

Govt to go ahead with trial of war criminals

Says Dipu Moni

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Participation of women at all levels should be ensured for developing their leadership, said the speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday.

The seminar titled 'Getting to leadership: Breaking the barrier and removing the obstacles' was organised jointly by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) and Bangladesh Alliance for Women Leadership (BDWL) at the BISS Auditorium.

Foreign Minister Dr Dipu Moni was the keynote speaker at the seminar.

She said, "Our attitude towards women is a major barrier for them to play the leadership role in the society."

About reserved seats in parliament for women, Dipu Moni said she personally believes that the concept is "designed to fail."

She suggested fixing a minimum quota for political parties to nominate their women candidates for parliamentary polls.

"Our aim is to increase the number of women at decision-making level," said BDWL Executive Director Nasim Firdous.

She said the Alliance will continue to seek 33 percent of all leadership positions in every sector for women by 2015 as outlined in the million development goals (MDGs).

BISS Director General Maj Gen ABM Shafiqul Haque chaired the programme where women MPs, political leaders, government officials, representatives of international community and civil society, academics and diplomats were present.

While talking to reporters after the seminar, Dipu Moni said the government is pledged to hold the trial of war criminals.

Clarifying her talks with the visiting Pakistani envoy Mirza Zia Ispahani, she said the trial of 1971 war criminals was not included in their discussion.

Bangladesh would go ahead with the trials, reiterated the foreign minister.

FUND MISAPPROPRIATION Chandpur mayor asks Jubak to stop activities

A CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

The Chandpur municipality mayor yesterday directed the Jubo Karmosangsthan Society (Jubak) to stop its activities following complaints that Jubak has misappropriated the money of its members.

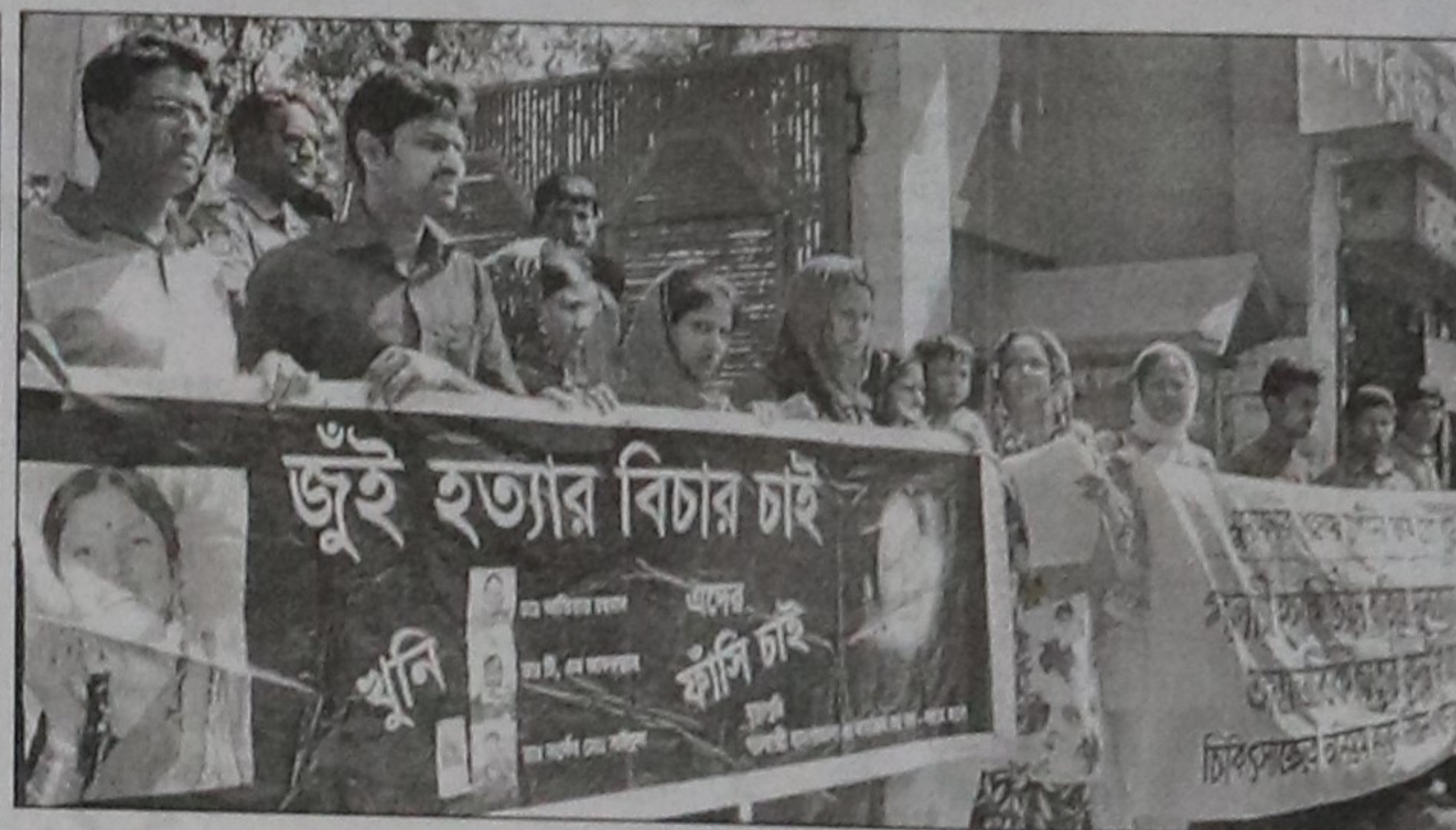
Mayor Nasiruddin Ahmed Bhuiyan also asked the Jubak officials to be present at his office at 10:00am on February 23 along with all records of financial transactions.

