

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA H 30.4 L 20.8	CHITTAGONG H 29.8 L 23.5	SYLHET H 28.8 L 18.2	RAJSHAHI H 31.4 L 22.1	KHULNA H 32.5 L 21.5	BARISAL H 30.6 L 21.4	RANGPUR H 30.0 L 21.0	COX'S BAZAR H 32.6 L 25.7
---------------------------------	-------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------------------

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty/squally wind is likely to occur at one or a few places over all the divisions in the country with hails at places 6:00pm today, said Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:16pm and rises tomorrow at 05:45am.

JU environment dept's shift to new building halts due to row
JU CORRESPONDENT

Counter protest at Jahangirnagar University halted the process of transferring the environmental science department to a newly constructed building.

The university authorities had allowed the environmental science department to move into the new building on April 4 after the department staged demonstrations demanding the move, which they claimed was supposed to take place a year ago.

However, two other departments -- computer science and engineering and geological science -- housed in the building, protested the move.

On April 4, they blocked the entrance to the new building barring the environmental science department access. They claimed the three-storey building is not big enough to house all three departments.

Meanwhile, at a press conference on the campus yesterday the environmental science department announced an indefinite sit-in from today if they are not allowed to move into the new building.

The university authorities will hold a syndicate meeting today to make a decision regarding the move.



Pedestrians wading through knee-deep water in No-2 Gate area of Chittagong city yesterday after just an hour-and-a-half of heavy rain. Waterlogging in Chittagong city is an age-old problem still persisting as authorities pay no heed to numerous pictures and reports published in different newspapers, including The Daily Star, portraying sufferings of the public.
PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

Downpour pushes Ctg city under water again

Residents want problem to be major electoral issue

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

Chittagong city residents had to wade through waterlogged streets yesterday as most of the roads were submerged by rainwater exposing the city's poor drainage system.

Only an hour-and-a-half of downpour submerged busy intersections like Probartak, Golpohar, Sholshahar No-2 Gate intersection, and Chawkbazar and many other streets in knee-deep to waist-deep water.

Moniruzzaman Hossain, a fruit vendor at Probartak intersection, said the scenario is the same every rainy season for the last decade.

Ahead of the Chittagong City Corporation on April 28, voters

believe the waterlogging problem of the city could be a major electoral issue.

Outgoing Mayor M Manjur Alam Manju had made solving the waterlogging problem of the city one of his electoral pledges, which voters believe had turned the tide in his favour and led to the defeat of the then ruling party-backed candidate ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury with a huge margin of over 95,000 votes.

Residents believe Manju, who is contending in the upcoming polls, will have a tougher time this election as there has been no visible improvement of the waterlogging problem.

Ambagan Met Office recorded 74

millimetres of rain in two hours.

Roksana Akhter, who was commuting with her daughter to school in Nasirabad area, said they had to wade through filthy water as the whole street in her area was submerged and they could not procure transport.

She said politicians can only talk and they take no action.

"Mayoral candidates will surely again promise to solve the crisis but they will forget their words once they have won the election," she said.

"One mayor comes after another promising the same thing, I have been suffering due to waterlogged streets for the last 15 years," said fruit vendor Moniruzzaman.

According to CCC sources, Manju last year took an initiative to dig a three kilometre canal stretching from Boraipara of Bahaddarhat to the river Karnaphuli, with an estimated cost of Tk 289 crore, but the project is yet to be implemented.

However, CCC officials said the problem cannot be solved merely through digging canals and drains and blamed unplanned urbanisation and non-implementation of Chittagong City Drainage Master Plan as the root source of the waterlogging problem in the city.

Architect Zarina Hossain, general secretary of Forum for Planned Chittagong (FPC), said CCC alone cannot solve the problem.

RAJGHAT STAMPEDE
Govt probe report doesn't identify rumour mongers

Nor does it clarify whether magistrates responsible for security were at their posts, but makes recommendations for avoiding recurrence

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Though the Narayanganj district administration-formed committee's probe report cited rumours of a bridge collapsing to be one of the two core reasons for the March 27 Langabath stampede, there was no mention of who spread it or what the motive was.

Acknowledging this, one of the committee's seven members said, "It is law enforcers' job, not ours."

Moreover, there was no information on whether magistrates were at their respective posts and why the incident occurred despite monitoring by the district administration.

The seven-member committee convener, Ishrat Hossain Khan, also Local Government Division deputy director, submitted the report to Deputy Commissioner Anisur Rahman Miah yesterday afternoon.

Ten people were left dead and another 20 injured of the around 8 to 15 lakh devotees, as per locals, who had thronged the site for the annual "Maha Astami Snaan".

Hindu leaders had blamed local criminals for spreading the rumours to rob devotees of valuables.

The other reason cited was a high turnout of devotees at Rajghat, the most revered of the 16 ghats there and lying at one end of the 50-yard stretch of the stampede till the bailey bridge, for several circumstances including that the event falling in a three-day duration, a shorter window of time than yester years for the ritual holy dip in the Brahmaputra, and devotees' preference for Rajghat which is the junction of three roads. The report made a 15-point recommendation.

It includes building a ghat along a three-kilometre stretch, dredging two kilometres of the river, identifying owners of land adjoining the site and acquiring land if required, reserving space for fairs and shops, and a stop to the district administration leasing out land.

