

MILD COLD WAVE
LIKELY TO CONTINUE



WEATHER
TODAY

Unib, Dhaka

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today.		Country's highest temperature 30.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Cox's Bazar and lowest 08.7 degrees in Chuadanga.		Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage		Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
Mild cold wave is sweeping over the regions of Tangail, Rajshahi, Jessore, Kushtia and Srimangal and it may continue, Met Office said.		Night and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.		Max:		Morning		Max:		Morning	
Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river		The sun sets in the capital today at 5:18pm and rises tomorrow at 6:39am.		Min:		Evening		Min:		Evening	
				Dhaka		Khulna					
				Chittagong		Barisal					
				Rajshahi		Sylhet					
				Rangpur		Cox's Bazar					

'Raped' girl dies at DMCH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 15-year-old girl died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday after she, what her sister said, had been raped and fed something by one of her colleagues on Sunday.

Talking to The Daily Star, her sister said the victim worked at a tile factory in Turag.

She claimed that Ramzan raped the girl with false promises of marriage. He then offered her a substance, saying it was a contraceptive, she added.

Locals handed over Ramzan to Turag police. Officer-in-Charge Mahbub-e-Khuda said following a case filed by the family a Dhaka court sent Ramzan to jail after he had been produced before it.

Bid to release 700 tonnes of 'inedible' govt rice foiled in Khulna

Probe body formed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Some officials at Central Storage Depot (CSD) in Khulna city's Manikata Moheshwarpasha area allegedly tried to release some 700 tonnes of rice "unsuitable for consumption" at wholesale markets on Tuesday.

On information from CSD Manager AKM Mizanur Rahman, the district Food Controller Kazi Nurul Islam visited the spot and formed a four-member committee to investigate the incident.

The manager said the rice lost its original colour.

The committee of the District Food Controller's Office headed by Assistant Food Controller Saiful Kabir Khan will investigate whether the rice is unsuitable, and if there was any corruption.

A section of CSD staff, seeking anonymity, said some of their corrupt colleagues were involved in the attempt.

The accused, however, denied the allegation.

At first glance the rice seemed to be unsuitable for consumption, said Saiful, adding that after tests they would be sure about it.

2 'JMB' men

FROM PAGE 3

Dhanmondi Satmasjid Road area at 1:20am alone with a manual on bomb-making. Three others, however, managed to flee, Rahmatullah Chowdhury, DB south assistant commissioner of the bomb disposal team, told The Daily Star.

DB police also claimed that the two used to assist family members of the militants to go to West Bengal and also help return to Bangladesh to carry out terrorist activities.

They came to Dhaka from Chapainawabganj two days ago to avoid arrest. Police produced the two before a court which granted a three-day remand for them, the police officer told The Daily Star.

Christmas

FROM PAGE 3

together to build a happy, propitious and secular Bangladesh. Hasina said the goal of Jesus Christ was to establish justice and peace in the world, and urged all to come forward for the development of the country.

Khaleda Zia requested all to work for the welfare of the people.

Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar along with private TV channels and radio stations will broadcast special programmes, while national dailies will publish supplements highlighting the significance of the day.



Human excrement and rotting garbage surround a postbox of Bangladesh Post Office beside the gate of building number one for parliamentarians on Manik Mia Avenue in the capital. The photo was taken on Saturday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Happy not raped recently

Claims DMC forensic report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forensic Department of Dhaka Medical College yesterday handed over a report to Mirpur police, which claimed that film actress Happy was not raped recently, said the law enforcers.

Happy lodged a case against Bangladesh cricketer Rubel Hossain under Women & Children Repression Prevention Act earlier with Mirpur Police Station on December 13. Doctors at DMC conducted the forensic test the following day.

Criticising the report, Happy told The Daily Star, "I have not said that I had physical relation with Rubel recently. I said that we were involved in a physical relationship for the last nine months as Rubel had promised to marry me."

"When I raised the marriage issue on December 1, he refused to do so. Then I tried to solve the matter before filing the case. So there is no reason of getting a report of recent physical relation," she added.

On December 15, High Court granted Rubel Hossain an anticipatory bail for four weeks in the case.

Free legal aid can boost social services

Discussants tell iProbono roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Considered problem solvers and voices playing a pivotal role in bringing positive change, Bangladesh's lawyers, law firms and academics can offer free services and skills, including research and corporate advice, to civil society and non-government organisations from time to time, enhancing operations and ensuring legal rights of the disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

The recommendations came at a roundtable, "Lawyers as Changemakers", organised by iProbono at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

Pro bono means for the public good and the online platform tends to do just that, connecting non-profits, social enterprises and civil society organisations with providers of free legal support.