He gave the directives to Jubak Assistant Area Managers Rajib Poddar and Mohammad Solaiman Khan in presence of over 100 Jubak members, local people and journalists.

When the mayor asked Jubak officials how they would return the money to its members, Rajib said they have no cash with them, as they have sent all the money to their central office in Dhaka through Pubali Bank.

"We took up some housing projects, but could not sell the houses during the period of the caretaker government. Now a democratic government has come to power, and we are trying to sell the houses and return the money to our members," he told the mayor.

Sources said Jubak collected around Tk 30 crore from a few thousand members in the name of various projects in Chandpur, but did not provide them with any profit or capital money since 2006, putting them in total misery.



Family members of Jui who died due to wrong treatment at Galaxy Hospital form a human chain at Mirpur-11 in the city yesterday demanding trial of persons responsible for her death.

Jui's body exhumed 24 days after burial

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The body of Sultana Razia Jui, a fashion designer, was exhumed in presence of a magistrate from a city graveyard yesterday, 24 days after its burial, for post-mortem.

Jui died on January 24 at the Galaxy Hospital in Mirpur allegedly due to negligence and wrong treatment of the attending doctors.

Since her death, Jui's family members, relatives and locals have been demanding proper investigation into the incident and exemplary punishment to doctors and hospital authorities.

The Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, Dhaka ordered to exhume the body of Jui after one of her brothers filed a case with Mirpur Police Station accusing three doctors Atiar Rahman, Mohammad Saiful and TM Zafarullah.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Sazia Afreen was present when Jui's body was exhumed.

She identified the body with the help of family members and relatives and issued order to send the body to morgue for post-mortem.

Jui, a fashion designer of Red Point at Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ), died several hours after she underwent a surgery at Galaxy Hospital near Mirpur-10 on January 24.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday Kamruzzaman Prince, Jui's brother and complainant of the case, said noticing anomalies in the hospital, Jui urged them to shift her from there.

"We did the mistake at the cost of the life of my sister paying no heed to her request," Prince said with his eyes brimming with tears.

"These three 'greedy' doctors persuaded us not to move Jui from the hospital," he said, adding, "My sister is a victim of excessive greed of the hospital authorities."

Prince alleged that the hospital authorities first informed them that the patient was suffering from gastric, but later they told that she needed an operation to remove appendicitis.

He said the doctors were confused about her problem and provided wrong treatment from the very beginning of her admission to the hospital.

He also alleged that the doctors went to treat another patient leaving Jui bleeding due to a faulty operation at the operation theatre (OT).

