

DRY WEATHER LIKELY

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today. Moderate to thick fog may occur over the country during midnight till morning, said Met Office.



Night and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. **The sun sets in the capital today at 5:13pm and rises tomorrow at 6:32am.** Country's highest temperature 29.4 degree

Celsius was recorded yesterday in Cox's Bazar and lowest 11.1 degrees in Rajshahi. 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	21.2	16.8	91	76	Khulna	24.6	15.2	92	82
Chittagong	28.0	15.6	96	69	Barisal	23.8	15.3	100	94
Rajshahi	17.4	11.1	100	92	Sylhet	25.6	14.6	99	90
Rangpur	16.0	13.5	97	91	Cox's Bazar	29.4	17.5	73	71

While rich siphon money, poor drive economy

Prof Akash tells int'l conference in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

While the wealthy people mostly spend their money either on "wasteful" luxury or siphon it out of the country instead of investing in the domestic economy, the contributions of the poorer sections are driving growth, economist MM Akash said yesterday.

Despite bad governance and the acts of the rich, Bangladesh's economy is growing for farmers, expatriate wage earners, garment workers, and small and medium entrepreneurs, he told an international conference on "political economy, accountability and governance".

Braç's Institute of Governance and Development organised it in a hotel in Dhaka, jointly with Effective States and Inclusive Development, International Growth Centre and the Think Tank Initiative.

There is a default loan of Tk 57,000 crore in the country while the Swiss Bank has a deposit of Tk 3,100 crore siphoned off Bangladesh, said the economics professor of Dhaka University, citing official records, and added that the working class was driving the economic engine.

In a presentation, economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud said widespread tax evasion at individual level caused a very low revenue mobilisation in the country.

He said a lack of democratic culture within political parties, a non-functioning parliament, weak local government, and politicisation of state institutions affected both governance and development.

The professor said somewhat paradoxically and despite "a serious problem of dysfunctional governance", the country had achieved remarkably in human development and poverty reduction efforts over the past two decades.

After the January 5 election, Bangladesh is gaining the syndrome of a one-party state, observed Prof Ataur Rahman, president of Bangladesh Political Science Association.

Brian Allemekinders, charge de affairs of Canadian High Commission, said democracy was much more than mere elections; it required an independent judiciary and election commission and space for mass media.

"There cannot be true good governance without true representation, and true development is not possible without good governance," he said.

Prime minister's adviser Mashiur Rahman, Prof Mushtaq Husain Khan of University of London, and Dr Shankar P Sharma, former vice-chairman of National Planning Commission, Nepal, also spoke, while Prof Rehman Sobhan, chairman of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, presided over the session.



The finalists of The Daily Star's photo contest, inPixel, a platform for promoting photography among the country's amateur photographers, with certificates presented by The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday. Robin Hasnat and Ziaul Haque Oisharj were presented high-end smartphones for being adjudged winners in two themes, Rivers of Bangladesh and Festival, respectively. The second and third position winners received power banks.

PHOTO: STAR

MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEM Science, indigenous knowledge both needed

Experts tell seminar marking Int'l Mountain Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The fragile ecosystem of mountains, storehouses of global biodiversity, needs to be managed using science, policy and indigenous knowledge together to ensure sustainable livelihood of both the mountainous communities and people living in the plains, said experts.

They discussed the impacts on ecological system of mountains caused by different factors both natural and man-made as well as ways to managing it at a seminar on "Mountain Farming" at Cirdap auditorium in the capital yesterday marking International Mountain Day-2014.

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OIL SPILLAGE Environmentalists demand Sundarbans' protection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environmentalists at a human chain yesterday demanded that the government take immediate steps to protect the Sundarbans from the oil spill in the rivers Shela and Pashur.

Poribesh Bachao Andolon (Poba) organised the event in front of the National Museum in the capital.

A thick layer of oil is floating in the two rivers after an oil tanker carrying 3.58 lakh litres of furnace oil and eight crew members sank in the Shela near

Mongla around 5:00am on Tuesday.

Speakers at the human chain said survival of aquatic life forms, including different species of fishes, crocodiles and dolphins, in the Sundarbans depend on zooplankton and phytoplankton, organisms that drift in oceans, seas, and bodies of fresh water.

The oil spill would destroy these organisms and harm the forest's biodiversity, they added.

Abu Naser Khan, chairman of Poba, said government can restrict the spill using foam and net and then clean up

the oil with help of experts.

Referring to the forest department's claim that Tk 100 crore wealth of the forestry was damaged, Dr Anisuzzaman Khan, chairperson of Biodiversity World, questioned how they can estimate the loss before any survey was done by experts.

He said according to the law, no vessel can ply within the Sundarbans. Yet around 150 to 250 vessels ply there every day.

Abdus Sobhan, executive secretary of Poba, among others, spoke.

Sexual minorities being harassed

Law enforcers using Section 54 to do that; lawyers tell Bandhu Social Welfare Society workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers often use Section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to harass homosexuals and other sexual minorities as it allows arrest of anyone without a warrant, lawyers from around the country told a workshop yesterday.

