

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 33.5 | L 24.4

CHITTAGONG
H 33.0 | L 23.0

SYLHET
H 30.3 | L 17.8

RAJSHAHI
H 36.0 | L 23.4

KHULNA
H 34.0 | L 23.3

BARISAL
H 34.1 | L 23.8

RANGPUR
H 34.3 | L 22.8

COX'S BAZAR
H 33.8 | L 24.5

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty/squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Barisal, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and Comilla and Noakhali till 6:00pm today. Day and night temperature may rise, said Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:18pm and rises tomorrow at 05:42am.

WHEN WARNINGS ARE DITCHED



PHOTO: FAHD MANNAN

Unable to see on time this hole on the capital's Mirpur Road leading to a sewer opening, the speeding truck carrying sponge iron weighing four times its capacity lost its two axles on impact, mounted the divider and ended up on its side around 2:30am yesterday. Luckily the three persons inside the cab escaped with bruises. On April 4 a bus driver lost control going over a poorly repaired trench at the Moghbazar intersection, running over three workers, leaving two dead. The photo was taken near the Dhanmondi 8 playground.

Dhaka finally gets German envoy after ten months' void

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Amid diplomatic tension with Berlin, Dhaka finally received after a void of 10 months a new German ambassador, Thomas Prinz, who presented his credentials on Thursday.

Dr Albrecht Conze left Bangladesh on June 1, 2014 to take his new role in Mali, and the next month Germany appointed career diplomat Dr Gabriela Guellil.

But Dhaka did not respond to the agrément, the official naming of a new envoy, for Dr Guellil, then German ambassador in Cyprus, made some "comments going against Dhaka" which displeased the Sheikh Hasina administration.

What she said was not shared by the foreign ministry officials.

As per the Vienna Convention of Diplomatic Relations 1961, the receiving country can reject any proposed name without showing any reason.

Diplomatic sources said it was not the first time Dhaka-Berlin relations witnessed ups and downs in the last three years.

The first was on June 24, 2012 when the foreign ministry summoned the chargé d'affaires in the German embassy in Dhaka, visiting its disappointment and concern over some of visiting German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle's remarks.

In a protest letter, the ministry said it "wishes to record its surprise at the content of a prepared written text and subsequent remarks by the German Foreign Minister immediately following the official meeting".

At a pre-departure joint press briefing, Westerwelle said he and his counterpart talked about a free civil society, freedom of expression, human rights situation in Bangladesh, and concern over the recent killing of activists and bringing their perpetrators to justice.

The foreign ministry, however, said none of these issues were even raised.

Afterwards, Dhaka withdrew then Bangladesh Ambassador Mosud Mannan from Berlin in February 2013 at the German government's request for "violating rules" in terminating some German staff from the Bangladesh embassy.

Foreign ministry officials said Mosud had also created problems regarding paying salaries to the embassy's local staff.

Dhaka buzzing with

FROM PAGE 3
CANDIDATES, on Manik Mia Avenue.

The city dwellers have been in panic for violence over the last three months since the BNP-led alliance's indefinite blockade started on January 6.

AL-sponsored mayoral aspirant for Dhaka South City Corporation, Sayeed Khokon, yesterday started off with a views exchange meeting at Dholaipara of Shyampur.

He pledged to make sacrifices for the development of the city people. "I don't want to be the 'city father', but rather I want to serve you as 'your son'," he told the meeting.

In the afternoon, Khokon talked to businessmen at Gulistan Trade Centre. He also met people of Bangshal and Kotowali before wrapping up the day's campaign.

On behalf of Mirza Abbas, BNP-backed mayoral candidate in Dhaka south, his wife Afroza Abbas yesterday started off from Malibagh Kitchen Market.

Later she visited Shantibagh, Chamelibagh, and Shantinagar.

Talking to reporters during her campaign, Afroza complained of the absence of a level-playing field and demanded that the Election Commission and the government give equal opportunities to all.

"A level-playing field is mandatory for a credible election."

"I am getting a huge response from the people," Afroza said, and told the people that her husband would appear before them, once he got bail.

Other mayoral aspirants also spent a busy day campaigning.

Besides mayoral aspirants, the ruling party-backed councillor hopefuls yesterday started campaigns, as the AL has finalised the list of candidates it is supporting.

Stronger efforts must for universal health coverage

Experts tell international conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Public health experts from home and abroad yesterday called for stronger efforts in achieving universal health coverage (UHC) in Bangladesh that ensures quality healthcare for all without financial hardships.

They said non-communicable diseases like cancer, diabetes, hypertension and heart diseases are emerging as major health threats that cause 60 percent of the total deaths in Bangladesh.

"Reality suggests that universal health coverage agenda needs to be scaled up," said economist Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC).

He said government contribution to health sector is only 25 percent in Bangladesh.

The observations came at a three-day international health conference on "Realizing Universal Health Goals" at a hotel in the capital that began yesterday.

PPRC organised the conference with support from the Rockefeller Foundation and the World Bank.

Dr Hossain Zillur said misgovernance in the health sector, quality of healthcare, counterfeit medicines and low health budget are some major issues in Bangladesh that need to be addressed.

Dr AK Azad Khan, president of the Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, said Bangladesh has achieved well in millennium development goals, but now it is time that it focuses on improving health personnel and utilising its infrastructure already in place.

Thailand's Deputy Minister of Public Health Dr Somsak Chunahas said

Thailand began implementing UHC 30 years back, and health insurance was a big component.