Moreover, it suggested barring roadside shops, connecting the ghat with the main road, doubling the road's width and erecting dividers; replacing the current bridges with concrete ones, deploying an "adequate" number of law enforcers and volunteers, increasing monitoring, and providing toilets, clean water, changing rooms, and sheds.

Cop dies in road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

A cop died and another was injured when a truck hit their motorcycle while they were chasing smugglers during an anti-smuggling drive on Jessore-Chaugachha road at Dogachhia in Jessore yesterday.

The deceased Ismail Hossain, 55, of Natore was a constable of Sajiali Police Camp under Kotwali Police Station.

Obituary

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Fazlur Rahman Sultan, a former BNP lawmaker from Mymensingh-10 constituency, died of a cardiac arrest at a Dhaka hospital early yesterday. He was 85.

He left behind a son and four daughters. He will be buried today after namaz-e-ajanaza at his family graveyard in Shulahasia village of Gafargaon.

He was the founder president of BNP Gafargaon-unit and vice-president of BNP district-unit.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, district BNP leaders -- AKM Mosharrif Hossain and Abu Wahab Akanda -- mourned his death.

IUB houses Omni Books
CITY DESK

To give the young readers a platform to meet, Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) inaugurated Omni Book Shop on its Bashundhara campus in Dhaka yesterday, said a press release.

Rashed Chowdhury, chairman of IUB Board of Trustees, and Neo G Mendes, managing director of Omni Music, inaugurated the book shop.

14 BARGUNA HINDU FAMILIES' EVICTION FROM HOME
HC orders judicial probe, report in 30 days

Also wants setting up of police outpost; seeks explanation on cops' failure to investigate, take measures against perpetrators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed Barguna's chief judicial magistrate to investigate a reported attack by local terrorists who forced 14 Hindu families off their houses and 40 acres of croplands in Taltoli upazila's Chandantala village, damaged the residences and looted goods in March.

In response to a writ petition, it also directed the magistrate to provide a report in 30 days mentioning what government measures had been taken afterwards and the prevailing situation.

The HC bench of Justice Quazi Reza-Ul Hoque and Justice Abu Taher Md Saifur Rahman ordered the government to ensure security to the families by immediately

setting up a police outpost in Chandantala.

It also issued a rule upon the government to explain why police failure to hold a fair investigation and take action against the perpetrators shall not be declared illegal.

Rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) submitted the petition yesterday, seeking necessary orders on the government to ensure security and rehabilitate the families and challenging legality of the police failure to provide security.

Petitioner's lawyer ZI Khan Panna told The Daily Star that ASK included with the petition a report based on its own inquiry. Two girls who had been raped cannot venture out of their homes, he added.



With India's Farakka barrage upstream reducing the water flow, the once mighty Nabaganga river has fallen victim to a new enemy, encroachment, resulting in its depth now just reaching the ankle while flowing through Jhenidah. Originating near the Chuadanga town, the river runs to the Madhumati. The photo was taken yesterday.
PHOTO: AZIBOR RAHMAN



Buyers throng Chawkbazar in Barisal city yesterday, as clothes traders offer discounts ahead of Pahela Baishakh, one of the major occasions outside two Eid days and Durga Puja when the apparel market gets a sales boost all over the country.
PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

House owner, tenant both die from electrocution in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A house owner and his tenant died after being electrocuted beside their house in the capital's Khilgaon yesterday.

The deceased were house owner Anwar Hossain, 50, and his tenant Md Razzak, 20.

Police said around 6:00am Razzak came into contact with a live wire that fell from an electric pole due to heavy winds.

Later Anwar got electrocuted when he attempted to save Razzak with a wet wooden stick.

Doctors pronounced them dead after locals rushed them to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Man falls to death

FROM PAGE 4

Dewan, over naming their family mosque in the area. Some 70 people led by Ibrahim had already gathered near the house before police reached the spot, said Sub-Inspector Rezaul Karim of Bhahantek Police Station.

Anwar's wife Nila alleged that some relatives pushed her husband off the building over a previous land dispute but she did not specify any name immediately.

Anwar suffered injuries in the waist and died while being taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital from Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, he added.

The body was kept at the Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy.

Suspended OC sent

FROM PAGE 4

Ataur, following a High Court order asking police to record the case after Shamim filed a writ petition.

Other accused are inspector (investigation) Shaymal Banik, sub-inspector Ashraf Islam, ASI Abu Taher and constables Adhir Chandra, Rajib Kanti Das, Azadur Rahman and Nazmul Hossain.

The eight policemen went into hiding since they were suspended on July 27 last year.

Recently, a court issued arrest warrants for the policemen and ordered to confiscate the movable and immovable properties of the main accused Ataur. However, police could not find any properties of Ataur at his address at Zakiganj in Sylhet.

Latif's own

FROM PAGE 4

After three to five months, Latif was taken away by Razakars and the people fled as Razakars became active in the locality, he added.

Seven to eight months after victory was achieved, Amjad met Latif. "When I inquired about his capture by Razakars, he told me that I need not know about the matter," said Amjad, adding he did not ask anything further as Latif was elder to him.

Sardar Abdul Mannan's deposition was similar. During cross-examination by prosecutor Syed Haidar Ali, he said, "I do not know whether Latif was a Razakar but later I heard he had joined the Razakar force."

International Crimes Tribunal-1 adjourned proceedings until today. Latif is one of three alleged Bagerhat Razakars facing seven charges for their alleged involvement in crimes against humanity and genocide.