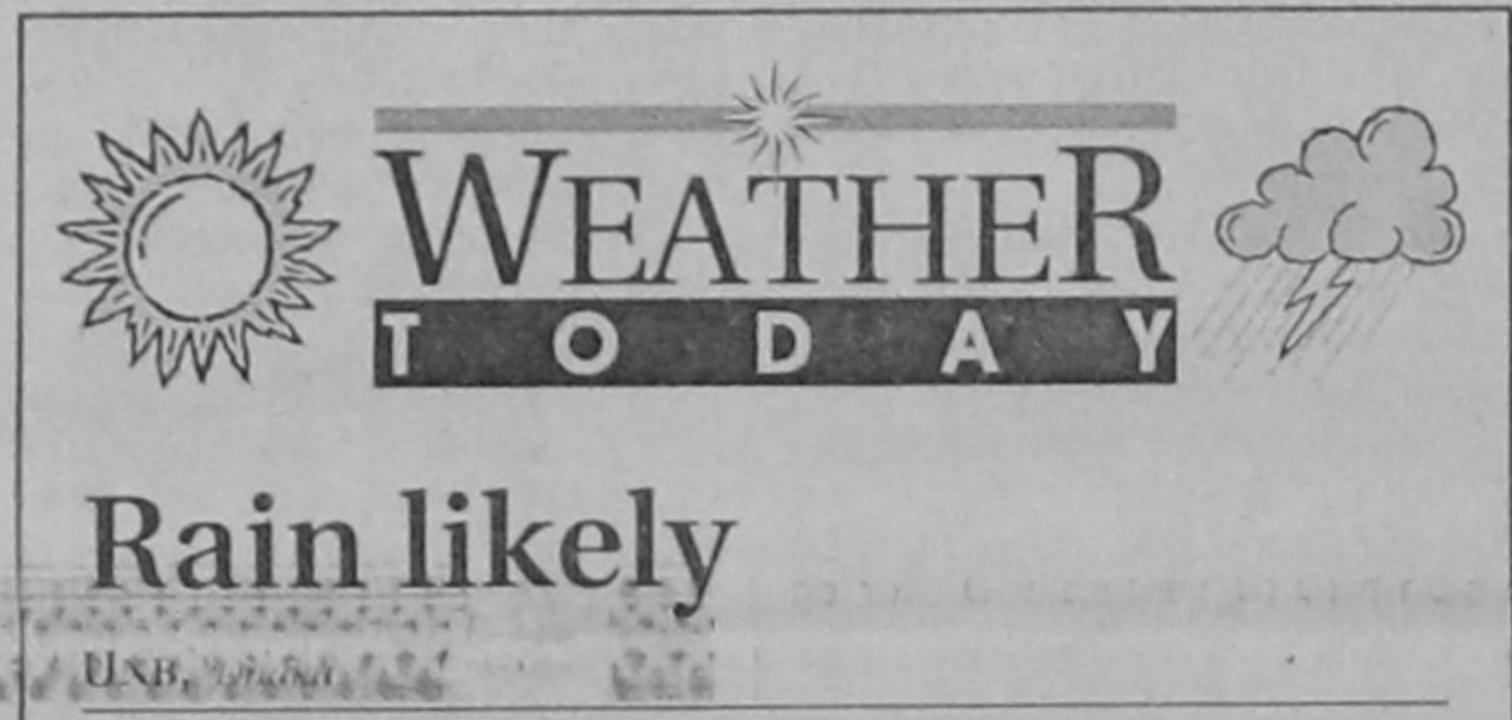
Contract farming is also needed in collaboration with NGOs and development organisations, which will help the char farmers to ensure good production and market access, suggested Hossain, also the executive director of BRAC and member of the Governing Body of InM, an independent research and training organisation.

The incidence of poverty at the national level stands at 43.8 percent, while in the char areas the rate is 86.4 per cent, said Prof Atiur Rahman, professor at the

department of Development Studies of Dhaka University, in his keynote presentation at the seminar.

He also said that in the char areas 61 percent people suffer from food insecurity occasionally while 31 percent people face food scarcity round the year.

Prof MA Baqui Khalily, executive director of InM, also spoke at the function.



Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over all the six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 38.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessor and lowest 22.9 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:41pm today and rises at 5:11am tomorrow.

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	35.0	25.2	78	65
Chittagong	31.5	24.3	76	82
Rajshahi	37.8	27.9	77	54
Kulna	37.3	27.5	77	62
Barisal	35.0	27.4	79	70
Sylhet	29.5	22.9	91	77
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.0	75	76

## 123 students expelled on first day of HSC exams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 123 examinees were expelled on charges of cheating in English first paper examination on the first day of the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent Alim and Business Management examinations yesterday.

Three teachers were also expelled for abetting the students in cheating.

According to sources at the HSC examination control room, three examinees were expelled under Dhaka Board, 15 under Rajshahi Board, six under Jessor Board, two under Chittagong Board, three under Comilla Board, seven under Barisal Board and two under Sylhet Board.

Besides, 71 examinees under Technical Education Board and 14 under Madrasa Education Board were also expelled.

A teacher under Rajshahi Education Board and two other teachers under Technical Education Board were expelled for assisting students in the cheating, the sources added.

Meanwhile, our Sirajganj correspondent said Belkuchi Upazila Nirbahi Officer Khairul Alam allegedly assaulted college teacher Sushil Kumar while the latter was discharging his duties at Belkuchi Degree College centre.