Now over 99 percent of Thais have health protection coverage, he said.

"Throughout the last few decades, health system researchers and civil society played a crucial role advocating for UHC," said Dr Somsak, adding that their government health spending is 77.7 percent.

Dr Kamran ul Baset of the Centre for Injury Prevention and Research, Bangladesh, presenting a research paper, said 83 percent of patients were happy with the overall services of the community clinics at the grassroots level.

In a video message, Health Minister Mohammed Nasim sought cooperation from stakeholders to achieve UHC.



State Minister for Finance and Planning MA Mannan addresses a three-day international health conference on "Realizing Universal Health Goals" at a hotel in the capital that began yesterday where, from left, economist Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, Thailand's Deputy Minister of Public Health Dr Somsak Chunahas, and World Federation of Association of Paediatric Surgeons President Dr DK Gupta were present.

PHOTO: STAR

HC summons Dhaka divisional

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councillor aspirant's nomination paper in Dhaka South City Corporation.

Zillar has to appear before the HC bench of Justice Farah Mahub and Justice Kazi Md Ejarul Haque Akondo at 10:30am, Deputy Attorney General Amatul Karim told The Daily Star.

In response to a writ petition, the

HC yesterday asked the divisional commissioner to explain why he will not be directed to allow Sumaiya Begum to contest in the election for the post in Ward 19 reserved for women.

Sumaiya in the petition said the returning officer cancelled her nomination paper on April 1 saying that she did not sign the affidavit, which was sworn by her along with the nomina-

tion paper.

The divisional commissioner on April 4 rejected an appeal of the aspirant against the returning officer's decision.

Sumaiya in the petition also said the divisional commissioner has accepted some others as candidates despite having similar faults, which is discriminatory.

Guard poll centres till declaration

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others.

Though the official campaign for the April 28 polls kicked off on Tuesday, Manju is set to start his personal field-level visits today after allotment of election symbols.

However, BNP Vice-chairman

Abdullah Al Noman and Chittagong city President Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury visited door to door seeking votes for Manju.

Addressing a street rally in Halishahar B Block area, Noman said that through ballots, the people would convey "no confidence in the govern-

ment en masse".
"...the people will send a red signal to the government so that it is forced to hold a [parliamentary] election under a caretaker administration."

He urged the Election Commission to create a level-playing field.

NEWS IN brief

125 female cops fly for Congo to join UN peacekeeping mission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A unit of 125 female police flew for Congo yesterday to join the UN peacekeeping mission there.

The team is headed by additional police superintendent Atia Hosna, said a press release.

Another female police unit is currently working in UN missions in Haiti. Currently more than 1,300 members of Bangladesh Police are working in different countries.

JU environ sciences students continue demanding move to new building

JU CORRESPONDENT

The environmental sciences department of Jahangirnagar University (JU) yesterday again began an indefinite sit-in demanding the department be transferred to a new building.

The students and teachers said they would sit in front of the new building every day from 10:00am till 1:00pm until their demand was met.

However, two departments already housed in the building -- computer science, and engineering and geological sciences -- are against the move saying the building is not big enough for all three. Meanwhile, a five-member team was formed to look into the matter and submit a report within seven working days.

150 maunds of fish poisoned in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Fishes weighing 150 maunds were poisoned to death in Burirhat area of Rangpur city on Wednesday night.

Md Moshir Rahman Nahin, owner of Nahin Fish Hatchery, said he has been fish farming in the pond for a long time.

Locals found dead fishes floating on the pond yesterday morning. Police are looking for the miscreants.

Man held with Indian currency

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs officials detained a man along with 2.38 crore Indian currency at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital early yesterday.

Sajjat Hossain, 49, a resident of the capital's Mohammadpur Geneva Camp, was detained around 5:00am after he arrived at the airport on a flight of Qatar Airways from the UAE along with the currencies suspected to be fake, said Kazi Md Ziauddin, joint commissioner of customs.

2 crushed under train wheels

CITY DESK

Two people were crushed under the wheels of trains in two districts yesterday.

In Pabna, Safura Begum, 55, of Piarakhali village died after Kopotakhho Express ran her over while she was crossing the rail track near Ishwardi rail station area around 11:55am.

In Jamalpur, Julfikar Ali, 38, of Aramnagar Hajibari was crushed under Agnibina Express intercity train while he was talking over the phone sitting on the rail track in Aramnagar Kamil Madrasa area in Sarishabari upazila.

Mental Health First Aid, Bangladesh launched

DU CORRESPONDENT

The activities of Bangladesh chapter of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), created in Australia as a non-profit mental health service provider, was launched at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban of Dhaka University yesterday to provide mental health first aid training and education in the country.

Vice Chancellor of DU Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, CEO of MHFA England Poppy Jaman, and Executive Director of Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation Monira Rahman spoke at the event.

DHAKA TODAY

Exhibition

Monobhumi Art Space will inaugurate an exhibition on Serigraphy Watercolour Print. Venue: Sahara Tropical Center, Elephant road, Time: 6:00pm.

Seminar

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) will organise a seminar on safe food and Consumer Right. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity hall, Time: 10:00am.

Australian Business Migration in MELBOURNE

EXHIBITION
10th & 11th April
Time: Friday 10th April 3pm-8pm
Saturday 11th April 12noon-8pm
at Ascott The Residence
Road-8, House-13
Baridhara, Dhaka-1212

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