It remains the most convenient way to harass people, they observed at the programme, "Human Rights of the Sexual Minorities: Response and Responsibilities", organised by Bandhu Social Welfare Society in the capital's The Daily Star Centre.

"Section 54 is often abused at the whim of law enforcers. SEE PAGE 4 COL 7, SEE PHOTO ONLINE

ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN Perps must be reformed

DU workshop told

DU CORRESPONDENT

Instead of being overlooked, perpetrators of violence against women should be persuaded to join the fight for eliminating gender-based violence, speakers said at a workshop yesterday.

A section of the male population that is already fighting violence against women should play a more active role to make offenders realise their guilt, they said.

They were addressing the workshop titled "Boys and Men Engagement to Reducing Gender based violence" at Dhaka University's Senate Bhavan.

Women and gender studies department of DU and Center for Men and Masculinities Studies organised the workshop.

Tania Haque, chairperson of the department, said the traditional perspective of wholesale branding of wrongdoers should be changed.

"This often results in them [offenders] carrying out the offence again.... So engagement of defaulters in the fight against violence through proper counselling is a must," she added.

Senait Gebregziabher, country director of Plan International Bangladesh, said as academicians and students are attending discussions and workshops focusing on role of men and boys in fighting violence against women, these programmes would be effective in achieving their goals.

HOLDING OF DCC, ZILA PARISHAD POLLS Govt reluctant as it fears AL's defeat

SHUJAN roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is disinclined to hold the elections to the two Dhaka city corporations and zila parishads fearing defeat of the Awami League candidates, discussants told a roundtable yesterday.

The fear might have come from the ruling party's downfall in the elections to five city corporations last year and many upazila parishads this year, said M Hafizuddin Khan, president of Shushashoner Jannoy Nagorik (SHUJAN), which organised the discussion at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

"I think the government wants to confirm the victory of its party men. That's why, the polls are held up," he said, adding that the complexity over demarcation was nothing but a political trick to not hold the DCC polls.

Giving the same reason, Dhaka University's law professor Asif Nazrul said delaying local government elections was a

violation of the constitution and human rights.

The five-yearly DCC election has been overdue since May 2007, while there has been no election to the zila parishads since the passage of the zila parishad act in 2000. The then government appointed administrators to 61 zila parishads in 2011 to run the institutions.

Since the absence of elected representatives is affecting local governance, democratic progress, and depriving people of services, the government must hold the polls immediately, the speakers said.

SHUJAN Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said the government split DCC into two in 2011 and was running them with unelected administrators to serve its "narrow" political interests. He demanded a new zila parishad act to hold the elections and run the institutions effectively.

Former cabinet secretary Ali Imam

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Aggressive campaign key to election victory

Delhi-based think tank tells CPD meeting referring to last Lok Sabha election

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Intense or aggressive campaign in a sense is the key component in winning elections and what matters is how a party reaches its voters or sends its message to people, a Delhi-based think tank says in a survey.

Centre for the Study of Development Societies Director Sanjay Kumar shared results of the recent survey, "Election with a difference: Analysing the Verdict of Lok Sabha Elections 2014", at a views-exchange meeting in the capital's Centre for Policy Dialogue with select media and distinguished guests.

According to the survey, if there was a level playing field in polls campaign, Indian National Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) campaigned honestly and there was some formal platform to campaign, then Congress would not have done so badly and BJP would not have done so well.

Narendra Modi-led BJP captured 285

seats out of 543 seats of Lok Sabha while Sonia Gandhi-led Congress got 44 seats.

Sanjay said, "If we look at the proportionality in terms of the kind of failure, Congress registered in 2014 and their performance, this is a mismatch. Congress actually did not do as badly as they fared in the 2014 election.

"They failed miserably, got only 44 seats. Is this the right reflection of Congress Party's performance between 2009 and 2014.

"Yes, it's true that the United Progressive Alliance led by the Congress governed the country badly (2009-2014) but not as much bad as they did in the election."

So the big message is how best you can send your message to voters and that is the strategy -- how well you can leave the message with the voters, he added.

"Congress did some very big, good jobs in their last tenure including health schemes, midday milk scheme and various

Protest forces JU to relax bounds on females

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University authorities yesterday relaxed their recently rejuvenated strict enforcement of age old restrictions for female resident students in the face of vehement protest from the residents.

The students on Wednesday night brought out a protest procession on the campus centering on a recent alleged incident in which Assistant Proctor Nigar Sultana did not let Shahinur Akhter Priti, a resident student of Sheikh Hasina Hall, enter the dorm, and also seized her identity card as she returned from a workshop after 10:00pm.

However, Proctor Tapan Kumar Shaha denied the allegation.

The students of the hall also claimed that seat allocations of around 40 students were cancelled after December 7 as their hall attendances were below 75 percent.

However, the hall provost, Farid Hossain, said some seven seat allocations were cancelled as the attendances were nil and the others with poor attendance were served with show cause notices.

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