When contacted, Dr Atiar Rahman, who is also a surgeon at Bangladesh Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital, said the operation was flawless and the patient died not because of operation-related complications.

Court staff held for taking Phensidyl

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Zahidul Islam Apu, a bench assistant (peshkar) of the Metropolitan Magistrate's Court-16 in Dhaka, was detained yesterday as he took contraband Indian Phensidyl syrup on the court premises.

When a team led by Metropolitan magistrate AEM Ismail Hossain was destroying the contraband items on the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's court premises in the afternoon, Apu picked up a bottle of Phensidyl and started taking the syrup.

Magistrate Ismail saw Apu taking Phensidyl and ordered the court staff to detain him. The magistrate later handed over Apu to Nazir (court keeper).

Sources said Apu will be handed over to Kotwali police station.



Lt Gen (retd) Yogender Bammi of India speaks at a view exchange meeting with freedom fighters at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.

LIBERATION WAR India should declassify documents

Says Lt Gen (retd) Bammi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Documents on the War of Liberation which have been preserved in India should be declassified so that Bangladesh can preserve the real history of the war, Lt Gen (retd) Yogender Bammi of India said yesterday.

Lt Gen (retd) Bammi, who served as a joint force officer during the liberation war, also said armed forces officials of both the countries who were members of the joint forces should write a book of liberation war history jointly under the government initiative or private initiative.

Lt Gen (retd) Bammi, now on personal trip to Bangladesh, said this while exchanging views with freedom fighters at a programme at the Liberation War Museum in the city yesterday.

Replying to a question on whether the documents preserved in India would help Bangladesh in the process for trial of war criminals, he said the issue totally depends on Bangladesh.

Gen (retd) Bammi is one of the first four Indian army officials who entered Dhaka on December 16 in 1971.

"I salute the Mukti Bahini members who received training for only one month and fought with courage and helped us in every phase. I also salute the people of Bangladesh who took up arms, fought, sacrificed their lives, and achieved independence," he said.

"During the liberation war, freedom fighters were great assets for the Indian Army. They had created fear psychosis among the Pakistan army," he added.

He also said, "We have shared our blood and lives during those days and there is no thicker bond than this."

Later, Gen (retd) Bammi presented three flags and several photographs of the liberation war to the Liberation War Museum.

Maj Gen (retd) Amin Ahmed Chowdhury, Nasiruddin Yusuf Bacchu, Col (retd) Sazzad and Air Vice Marshal (retd) Sultan Mahmud were present at the programme.

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Tk14.26 lakh smuggled goods seized at ZIA

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officials at Zia International Airport (ZIA) seized smuggled electronics goods and VoIP equipment worth about Tk 14.26 lakh early yesterday and arrested three people in this connection.

The arrestees are Sajal Bin Ahmed of Madaripur and Kamal Uddin Patwari and Mir Hossain of Comilla district.

Customs officials said they seized 43 cameras from Sajal who came from Hong Kong via India.

Besides, 84 computer processors, 77 mobile phone sets and 14 videocassettes were seized from the possession of Kamal and Mir Hossain who came from Malaysia via Singapore.

21 lakh unemployed in country

Minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Labour and Employment Minister Engineer Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said in the parliament that the number of unemployed people in the country is 21 lakh.

The minister disclosed it referring the survey titled 'Labour force survey 2006' conducted by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

He, however, said his ministry does not have any exact data about the educated unemployed people in the country.

In a scripted answer to a question of Awami League lawmaker Jamuddin Pramanik, the labour minister said the government has taken various measures to generate employment.

27TH BCS EXAMS Govt hailed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unsuccessful candidates in the 2nd phase results of the much controversial 27th BCS examinations yesterday hailed the government for giving its assurance of recruiting all 1,137 unsuccessful candidates in different public services.

The government may consider their demands by ignoring the second phase results published by the present PSC body.

They placed the demands at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday following the assurance by Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid and Textiles Minister Abdul Latif Siddique on Monday.

The candidates also reiterated their demand for removing PSC Chairman Dr Saadat Hussain.

However, Fair BCS Movement, a platform of students, condemned the government step, saying that High Court declared the 1st phase results illegal due to gross irregularities and widespread corruption.