Operating globally since 2009 with field offices in London and New Delhi and with support from the Ford Foundation and Commonwealth



Participants at a roundtable titled "Lawyers as Changemakers" at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday, organised by iProbono, an online platform.

PHOTO: STAR

State responsible for unsafe

FROM PAGE 3

preferred public transport over private car." Meanwhile, at a discussion also held at Jatiya Press Club, Passenger Welfare Association of Bangladesh urged the government, transport operators and law enforcers to take comprehensive measures to minimise road accidents.

It also demanded staging massive awareness campaigns to bring behavioural change in passengers and drivers.

The association organised the function titled "Passengers Rights, Human Rights" marking its fifth founding anniversary.

Addressing the function, noted columnist Syed Abul Maksud said if all stakeholders were sincere, around 75 per cent of road accidents could be avoided.

He further viewed that if road accidents could be reduced, hundreds of lives would be saved and the country's economic progress would improve.

Mozammel Haque Chowdhury, secretary of the association, demanded inclusion of passengers' representatives in all decision making processes of transport sectors.

All footbridges, footpaths and underpasses must be repaired and freed from illegal structures to ensure smooth movement of pedestrians, he added.

Other demands include stopping operation of illegal and unfit vehicles, bringing an end to charging additional fare and improving railway and waterways transport systems.

Hasan burned down pro-AL

FROM PAGE 3

were tethered at the cattle shed. I cut the rope with a boti (pruning knife) to save the animals from fire."

After independence, Hachu Bepari returned home and "I narrated the incident to him," she said.

The witness said Hasan had a pointed beard and wore a white Muslim skullcap at that time, and asserted that she could have identified Hasan had he been at the dock.

Hasan faces six charges of crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

The state-appointed defence counsel cross-examined the witness before the proceeding was adjourned until January 5.

New military equipment purchase underway

PM tells passing out parade of army cadets

UNB, Ctg

The import of military equipment from countries like China and Serbia is underway to make the army more modernised and efficient on all sides, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told the commissioning of new cadets at Bangladesh Military Academy in Chittagong yesterday.

The government has signed a \$1 billion deal with Russia to purchase ultra-modern military equipment, which will increase the army's capability a great deal, she said, adding that the force had already got modern tanks, armoured personnel carriers, and multi-barrel rocket launchers.

Referring to the Awami League's role in army's modernisation, she said National Defense College, the Military Institute of Science and Technology, Armed Forces Medical College and the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training were set up in its 1996-2001 tenure.

Hasina said that in line with Bangabandhu's 1974 defence policy, the government formulated the "Forces Goal 2030" and, as part of this, established an infantry division in Sylhet and six units with

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

Ctg city failing to reach full dev potentials

The Daily Star - IUAA roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Though Chittagong has a huge potential to become a prominent port city, it is not growing as per expectation for a slew of reasons including unplanned and uncoordinated development activities, and a lack of vision, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

The roundtable titled "Progress of Chittagong, Obstacles & Opportunities" was jointly organised by The Daily Star and Independent University Alumni Association (IUAA) in the city's Chittagong Independent University (CIU).

Mahbubul Alam, Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry president, said besides building new ports, the government should also increase the capacity and efficiency of Chittagong Port and thereby make it fit for future challenges.

Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, the first vice president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, recommended developing communications between Chittagong and the rest of the country.

Eng Ali Ahmed opined that the Chittagong-Dhaka Highway should be widened in preference to constructing the Padma bridge.

Many development works are being carried out in the city defying the government's master plan and taking advantage of incoordination among the government bodies, said Eng Delwar Majumder.

Focusing on upgrading Chittagong airport to the international standard, and building a five star hotel and a modern convention centre in the city, Wahed Malek, managing editor of The Daily Azadi, said politics should be kept aside during taking decisions about development.

SM Abu Toyab, president of Rotary Club, Chittagong, suggested that the other side of the Karnaphuli river bank be developed as well.

AKM Raisul Huq Bahar, Chittagong Bureau chief of The Daily Star, moderated the roundtable where Syed Mohammad Tanvir, Pacific Jeans director; Kohinur Kamal, Meridian Group chairman; ABM Wadud Ullah, former chairman of Bangladesh Shipping Agents Association; Dr Irshad Kamal Khan, CIU pro-vice chancellor; Dr Mahmud Hassan, an assistant professor of CIU; Eng Shubhash Barua; Alihussain Akberali, BSRM Group chairman; and Dr Shamsul Hossain, former curator of Chittagong University Museum, spoke among others.



Discussants at a roundtable, "Progress of Chittagong, Obstacles & Opportunities", jointly organised by The Daily Star and Independent University Alumni Association in Chittagong Independent University in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR