

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 31.1 L 16.6	H 31.5 L 18.2	H 32.0 L 15.2	H 31.2 L 14.3	H 31.2 L 16.6	H 31.1 L 14.8	H 29.5 L 14.2	H 31.8 L 19.5

Day temperature may rise slightly and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, said Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:05pm and rises tomorrow at 6:13am. Highest temperature 32.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Sitakunda and lowest 11.5 degrees in Srimangal.

Judgment date for Khaleda's challenge deferred to March 15
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday deferred the date for delivering verdict to March 15 on a petition filed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for quashing the proceedings of Barapukuria coal-mine corruption case against her.

The order came after Khaleda's lawyer Zainul Abedin prayed to the court to shift the date saying that they would place arguments on this matter.

Earlier on March 5, the court had fixed March 10 for delivering the judgment after hearing arguments from Khurshid Alam Khan, a counsel for the Anti-Corruption Commission which filed the case on February 26, 2008.

However, Khaleda's lawyers were not present before the court on that day.

The ACC filed the case, accusing Khaleda and 15 others of causing a loss of Tk 159 crore to the state exchequer by awarding a contract for the operation of Barapukuria coalmine to a Chinese company abusing power.

Following a petition filed by Khaleda, the HC on October 16, 2008 stayed the case proceedings and also issued a rule upon the government and the ACC to show cause as to why the proceedings against her in the case should not be quashed.

'Teenage girl raped by former neighbour' in capital
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 13-year-old girl was allegedly raped by her former neighbour in her house in the capital yesterday afternoon.

Victim's mother, who is a day labourer, alleged that her daughter was alone at home when Zakir Hossain, 40, a rickshaw puller, raped her after gagging her.

Being informed by other neighbours, the mother returned home to find her girl bleeding. She rushed her to a local clinic from where she was shifted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital as her condition deteriorated.

Badda police, who were informed about the incident by the DMCH camp police in the evening, did not confirm the rape allegation as forensic exam is scheduled to be held today. Police said Zakir is absconding.

20-PARTY HARTAL GOES DEFUNCT IN CAPITAL



Rows of long queue of vehicles stuck on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the capital at traffic lights in both directions, defying a 72-hour hartal imposed by BNP-led 20-party alliance yesterday around 8:30pm, more than two months into its continuous countrywide blockade and sporadic series of hartals.

CITY CORPORATION POLLS TIN will suffice, no need for copy of tax return
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prospective contestants in the upcoming elections to Dhaka and Chittagong city corporations will have to mention their Taxpayer's Identification Number (TIN) instead of incorporating tax returns with applications seeking candidacy.

"We have already sent the (finalised) draft amendments [to the Local Government (City Corporation) Election Rules] to the law ministry for vetting," Election Commission (EC) Deputy Secretary Abdul Wadud told The Daily Star last evening.

EC plans to introduce this in all elections. Elections to the two city corporations may be held in the last week of May or the first week of June, said EC sources.

Meanwhile, the EC last week directed Government Printing Press to print over 24 types of forms needed for election management.

"This is our routine works. But these are not nomination forms," said EC Assistant Secretary Syed Golam Rashed.

The last election to an undivided Dhaka City Corporation was held on April 2002 and its tenure expired in May 2007. That of Chittagong City Corporation was held in 2010 and its tenure expires on July 26.

In another development, the election commissioners plan to sit today to discuss allowing commercial banks access to the nation database of voters to verify their information.

Currently, Bangladesh Bank, the National Board of Revenue, and Department of Immigration and Passports have access.

UPCOMING CTG MAYORAL VOTE 14-party backing for Mohiuddin questioned by 2 other aspirants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong unit of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance in a meeting yesterday proposed to back former city mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury in the upcoming mayoral election but two other prospective aspirants said such a proposal did not count because the party chief Sheikh Hasina was the ultimate decision maker.

At the meeting, where the name of Mohiuddin, also coordinator of the alliance in Chittagong and president of the city AL, was proposed unanimously, says a press release.

At least four AL leaders including Abdus Salam, finance secretary of Chittagong city AL; AZM Nasir Uddin, general secretary of the unit; and Nurul Islam BSC, vice president of the unit, may seek the party blessings in the mayoral vote, which has to take place within 180 days before July 25, 2015.

Both Salam and Nasir said AL President Sheikh Hasina could decide who would win party backing.

Salam, also chairman of the Chittagong Development Authority, said the 13-party could decide on the candidates they would back but not the one to be supported by AL.

Moreover, many top AL leaders of Chittagong were not present at that meeting, he said. He said the 14-party meeting decision would create misunderstanding in the party leaders and affect the organisation. He, however, said, "I think the decision will not impact the decision of central AL regarding the backing of mayoral candidate."

Nasir said that as far as he knew, such a proposal was not on the meeting agenda. He said the 14-party alliance did not have the right to propose any candidate of AL, and only the party chief would take the final decision.

This decision is baseless, he said, adding, "We haven't yet received any instructions of the PM regarding the nomination of mayoral candidate."

