

HEAT WAVE MAY CONTINUE



Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Sylhet division till 6:00pm today. Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Mild to moderate heat wave is sweeping over Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Barisal divisions and the regions of Sylhet and Pabna and it may continue. Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:22pm

and rises tomorrow at 5:32am.

Country's highest temperature 39.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rangamati and lowest 20.5 degree Celsius in Sreemangal. The highest and lowest temperatures 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 37.7	28.2	58	50	Khulna 39.2	25.2	49	40
Chittagong 33.4	26.0	82	75	Barisal 37.6	25.6	63	56
Rajshahi 35.7	25.9	39	55	Sylhet 36.5	23.5	57	59
Rangpur 34.4	24.5	72	52	Cox's Bazar 36.3	26.5	68	63

Kalshi-Purabi road being widened

Completion of work likely by June

HELEMI ALAM

Dhaka North City Corporation is doubling the width of the 1.3km long road between Kalshi and Purabi in Mirpur to deal with the huge traffic generated after the inauguration of the Mirpur-Airport Road Flyover in March last year.

About 60 percent of the road has been widened to 120 feet from existing 60 feet, and the rest will be completed by June, said Lt Col Saiful Islam, the project director. During the extension work, the authorities have evicted a large number of encroachers by the roadside.

Though it has significantly cut travel time of commuters using the flyover to and from Mirpur 11, travellers feel discouraged to use the road, as it is narrow, full of illegal occupiers and lacks proper traffic management.

Officials said while around 10,000 vehicles were supposed to be plying the flyover, the figure stood at 5,000 currently due to the road's poor condition.

Project director Saiful Islam said they were doing the work on prime minister's instructions to develop the infrastructure for facilitating the movement of VIPs, including cricketers, to the Mirpur national cricket stadium.

The Tk 18 crore project involving drainage system development and footpath building is being implemented by Bangladesh Army's 14 Engineering Corps with the assistance of the city corporation.

The project director said a 120-foot box culvert would be installed so that the underground sewers along the road could carry rainwater into the culvert linked to a canal. After completion of the work, local police will be assigned to keep the road free from illegal occupiers, he added.

Locals said when the army started the extension work

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A stretch of the 1.3km Kalshi-Purabi road, which is being widened. With 60 percent of the work done, the rest is likely to be completed by June. The crucial road gives commuters from Airport road an easy access to the capital's Mirpur. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

FLOURISHING OF DEMOCRACY

Dynastic politics major barrier

Says Prof Rounaq Jahan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dynastic leadership and lack of democratic practices inside political parties are the major challenges for the advancement of democracy in Bangladesh, eminent political scientist Prof Rounaq Jahan said yesterday.

"Political parties are a major component of democracy. How democracy will flourish if democracy is absent inside the parties?" she said in her lecture, "Political Parties in Bangladesh: Challenges of Democratization", at the capital's Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

Political parties do not regularly hold councils to choose new leadership and do not take opinions of grassroots leaders in nominating candidates in most cases, the former Dhaka University professor said. "Democratic practices are absent here."

Prof Rounaq laid stress on a qualitative change in the country's political culture. "People should continue their attempts to change the culture by being involved in politics. It's not possible to change the political culture staying outside of politics," she remarked.

The analyst identified intra-party violence

as a dominant feature in recent times, mostly in the ruling party. This mainly occurs due to a lack of democratic practices inside the parties, she said.

Rounaq, also distinguished fellow of the civil society think tank, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), shed light on businesspersons' coming to politics and stressed that there should be a law restricting such people from using political clout to expand their businesses.

She observed that since the "democratic era" started in 1991 in the country, small political parties had been gradually marginalised, and they were joining alliances led by Awami League and BNP.

Although Jatiya Party is considered one of the largest parties, the recent upazila parishad election results suggest that the party is losing popularity and strength, she said.

Prof Rounaq also observed that there was a lack of transparency in collecting and spending funds of political parties.

