

DRY WEATHER
LIKELY

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today, said Met Office.

Mild cold wave is sweeping over the regions of Mymensingh, Tangail, Srimangal, Pabna, Rangpur and Saidpur and it may

abate.

Night and day temperature may rise slightly over the country.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:48pm and rises tomorrow at 6:37am.

Country's highest temperature 29.5

degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Patuakhali and lowest 07.6 degrees in Srimangal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage		Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage		
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening	
Dhaka	26.8	12.5	74	65	Khulna	28.5	12.0	91	69
Chittagong	27.8	14.2	78	66	Barisal	27.9	12.4	92	67
Rajshahi	27.5	10.7	95	71	Sylhet	24.5	12.9	93	68
Rangpur	22.5	08.6	97	74	Cox's Bazar	29.0	15.4	57	55

Jan 5 poll detrimental to democracy

Says former CEC ATM Shamsul Huda citing low turnout, rigging

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Low voter turnout and rigging that marked the January 5 national polls are a major barrier for flourishing of democracy, former chief election commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said yesterday.

At the same time, the opposition's violent activities in the name of movement also affected the democratic atmosphere, he told a mock parliament.

The debate on "Whether people responded to opposition's call to boycott the 10th parliament election or not" was organised by Debate for Democracy in the capital's Bashundhara City. "Creating a fear-free atmosphere and earning people's trust are the prime prerequisites for ensuring high turnout of voters. But these were absent in the 10th national election," Huda said.

About BNP-led alliance's pre-election demonstrations, marked by killings of civilians, he said spontaneous participation of people was absent in the movement as it was violent.

Debate for Democracy Chairman Hassan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron conducted the debate between Jahangirnagar University and IBAIS University, while the latter being in opposition won.

NEWS IN
brief

32 held at Bangla college freed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday morning released 32 people, out of 42, who were detained at a dormitory of Mirpur Bangla College in the capital.

Twenty sharp weapons, a pistol, and some arms and ammunition were recovered during the raid early yesterday. College sources said most of those released and six students out of 10 still in custody are involved with ruling party-backed student body Bangladesh Chhatra League.

Boy dies after falling off stairs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-year-old boy died after falling off the staircase of the second floor of a two-storey building in the capital's Uttar Khan area yesterday.

Mohammad Mahim, was playing on the stairs when he lost his footing and fell off the stairs as there was no protective railing, said Giasuddin, Mahim's grandfather. He succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Woman commits 'suicide' in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A woman allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself in her home in the capital's Dakkhin Khan area yesterday.

The deceased was Sabita, 23, wife of Krishna Sutradhar, a day labourer. Police said, yesterday morning Krishna woke up to find his wife hanging from the ceiling fan by a scarf. She might have committed suicide over family feuds and monetary problems. An unnatural death case was filed.

Worker dies in scaffold collapse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A construction worker died after his scaffold collapsed while he was working on the third floor of an under-construction five-storey building in the capital's Pallabi yesterday.

The bamboo platform collapsed to the ground, leaving Abdur Rashid, 23, of Chapainawabganj seriously injured. He was declared dead in Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Three hurt in attack by extortionists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three assistants of a cable TV service provider were injured in an attack by extortionists in the capital's Hazaribagh last night.

Two of them--Rana, 28, and Sumon, 26--suffered bullet wounds, while the third, Belal, 25, was stabbed, said a source at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Police said local extortionist Masud and his men attacked the victims, as the owner, Kabir, refused to pay them.



(Clockwise from top left) Students of Rajuk Uttara Model College of Dhaka, Sylhet Government Pilot High School, Government Agragami Girls High School & College of Sylhet, and DPS STS School of Dhaka selected at the beginning of the first round of The Daily Star Spelling Bee's third season yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



First round of season 3 begins

TAHIRA AHMED TRISHNA



The first round of The Daily Star Spelling Bee's third season began yesterday with three to four students being selected from four schools in Dhaka and two each in Sylhet and Chittagong.

The schools are Rajuk Uttara Model College, DPS STS School, Ideal School & College, and Motijheel Government Boys' High School in Dhaka; Sylhet Government Pilot High School, and Government Agragami Girls High School & College in Sylhet; and Chittagong Cantonment Public College, and Chittagong Model School & College in Chittagong.

