

DRY WEATHER
LIKELY

WEATHER
TODAY

Unib, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia, Tangail and Mymensingh and weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country till 6:00pm today.	Night and day temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.	Celsius was recorded yesterday in Sitakunda and lowest 12.0 degree Celsius in Sreemangal.	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage		Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage			
	The sun sets in the capital today at 6:01pm and rises tomorrow at 6:21am. Country's highest temperature 32.1 degree	The highest and lowest temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening		
			Dhaka	29.2	16.6	51	41	Khulna	29.3	17.5	62	55
			Chittagong	30.5	17.4	56	47	Barisal	29.7	16.0	72	57
			Rajshahi	27.8	14.4	84	61	Sylhet	30.2	14.8	57	56
			Rangpur	27.7	16.4	75	45	Cox's Bazar	31.5	18.5	60	59

NEWSIN
brief

First JS session to continue till April 3

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing first session of the 10th parliament will continue till April 3.

The decision was taken at a meeting of Business Advisory Committee held at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday.

Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury chaired the meeting that was attended, among others, by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Opposition Leader Raushan Ershad and Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad.

It was the advisory committee's first meeting in the 10th parliament that went into session on January 29.

IUB honours staff for 15yrs of service

CITY DESK

The Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) organised an award ceremony yesterday to honour university staff who have completed 15 years of service at IUB.

A letter of appreciation and a crest were provided to the 62 employees, including three posthumously. The ceremony was held on the university campus in the capital's Bashundhara residential area.

Rashed Chowdhury, chairman of the Board of Trustees, IUB, and Prof M Omar Rahman, vice chancellor of the university, among others, were present.

Bangladeshi gets Chilean award

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi businessman Asif A Chowdhury has got Chile's prestigious Bernardo O'Higgins award for his outstanding contributions to developing relations with Chile.

Asif, who is honorary consul of Chile, is the first Bangladeshi to get the award.

Cristian Barros, ambassador of Chile to Bangladesh, on behalf of the Chile government, gave the award at a reception in Radisson Hotel in Dhaka Wednesday.



Police cordon off demonstrating teachers and students of Jagannath University near Bangladesh Secretariat in the capital yesterday when the latter were headed towards the education ministry to hand over a memorandum, demanding punitive action over a recent police assault on them. In an attempt to quell the JnU students' simmering movement to reclaim their 10 dormitories from illegal occupation, police used batons, shotguns and tear gas on the protesters in front of the campus Sunday, leaving a hundred teachers and students injured. The movement started on February 12 with the demand for return of Tibet Hall, part of which is allegedly grabbed by independent lawmaker and Awami League leader Haji Mohammad Selim.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

RTI ACT

Revision of restrictive provisions demanded

CITY DESK

Speakers at a roundtable in Khulna have called for revision of Section 7 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act as it is often misused to hold back information.

MRDI, in partnership with Manusher Jonno Foundation, organised the programme on section 7 of the RTI Act 2009 at a local hotel, says a press release.

Chief Information Commissioner Mohammed Farooq was present as the chief guest. Divisional Commissioner of Khulna Md Abdul Jalil attended as a special guest.

Adviser Programme Operations of MRDI Nepal Chandra Sarker presented the keynote paper and MRDI Executive Director Hasibur Rahman Mukur moderated the programme. Farooq said many of the designated officers were trying to create barriers to providing information using section 7 as an excuse. Such incidents were found in Information Commission's hearing, he added.

Garbage on the way of visitors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Throughout the month of February, a garbage laden path was what visitors had to walk over to enter the Suhrawardy Udyan portion of the Amar Ekushey Granthamela 2014.

Though the fairground was clean, the entire space from Suhrawardy Udyan's gate to the fair's entrance was strewn with litter mostly from food stalls popping up on the gate's right side since the fair's February 1 inauguration.

The condition was made worse as hawkers, beggars and marketers offering leaflets took up position at the fair's entrance and adjoining spaces.

The book fair's management committee had 50 staff to, with assistance from Dhaka South City Corporation, clean the fairgrounds and adjacent spaces and the road from Teacher-Student Centre to Doyel Chatter.

"We clean at night but the road and park (Suhrawardy Udyan) is open to all throughout the day and hundreds of people use these places making it dirty again," Shahida Khatun, the committee's member secretary, told The Daily Star yesterday.



She said five garbage bins placed right outside the fair's entrance alongside some bamboo benches for visitors were found missing on the second day of the fair.

Scheduled to be closed to traffic during fair hours from 3:00pm to 8:30pm, the road was not always sealed off on time by law enforcers, added the director of Bangla Academy's establishment, planning and training division.

On the food stalls she said, "That portion is beyond our jurisdiction."

However, Shahida hopes that Bangla Academy would have more time next year to see how they can deal with these issues which hamper the fair's ambience.

"This year we only got about four days to prepare the Suhrawardy Udyan portion for which there were some flaws," she said.

Bangla Academy Director General Prof Shamsuzzaman Khan claimed that the fair's condition was far better than any other, especially that of Kolkata.

"It would be impossible for any other institution to hold such an uninterrupted fair for one whole month," he said.

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RAPE, MURDER OF ADIVASI WOMEN

Activists rip into admin's silence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Heinous crimes like rape, murder of indigenous girls and repeated communal attacks on indigenous people have been going on in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) for the last few days but the local administrations are being nonchalant, rights activists alleged yesterday.

In a statement, they demanded immediate intervention of the higher authorities to stop the planned attacks, investigate all incidents of atrocities, and punish the perpetrators.