Talking about students' politics, she said absence of elections to the students unions at universities was the main reason holding back the emergence of talented student leaders.

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Indo-Bangla railway meeting begins tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The three-day annual India-Bangladesh Inter-Governmental Railway Meeting will begin in Dhaka tomorrow to discuss various railway issues of the two countries.

Additional Director General (Operations) of Bangladesh Railway Shah Zahirul Islam will lead Bangladesh side while Railway Board's Additional Member (Traffic) AK Maitra will lead the Indian delegation.

The meeting will undertake a complete review of railway cooperation between the two countries and ways and means to improve connectivity and services, says a press release.

The measures include making travel by Maitree Express more convenient and comfortable, re-opening of old rail connectivity points such as Birol (Bangladesh), Radhikapur (India), Chilahati (Bangladesh), Haldibari (India) and opening of new points,

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INVESTIGATING 'NEGLIGENCE' AT MITFORD HOSPITAL

Interns assault reporters, videographers of ETV

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Interns of the capital's Mitford Hospital yesterday beat up three reporters and three videographers of Ekushey Television, a private TV channel, and smashed two cameras on the hospital premises.

They also confined the journalists and videographers to the hospital Director Brig Gen Zakir Hasan's room for several hours.

Ilias Hossain, a wounded journalist, said it all started when he and videographer Monirul Islam went to the hospital around 11:00am upon receiving an allegation from a patient that he was not getting proper treatment.

The reporter said he alone had gone

inside the ward to talk to the patient as part of the investigation, with an aim to discuss the matter with the hospital director later.

In another instance inside the ward, an intern pushed a patient following a scuffle, provoking the reporter to protest it.

Coming to know about his professional identity, the intern got furious, called others who started beating him, Ilias said.

Videographer Monirul, who was kept outside the gate of the ward, started filming it. Seeing him videoing, the unruly interns then caught Monirul and started beating him mercilessly.

They also snatched our camera and confined us to the director's room, Ilias said.

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Tech education underscored for country's development

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed for quality enhancement and popularisation of technical education to face the challenges of 21st century, and turn Bangladesh into a middle income country by 2021.

They underscored the increase of technical education to 25 percent, citing that such medium of education could accelerate the country's development, says a press release.

Senior government officials, intellectuals and educationists, among others, attended the seminar on "Innovation: Industrialisation and Employment" at the Dhaka Polytechnic Institute.

It was part of the second round of the Skills Competition 2014 (regional level) that took place simultaneously in 10 polytechnic institutes including Dhaka yesterday.

The competition has been organised by the Skills

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Kidnapped Sylhet girl rescued after 3 months

One held

UNB, Sylhet

Police rescued a schoolgirl at Barolekha in Moulvibazar district Friday afternoon, three months after her abduction from in front of her residence at Jakiganj in Sylhet.

The rescued is Afia Begum, 14, daughter of Kabir Uddin, a resident of Rasulpur village in Jakiganj.

Police arrested Sohel Ahmad, 22, son of Sahab Uddin, a resident of Majikandi village in Jakiganj, in connection with Afia's abduction on January 19.

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Two held with gold, Indian currency at Dhaka airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs Intelligence officials in separate drives arrested a man with 17 gold bars, weighing 2 kilogrammes, worth around Tk 1 crore and another with Indian Rs 50 lakh at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital yesterday.

The gold bars were seized from the luggage of one Zakir Hossain around 9:00pm, Customs Intelligence Director General Moinul Khan told The Daily Star.

Zakir came to the airport by a flight coming from Dubai, he added.

Earlier in the morning, the officials arrested another Bangladeshi national and seized the Indian currency from his possession at the airport.

The arrestee was identified as Muhammad Idris, 25.

He landed at the airport by an Air Arabia flight from Karachi in Pakistan, said Mostafizur Rahman, Deputy Director of Customs Intelligence.

On suspicion, the officials held him around 10:30am as they found the money in his luggage.

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