

DRY WEATHER LIKELY



WEATHER TODAY

Unb. Dhaka

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|------|------------------------|------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|---------|
| <div>The weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.</div> <div>Moderate to thick fog may appear over the river basins and light to moderate fog may appear elsewhere over the country from midnight till morning, said the met office.</div> | A mild cold wave is sweeping over the regions of Jessore, Kushtia, Sayedpur, Dinajpur and Srimangal and it may continue. | | The country's highest temperature 29.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Cox's Bazar and lowest 08.4 degrees in Srimangal. | | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in percentage | | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in percentage | |
| | Night and day temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. | | The highest and lowest temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were: | | | | | | | | | |
| | The sun sets in the capital today at 5:47pm and rises tomorrow at 6:38am. | | | | Max: | Min: | Morning | Evening | Max: | Min: | Morning | Evening |
| | | | Dhaka | 25.0 | 12.0 | 85 | 49 | Khulna | 25.5 | 11.5 | 83 | 56 |
| | | | Chittagong | 26.1 | 16.6 | 76 | 63 | Barisal | 26.2 | 10.2 | 99 | 75 |
| | | | Rajshahi | 21.0 | 10.5 | 95 | 69 | Sylhet | 25.7 | 12.6 | 100 | 76 |
| | | | Rangpur | 19.2 | 10.5 | 97 | 76 | Cox's Bazar | 29.3 | 17.7 | 57 | 53 |
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Seagulls locally known as Bodor Kabutar in flight over the Gangamati island, around six kilometres east of the Kuakata beach in Patuakhali, recently. The migratory birds arrive every winter, attracted by sun-dried fishes on the shore of the Bay of Bengal in Kuakata, said locals.



PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

Dissolve JS, hold polls under 'independent' EC

Demands Gonotantrik Bam Morcha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of Gonotantrik Bam Morcha, an alliance of several leftist parties, urged the government to dissolve parliament and hold a new election under an "independent" election commission.

"This parliament was formed through a farcical one-sided election. In order to uphold the norms of democracy, a participatory election is needed," the morcha Convener Abdus Sattar told a press conference at its Topkhana Road office in the capital.

He said an independent commission should be formed to ensure punishment for perpetrators of attacks on minority communities following the January 5 parliamentary elections regardless of their political affiliation.

Developing a secular and democratic political culture requires banning Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir, he observed.

HC bars mineral extraction from Sari river

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to immediately take steps to stop extraction of minerals like sand, stone, marble and coal from the Sari river in Sylhet's Jaintapur to ensure its free flow and navigability.

In response to a writ petition, the court also issued a rule upon the government's authorities concerned to explain in four weeks why they should not be directed to demarcate the river and declare it an "ecologically critical area".

Appealing for the order and rule, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association submitted the petition on Sunday saying that the river flowing in from India is a tourist attraction but the extraction by some traders was polluting and damaging it.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the first death anniversary of Khosruszaman Chowdhury, a freedom fighter and joint secretary of the Bangladesh government in exile at Mujibnagar.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at the capital's Shiddheshwari Mosque.

Hasina prioritises river dredging

HASAN JAHID TUSHER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the government wanted to prioritise dredging projects to save major rivers and protect people from erosion of their banks.

At the weekly cabinet meeting, she inquired the water resources minister of the dredging projects and gave him necessary guidelines to focus on dredging of major rivers.

The premier said once major rivers were dredged, huge land from both banks would be reclaimed, which would add to agricultural land, bring navigability of the rivers back paving the way for smooth waterway communications, and the rivers would hold more water benefiting crop production, several cabinet sources told The Daily Star.

Dredging will also help build industrial parks and roads on the banks, check overflow of water and finally help reduce the chances of flood, Hasina said. The premier asked Finance Minister AMA Muhith to disburse funds when needed for river dredging.

Water Resources Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud told

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL OF MIR QUASEM ALI

Chhatra Sangha turned hotel into torture centre

Testifies third prosecution witness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Islami Chhatra Sangha, the then student wing of Jamaat-e-Islami, occupied Dalim Hotel in Chittagong before turning it into a torture centre of the infamous Al-Badr force during the 1971 Liberation War, said a prosecution witness yesterday.

The third witness, Nasiruddin Chowdhury, in the war crimes case against Mir Quasem Ali, also said the establishment had the name Mahamaya Hotel and was owned by a Hindu man before being occupied and renamed.

It was also where he was confined and had first met Quasem, said the freedom fighter while being cross-examined by

Quasem's counsel Mizanul Islam before the International Crimes Tribunal-1 adjourned proceedings till February 17.

On Sunday, Nasiruddin had testified that Quasem was responsible for organising the Al-Badr force in Chittagong and had even interrogated him to glean information about the pro-liberation forces.

The first prosecution witness, Syed Mohammad Amran, had also stated that Quasem had control over the Al-Badr camp at Dalim Hotel.