Sirajganj Belkuchi College Teachers' Association yesterday declared that they would refrain from their duties unless the UNO is stripped of his responsibilities at the centre and given exemplary punishment.

They also called on the government to make public all the initiatives for the reforms of the local government, saying that good governance would not be established without the participation of common people in the process.

The Governance Coalition organised the roundtable on 'Local government and its reform' at Cirdap auditorium in the capital. Representative of 27 non-government organisations took part in the roundtable.

Speaking as the chief guest, Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) President Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad called for allocation of special funds in the national budget for the local government.

He also said that the local government would not be strengthened if the proposed commission act just as an advisory committee.

Justice Golam Rabbani said the caretaker government should

bring about reforms in the local government with a view to empowering common people.

Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) Director General M Khairul Kabir said the local government commission should be a truly independent body so that the central government cannot interfere in its activities.

DemocracyWatch Executive



PHOTO STAR  
Professor Kabir Chowdhury, centre, launches a book of memoirs by poet Mahbub Ul Alam Chowdhury - 'Smriti Sandhane' - at its publication ceremony at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday. On his left are Prof Rafiqul Islam and writer Selina Hossain and on his right are Mahbubul Haider and writer Hasnat Abdul Hai.

DOCUMENT FORGERY  
ACC withdraws allegation against Salman F Rahman  
BSS, Dhaka

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has withdrawn an allegation of forgery of land documents against Awami League leader Salman F Rahman and five officials of Beximco Holdings Ltd and four former officials of AB Bank.

The commission decided to submit the final report of the case as 'mistake of fact' as the allegation was not proved during the scrutiny of related records and documents, said ACC Director General Hanif Iqbal at his regular press briefing yesterday.

Being satisfied with the final report of the investigation officer (IO) of the case, the commission under its power bestowed in Section 32 of the ACC Act-2004 and 15(1) of the ACC Rules-2007 has approved it," the DG said.

The ACC filed the case with Motijheel Police Station on October 1, 2007 against AB Bank and Beximco Holdings Ltd officials over the allegation that they rescheduled a loan of Tk 191.39 crore showing forged documents and wrote off about Tk 182.77 crore illegally in collusion with each other to gain financial benefit.

The Beximco Holdings Ltd officials are ASR Rahman, chairman of the company, Salman F Rahman, vice chairman, directors Iqbal Ahmed, MA Kashem and Osman Kaiser Chowdhury, and Binoy Krishna Nath, secretary of the company.

The four former officials of AB Bank are CM Kayes Sami, Abu Hanif Khan, DMA Awal and Towhidul Islam.

## Allocate special funds for local govt in budget

Speakers tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday urged the caretaker government to allocate special funds in the national budget for strengthening the local government and decentralising its activities.

They also called on the government to make public all the initiatives for the reforms of the local government, saying that good governance would not be established without the participation of common people in the process.

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## DHAKA TODAY

### Certificate distribution

Jatiya Natyashala Theatre organises a certificate distribution ceremony of the 18th batch of a one-year certificate course. Venue: Natyashala Theatre, Time: 6:30pm.

### Award distribution

Sylhet Ratna Foundation accords a reception to eminent personalities of the district. Venue: Bhami auditorium. Time: 3:50pm.

### Roundtable

Homeopathic Foundation Bangladesh holds a roundtable on 'National Health Budget: Homeopathic medical system in Bangladesh perspective'. Venue: Bhami auditorium, Time: 10:00am.

### Conference

Anushandhu Chokro Mirpur branch holds the 3rd science conference in two sessions. Venue: Mirpur Adarsha Bidyaniketan. Time: 9:15am to 12:30pm and 4:05pm to 6:00pm.

### Workshop

RHSTEP organises a workshop on 'Contribution of RHSTEP to GO-NGO collaboration in health and reproductive health and rights programme'. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 9:00am.

### Drawing contest

Light-on organises a drawing competition for children. Venue: BCS Computer City. Time: 10:00am.

### Musical soiree

Rabirashmi, a cultural organisation, holds a musical soiree titled 'Gane Gane Rabindranath'. Venue: Begum Sufia Rabindranath. Time: 11:00am.

## Trader shot dead by BSF

UNB, Jhenidah

Members of Indian Border Security Force (BSF) fired across the Maheshpur border killing a trader at Shyampur border village of Maheshkhali upazila in Jhenidah yesterday.

BSF jawans of Fatehpur border outpost trespassed into Shyampur and dragged away the body of victim Shah Jamal, 35, who hails from adjacent Laramghat, villagers said.

Confirming the incident, local BDR officials said they have strongly protested the unprovoked firing by BSF resulting in killing of Jamal.

They have also demanded immediate return of the body.

## Chehulum

Chehulum of Sultan Naima Khanam, mother of Noor-e-Jannat Akther Seema, senior assistant editor of the daily Jugantar and organising secretary of Dhaka Union of Journalists (DU), will be held today, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwan and mild mahfil will be held at her village home at Jashodia Gazi bari at Louhajang upazila in Munshiganj after Asr prayers.

Her relatives and admirers are requested to attend the daa mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

## Obituary



Rokeya Khatun Chowdhury, wife of late Amjad Hossain Chowdhury, former district and sessions judge, passed away on Monday, says a press release.

She was buried beside her husband at Damodarpur in Rangpur.

Her quirkhwan will be held at her residence at Minita Plaza at 54, New Elephant Road in the city after Asr prayers tomorrow.

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