At the programme, the unsuccessful candidates declared February 16 as National Job Rights Day with the assurance of the ministers.

ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES Prices to decline further if traders help

Says commerce minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Commerce Minister Faruk Khan yesterday said prices of essentials started to decline and it would come to a tolerable level if businessmen extend more cooperation.

The minister made the remarks when a delegation of Dhaka City Fish and Kitchen Markets Small Traders Association met him at the conference room of the ministry.

The traders put forward a set of demands to the minister and pledged that if their demands are met, they would be able to reduce Tk 20 in per kg fish and Tk five in per kg vegetables.

The demands include action against aratdars (warehouse owners) who collect illegal tolls from greengrocers, stopping the form of toll popularly known as 'Koyeli' and all other sorts of toll collection, removal of shops from footpaths and introduction of four proposed kitchen markets in the city.

The minister told the traders that he knows about all sorts of toll collection, urging them to resolve the problems through talks.

Those who are involved in illegal business are less in number, he said, adding, "It is possible to stop activities of the dishonest businessmen, if honest businessmen, who are higher in number, perform their roles sincerely."

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CONVICTION IN ABSENTIA AG opposes bail prayers of politicians

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam yesterday strongly opposed the bail prayers filed by some politicians convicted in absentia in the cases against them.

He told the High Court that any convict cannot get any benefit of praying for bail to the HC by directly appearing before this court without surrendering to the trial court in connection with the case concerned and this is the settled principle of long existing laws.

The highest law officer of the country said this while making submissions during the hearings on bail petitions.

Earlier, the petitioners' counsels argued that there was no rule of law in the country during the last two years of emergency and it was difficult for the petitioners to surrender before the courts in connection with the cases against them.

The High Court has powers to consider the bail prayers, they said.

The HC bench of Justice Syed AB Mahmudul Huq and Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury adjourned until today the hearing of the petitions.

The politicians, including former Awami League lawmaker Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya, Jatiya Party (Manju) Chairman Anwar Hossain Manju, former BNP lawmaker Nadim Mostafa and former finance minister M Saifur Rahman's son Shafiqur Rahman Babu, in January surrendered before the court and prayed for bail in different criminal cases.

In the cases, they were convicted in absentia.

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Foreign ministry begins shake-up

UNB, Dhaka

With the inauguration of the new government, the foreign ministry is poised to go through an overhaul with new postings, transfers or retirements of diplomats.

Bangladesh ambassadors to the United States Humayun Kabir and Vietnam Maroof Zaman have been called back to Dhaka at the first knock.

Foreign Secretary Touhid Hossain yesterday told reporters that they had been called back as "it was deemed fit". But, he said, it takes time for them to come back.

It has not yet been decided who to be assigned to the important diplomatic mission in Washington.

Touhid said Bangladesh Ambassador to Malaysia Maj (Retd) Khairuzaman, who was accused in the Jail Killing Case and later acquitted by High Court orders, would relinquish his charge on February 28. After relinquishing his post, one diplomat usually takes seven days to return home.

Presently, seven ambassadorial posts remained vacant in Bangladesh missions abroad. With the calling back of the three envoys, the number of vacancies will be 10.

The foreign secretary said currently three army generals are serving in Bangladesh missions abroad. Rear Admiral Mustafizur Rahman is scheduled to take up his assignment as ambassador to Libya.

As per government decision of 1991, 70 percent Foreign Service Cadres and 30 percent from outside the cadre are appointed as ambassadors.

The new government has not yet made any political appointment for the ambassadorial job.

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JANATAR MANCHA CASE HC vacates stay order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday vacated its earlier order staying the proceedings against former director of the Narcotics Control Department Syed Bazul Karim in the Janatar Mancha sedition case filed in April 2002.

Upon a prayer moved by Bazul Karim's counsel Advocate Anisul Huq, the HC bench of Syed AB Mahmudul Huq and Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury also discharged the rule earlier issued by HC on the government to explain why the proceedings of the case should not be quashed.

Anisul Huq appealed to the court to vacate its earlier order so that the government can successfully withdraw the case.

He told The Daily Star yesterday that the government has decided to withdraw the case against his client and others filed by the BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

Sources said the home ministry on January 27 sent a letter asking the Metropolitan Public Prosecutor to begin the process for withdrawal of the case.