Quasem, now a member of Jamaat's central executive council, was chief of Chittagong Chhatra Sangha before becoming the

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Right before the eyes of a traffic police, rickshaws ply a road in the capital's Hatirjheel area where non-motorised three-wheelers are prohibited. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Don't push back Rohingyas

US official for Myanmar Judith Cefkin urges Bangladesh

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States yesterday urged Dhaka to allow Rohingyas if they escape from violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state and permit non-government organisations to provide humanitarian assistance in two refugee camps in Cox's Bazar.

The call was made by visiting US Senior Advisor on Myanmar Judith Cefkin during meetings with the senior officials of the foreign ministry in the morning.

Dhaka reaffirmed that it would continue to pursue dialogue with Myanmar to resolve the issue of early repatriation of refugees and undocumented Rohingyas bilaterally.

At the breakfast meeting, Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque led a team comprising the

foreign office director generals of the UN, South East Asia and Americas divisions.

Bangladesh has been preventing Rohingyas fleeing the violence in Rakhine state since mid-2012, and also banned operations of three international NGOs in Cox's Bazar in July 2012 for illegally providing aid to Rohingya intruders.

There are 30,000 registered refugees in the two official camps, while more than 300,000 unregistered refugees from Myanmar live in makeshift camps and in villages in Cox's Bazar, near the Myanmar border.

A highly placed source in the ministry, who was present at the meeting, told The Daily Star that the US official thanked Bangladesh for sheltering Rohingyas and

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CRACKDOWN AGAINST ILLEGAL WORKERS

5 more Bangladeshis detained in Malaysia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Five more Bangladeshi workers were detained by Malaysian police in the last two days in an ongoing crackdown against illegal foreign expatriates.

Since the inception of the crackdown on January 21, a total of 356 Bangladeshis have been detained, according to Malaysian newspapers.

Malaysian National News Agency Bernama reported that

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Why not fresh JS poll in Pabna-1

HC asks EC, govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule upon the Election Commission and government to explain in three weeks why they should not be directed to cancel the result of the 10th parliamentary election at Pabna-1 (Sathia-Bera) constituency and hold a fresh election there.

The rule came following hearing of a petition filed by former Awami League (AL) state minister for information Prof Abu Sayeed who had contested as an independent candidate from there on January 5.

Former AL state minister for home Shamsul Haque Tuku won at the constituency as an AL candidate and Sayeed, in the petition, said it was through rigging votes, abusing power and influencing law enforcers.

Sayeed had prayed for the cancellation and fresh election.

Errant hajj agencies may lose licences

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A good number of hajj agencies out of a total of 193, which face allegations of deceiving pilgrims and not providing proper services, may lose licences or security money ranging from Tk 10 lakh to Tk 20 lakh.

After receiving various allegations against the 193 agencies from victims and the hajj mission of the Bangladesh embassy in Saudi Arabia, a probe committee of the religious affairs ministry asked the agencies' representatives to appear before it and give explanations.

The five-member committee headed by the ministry's additional secretary, Bazlul Haque Biswas, will question

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NEWSIN brief

Bangladeshi dies after assault in Indian prison

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

A Bangladeshi national, who was arrested in Tripura state of India, died in a jail on Friday night of injuries he suffered during a physical assault by some convicts, according to media reports.

Karim Mia, who was apprehended in Khowai in west Tripura, died nine days after he was admitted to the GB Pant Hospital in Agartala, capital of Tripura.

"We will constitute an inquiry as he was in judicial custody. We have also to submit a report to the court," a prison official said. Mia was arrested on the charge of theft and for illegally trespassing into the country. The Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata has been informed of Mia's death.

Floating body of man recovered from Turag river

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Police recovered the body of an unidentified man from the Turag river at Kathaldia of Tongi yesterday.

Tongi police said locals last saw him on Sunday while he was bathing in the river after he had attended the Akheri Munajat. Police sent the body to Gazipur Sadar Hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Five held with illegal VoIP equipment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion yesterday detained five people with a huge quantity of illegal Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) equipment worth Tk 57 lakh raiding different places in the capital's Khilkhet, Mirpur and Kafrul.

The arrested are Md Ashiqur Rahman, 23, Md Idris Miah, 23, Md Sirajul Islam alias Prince, 32, Md Hasanuzzaman, 29, and Sheikh Imrul Hossain Tushar, 34. They were supposed to be sued yesterday, said a Rab press release.



Talks

United Nations Association of Bangladesh will hold talks on "Thoughts of Dag Hammarskjöld and the UN"; Venue: Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs; Time: 5:00pm.



Human chain

National Garment Workers Federation will form a human chain demanding Tk 28 lakh as compensation for families of the killed in Rana Plaza collapse and Tk 5 lakh for each injured; Venue: before Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.



Interviews of cricketing heroes: Wasim Akram, MS Dhoni, Rahul Dravid, Clive Lloyd, Dennis Lille, Garry Sobers, Jacques Kallis and many more.

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