The aggrieved rights defenders cited the incidents that took place over the last two weeks in Khagrachhari district, including the gang rape, murder of Sabita Chakma in Kamalchhari on February 15, and rape of a schoolgirl in Matiranga and repeated attacks on adivasis in Kamalchhari and Betchhari in Khagrachhari on February 25.

These incidents exemplify the human rights violation going on but the local administrations in CHT have created a shameful example of impunity in the country through their silence, read the statement. "Inaction of the administration and law enforcement agencies encourages the perpetrators," it added, listing three points of demand.

The activists call for preventing planned attacks on indigenous people, ending the culture of impunity, and forming independent committees to investigate all violent assaults. A fourth demand was for the proper compensation to all victims.

Twenty-nine activists signed the statement issued by a platform, "Aggrieved People Against Communal Violence".

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Reinstate cop protection for ex-ICT chair

Demands nirmul committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekatturer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday condemned withdrawal of police protection for former chairman of International Crimes Tribunal-1 Justice ATM Fazle Kabir.

In a statement, the anti-war criminal platform called for the facility's reinstatement, saying if the judges were not given extensive protection, none would take part in the war crimes trial proceedings.

Obituary

CITY DESK

Nazmun Nahar Rafia Khatun, wife of late Dr Moslem Uddin Khan, passed away at United Hospital, Dhaka on Wednesday.

Daughter of late Rabeya Khatun and Md Tamiz Uddin Ahmed, Rafia left behind her three daughters, Dr Rukhsana Parveen Khan, Dr Nasreen Parvin Khan and architect Shakila Parveen Khan, says a release.

Her quikhwani will be held at her Gulshan residence after Maghrib prayers Sunday.

She was joint secretary of Cheshire Foundation Homes, Dhaka.

Death anniversary

CITY DESK

Today is the 6th death anniversary of Imran Rahman, former managing director and CEO of Brac Bank.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and feed of the destitute will be held in the capital, says a release.

An alumnus of Shaheen School, Mirzapur Cadet College and IBA of Dhaka University, Imran died in Canada at the age of 45.

Relatives, friends and admirers were requested to pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

Visitors walk past stinking food rubbish littered along the entrance to the Amar Ekushey Granthamela at the Suhrawardy Udyan portion in the capital yesterday. Hundreds of people go through such an unwelcome situation every day apparently due to lack of preparedness or care of the organisers. The country's largest and month-long book fair closes today.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Double pry school stipends

Experts tell programme's evaluation report launch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Monthly stipends for primary school students should be doubled to Tk 200 since living expenses have gone up, urged experts yesterday at the launching of an evaluation report of the programme meant to keep children in schools.

Moreover, every child of a family should get the stipend equally, they suggested at a hotel in the capital. The eldest gets Tk 100 and the next Tk 25 while others get none.

"Costs have gone up so much that the value of the stipend money is around half of what it used to be in 2003 (when the programme was introduced)," said Hossain Zillur Rahman, former adviser to a caretaker government.

The report, "Bangladesh primary education stipends: A qualitative assessment", was prepared by the Directorate of Primary Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Power and Participation Research Centre and Unicef.

"Our military expenditure has gone up so why not spend more on education? It is the state's responsibility to make sure all children are educated," urged Rasheda K Choudhury, another adviser.

The government is currently allotting only USD 50 per child annually whereas developed countries spend USD 3,000, she remarked. "In South Asia, we spend the least behind our children," she added.

The students must also be given a hot midday meal since it is one of the most effective ways of keeping them in school, stated the experts.

Even the teachers should be given incentive

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Doctors will be made to stay in rural areas

Health Minister Nasim tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister Mohammad Nasim yesterday vowed in parliament that he would not give in to lobbying for transfer of doctors stationed in union and upazila health centres to the capital before they have spent two years in rural areas.

"In the last one and a half months [of the present government], I didn't approve transfer of doctors to Dhaka from their respective union and upazila health complexes," he said.

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RMC, CMC to be universities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to upgrade Rajshahi and Chittagong medical colleges to medical universities, Health Minister Mohammad Nasim said yesterday.

He made the announcement at the "Felicitation Ceremony of Print and Electronic Media Personnel". The Directorate General of Health Services organised the programme at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Nasim said they were forming an advisory committee for his ministry that will include journalists.

Another committee is being formed to examine the government hospitals' records of equipment purchase in recent years, he added. "We will identify and take action against those who were involved in the purchase of expensive equipment that are not useful."

DHAKA TODAY

Alphabet writing contest

Karok Natya Sampradaya will arrange a Bangla alphabet writing contest; Venue: Central Shaheed Minar; Time: 8:00am.

Chapai Utsab

Chapainawabganj Zila Samity, Dhaka will organise the fifth Chapai Utsab; Venue: The Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh; Time: 8:00am.

Int'l Meena Bazar

Women's Voluntary Association will arrange International Meena Bazar 2014; Venue: Banani Chairman Bari Field, Road-1; Time: 10:00am.

Roundtable

Rastrabigyan Samity will arrange a roundtable on leadership in politics; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 10:00am.

Discussion

Bangladesh Nationalist Front will hold a discussion on BDR tragedy; Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity; Time: 11:00am.

CORPORATE BOOKING

Fantasy Kingdom, Heritage Park and Water Kingdom will be reserved on 28th February, 2014 (Friday) for the Annual Picnic of Hop Lun (BD) Ltd.

From 1st March, 2014 (Saturday) Fantasy Kingdom and Heritage Park will remain open for all.



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