The first round will be held for students, except SSC examinees and O level candidates, from class VI-X of 200 English and Bangla medium schools in seven divisions alongside on the web at www.champs21.com all throughout February.

Those selected will sit for the second divisional round next month.

NEW DEVELOPMENT GOALS AFTER MDGs
Clear support mechanism a must: Shahriar Alam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Any new development goals set by the global community must have a clear and robust support mechanism, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam said yesterday, referring to inadequate resources for attaining the MDGs by 2015.

The efforts of much of the developing world shrank, as the world faced challenges midway through the last decade due to the triple crises of fuel, food and finance, he told a seminar on contemporary development debate and Bangladesh.

The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) organised it in its auditorium in the capital, as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is set to replace the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals after 2015.

Dr Shamsul Alam, an official of the Planning Commission, said Bangladesh needed foreign assistance to the tune of \$5 billion and \$3 billion per year under the baseline and high growth scenarios respectively, but received on average only \$1.32 billion annually during 1990-2011.

At the seminar, experts said Bangladesh had made significant strides in achieving several MDGs.

The poverty rate fell from 56.7 percent in 1991-91 to 29 percent in 2012, while primary school enrolment rate increased to 98.7 percent. Bangladesh has also reduced child deaths considerably.

"While school enrolment is high, the challenge now is the quality of education," said Neal Walker, UN resident coordinator in Bangladesh. He emphasised reducing "profound malnutrition" and promoting ownership of land and productive assets for the poor.

Dr Mustafizur Rahman, executive director, Centre for Policy Dialogue, laid stress on reforming the global trade regime, mainly opening up of the labour market of the developed countries.

He also recommended increasing of own financing by improving tax regimes at home and demanded of the developed nations to support Bangladesh's energy development.

As part of innovative resource mobilisation, Brac University Vice Chancellor Prof Ainun Nishat recommended taxing holidaymakers, while waiving taxes on the travel of migrant workers.

Foreign Secretary Shahidul Haque, BIISS Director General Maj Gen SM Shafiquddin Ahmed, Chairman Munshi Faiz Ahmad, and DFID Bangladesh Head Sarah Cooke also spoke.

Third phase of upazila polls likely on March 15

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The schedule for elections to around 74 upazila parishads in the third phase will be announced today or Sunday, Election Commissioner Shah Nawaz said yesterday.

Polls to these upazilas might be held on March 15, Election Commission sources told The Daily Star.

Out of 487 upazila parishads in the country, elections to 97 will be held on February 19 and one on February 24 in the first phase, and 117 on February 27 in the second phase.

The sixth and final phase is likely to be held on May 3, said EC officials.

Meanwhile, the EC has deferred its today's meeting with deputy commissioners, superintendents of police, and election officers of all districts on laying a plan to maintain law and order during the upazila elections. EC sources said the meeting might take place on February 12.

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Shahriar Kabir's book on war crimes launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A book of essays focusing on war crimes, Jamaat-e-Islami's role, and extremism, "Gonodatla theke Gonjagorom Mancha" (From People's Court to Gonjagorom Mancha), was launched in the Amar Ekushey Granthamela yesterday.

The launch marked the first anniversary of Gonjagorom Mancha, a platform formed on February 5, demanding highest punishment for all war criminals.

Eminent personalities and activists of Ekatturer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul

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Five JS committees formed

State minister for home says prisons are overcrowded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday formed five parliamentary standing committees.

Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury was made ex-officio chief of three committees--the business advisory committee, committee on the rules of procedure, and petition committee.

Awami League adviser Suranjit Sengupta was appointed chief of the parliamentary standing committee on the law ministry, while Chief Whip ASM Feroz was made chief of the House Committee.

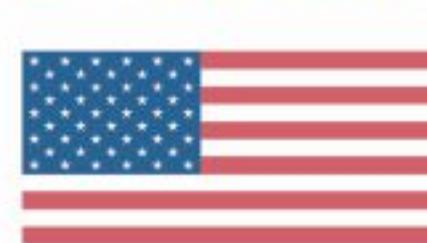
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U.S. Embassy Dhaka and the Bangladesh Football Federation present

SPORTS UNITED

An exhibition game between American Pro Soccer Players & the Bangladesh Football Federation
Friday, February 7, 3:00 pm
Free entry
BANGLADESH FOOTBALL FEDERATION TURF, MOTIJHEEL C/A, DHAKA



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