Meanwhile, Mohiuddin Chowdhury said he was not at the meeting but was informed of the decision later.

7 organisations of Bangladesh, India against GM crops
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Seven grassroots organisations from Bangladesh and India have expressed firm resolve to promote use of indigenous seeds, crops and foods to address malnutrition and health problems.

In a joint statement signed by three women activists on behalf of the seven organisations on Saturday also denounced cultivation of genetically modified (GM) crops.

The signatories are: Farida Akhter of Nayakrishi Andolon and Narigantha Prabartana, Dr Vandana Shiva of Diverse Women for Diversity, India and Dr Mira Shiva of Initiative for Health, Equity and Society, India.

Women are the primary growers of foods to ensure nutrition throughout history, said the statement. "We will not allow a further degradation of our food systems and knowledge systems. We will not sacrifice our seed and food sovereignty for corporate control and profits," it added.

Hasan Ali implicated in killing

FROM PAGE 4

Couri told him that local Razakar Askar Ali, leading a five-member team of the Pakistani occupation army's auxiliary force, hit her with a rifle butt and took Jibon to their neighbour Kamini Ghosh's residence despite being offered Tk 300 for his release.

Kamini's sister-in-law Rekha Rani Ghosh and one Sanjib, who witnessed the killing, stated the rest to the 54-year-old witness.

Before leaving, the Razakars had threatened to annihilate all the local Hindus if the bodies were not buried. "I want justice," pleaded Narayan before ending the testimony.

State-appointed defence counsel Abdus Shukur Khan completed cross-examining Narayan before the three-member tribunal led by Justice M Enayetur Rahim adjourned proceedings until today.

Now absconding, the alleged Tarail unit Razakar commander faces six charges including genocide committed in Kishoreganj in 1971.

ICT-2

Mahsin Ali, a freedom fighter operating under Bir Shrestha Captain Mohiuddin Jahangir, said his mother had told him that Chutu, whom she knew beforehand, and two other men torched their house.

From Ebadat Biswas Tola, the 78-year-old witness and fellow freedom fighters saw Mahidur and Chutu and two others, Moazzem and Gafur, set fire to Bilat Mandol's house in Kabirajtola and stand by as it burned down on October 13, 1971.

The eighth prosecution witness also told International Crimes Tribunal-2 that they did not attack the Razakars for not having sufficient manpower.

They returned to their camp and later that night went to Binodpur again where they found all the houses burnt down.

Earlier, Bilat's son Mohammad Khudi testified as the seventh witness that Mahidur and Chutu torched his house and 40 others in Kabirajtola.



Maj Gen Md Mahfuzur Rahman, Maj Gen (retd) Jiban Kanai Das, Mirzapur Cadet College Principal and English Speaking Union of Bangladesh Secretary General Masud Ahmed, and Country Head of Communications, HSBC Bangladesh Talukdar Noman Anwar at the Bangladesh finale of "International public speaking completion 2015" held in the college recently. National winner Cadet Seemah Shahid Noor is in the middle of the back row.



Eminent artist Prof Abul Barq Alvi discussing a painting with economist Dr Binayak Sen at a group exhibition of watercolour and prints by 10 contemporary artists, which was inaugurated in Galleri Kaya at Sector-4, Uttara in the capital on Friday. The exhibition will remain open every day from 11:00am to 8:00pm till March 17.

Jihad's death well contractor sent to jail

FROM PAGE 4

to take Abdus Salam, contractor of SR House, on a seven-day remand.

The motionless body of Jihad was pulled out by a band of indomitable volunteers around 2:45pm on December 27, around 15 minutes after the fire service called off a near 23-hour search in the 17-inch diameter abandoned shaft.

Dhaka Medical College Hospital doctors confirmed the death. Jihad fell into the abyss, some 40 yards from his house, on December 25 while playing with friends around 4:00pm.

On the night of the recovery, Jihad's father Nasir Fakir filed a case with Shahjahanpur Police Station against Salam and a Bangladesh Railway senior sub-assistant engineer, Jahangir Alam.

The accident was the result of the contractor and the railway's negligence for they left open the abandoned well which was supposed to be kept sealed, said the plaintiff.

N'ganj villagers' clash injures 30

FROM PAGE 4

house of Shahjahan and six others of his followers.

On information, police rushed in and took the situation under control.

The affected people claimed that Tk 11 lakh in cash and 45,000 yards of cloth was stolen from the house of Shahjahan, and five cows, four goats and valuables were taken away from other houses, totalling the amount of the loots to Tk 1 crore.

Additional police were deployed. Police said neither Shahjahan nor Abed Ali was found after the violence.

NU's institutions

FROM PAGE 4

In a written statement, Prof Harun said degree (pass) course exams, involving five lakh students, could not be taken from February 22.

Similarly, they could not take the rescheduled year final exams of 1.80 lakh first year students of 2013-14 session, he said, adding that they would soon take exams on weekends and other days.

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