In the letter, Deputy Secretary (Law) of the Home Ministry Mohammad Sujayet Ullah said the government has decided not to go ahead with the case.

The other accused in the case are Awami League lawmaker Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, former home secretary and Election Commissioner Shafiqur Rahman, former students relationship officer of education ministry Abu Alam Shahid Khan, former joint secretary in the women's affairs ministry Sirajuddin Ahmed, former assistant secretary of establishment ministry Rabiul Alam Mohammad Obaidul Mukhtar Chowdhury, former deputy inspector general of police Prokrit Ranjan Chanda and former president of the Secretariat Karmachari Sanjukta Parishad Syed Mohiuddin.

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Dr Zoha's anniversary of death today

RU CORRESPONDENT

The death anniversary of Prof Dr Shamsuzzoha will be observed on the Rajshahi University (RU) campus today.

On this day in 1969, Prof Zoha, a teacher of the chemistry department and proctor of the university, he was shot dead by the Pakistani army in front of the RU main gate. His death intensified mass uprising against the then autocratic regime.

The RU authorities have taken elaborate programmes to observe the day, which include placing wreaths at his grave, discussion, memorial lecture, milad mahfil and special prayer session.

University Grant Commission (UGC) Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam will deliver the 'Zoha Memorial Lecture' at Kazi Nazrul Islam auditorium.

Different student and cultural organisations also took various programmes on the occasion.

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Wasa inspector fined for illegal connection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court fined an inspector of Dhaka Wasa (Water Supply and Sewerage Authority) on charge of conniving at an illegal water connection at Banani on Monday.

The mobile court of Wasa fined Md Zubayer Hossain Tk 5000 for his negligence in duty and involvement in the illegal practice, special metropolitan magistrate Kazi Wasi Uddin told The Daily Star over phone.

The court fined the inspector during a drive against illegal water connections and bill defaulters in Wasa revenue zone-5.

The court also realised Tk 83,000 in outstanding bills and fines from the owner of House 107 at Road 4 in Banani Block-B for

with the cases against them.

The High Court has powers to consider the bail prayers, they said.

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Altaf Uddin METRO DESK

Today is the 59th death anniversary of Altaf Uddin, a missionary of communal harmony, says a press release.

On the occasion, milad mahfil and discussion will be held at Shaheed Altaf Memorial Girls' High School and Shaheed Altaf Uddin Memorial High School in Barisal.

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DHAKA TODAY

Workshop
National Food Policy and Capacity Strengthening Programme organises a two-day workshop on 'Research in support of the national food policy: Results of the challenge fund research and review of on-going projects'. Venue: Biam Foundation multipurpose hall. Time: 9:00am.

Consultation meeting
Institute of Governance Studies of Brac University organises a consultation meeting for its study on recent reform initiatives. Venue: Hotel Lakeshore. Time: 10:00am.

Cake festival
Dhakabashi organises a cake festival. Venue: Azimpur Estate Welfare Office premises. Time: 12:00am.

Reception
Department of Music of University of Development Alternative will accord a reception to singer Manna De and organise a discussion on modern songs of golden past. Venue: Time: Music Department auditorium, 80 Satmashjid Road. Time: 12:00am.

Poetry festival
The inaugural ceremony of the national Poetry Festival will be held. Venue: DU central library. Time: 10:00am.

Discussion
Workers Party organises a discussion on spirit of the Ekushey and secular Bangladesh. Venue: Party office. Time: 4:00pm.

BCL reunion
Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) organises a reunion and discussion marking its 61st founding anniversary. Venue: Paltan Maidan. Time: 11:00am.

WEATHER TODAY

Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Light fog may occur over the river basins of the country during late night till morning, Met Office said.

Night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 32.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 10.2 degrees Celsius at Srirangal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:55pm today and rises at 6:29am 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	29.6	18.8	42	36
Chittagong	30.0	17.2	63	42
Rajshahi	28.5	10.5	72	44
Khulna	28.8	14.4	66	51
Barisal	29.8	13.2	55	45
Sylhet	32.2	14.9	59	45
Cox's Bazar	32.0	20.4	64	49