

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 33.4 | L 25.5

CHITTAGONG
H 32.7 | L 24.0

SYLHET
H 26.2 | L 22.4

RAJSHAHI
H 32.7 | L 21.6

KHULNA
H 24.3 | L 21.8

BARISAL
H 33.2 | L 22.3

RANGPUR
H 28.0 | L 20.5

COX'S BAZAR
H 32.5 | L 24.0

Rain or thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty/squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions till 6:00pm today. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:26pm and rises tomorrow at 05:25am.

Will Nasir's rise in Ctg eclipse Mohiuddin?

HASAN JAHID TUISHER and DWAIPIYAN BARIUA

For more than two decades, Mohiuddin Chowdhury has almost single-handedly controlled the politics of Chittagong city. His sway was reinforced in 1994 when he became mayor and retained that position twice more. But with the grassroots and the party high-ups longing for new leadership in Chittagong and party favourite AJM Nasir Uddin becoming mayor, is Mohiuddin's sway going to be challenged?

Some leaders think so. However, for others, it is too early to predict. The Daily Star has talked to several leaders of the ruling party who are speculating that the "nucleus of power" will likely be passed on to Nasir, the general secretary of Chittagong city Awami League, from Mohiuddin, his president.

Party insiders say Nasir is on a strong footing now due to a host of reasons.

Firstly, he has been elected mayor and is the second man in Chittagong city AL. His clout is growing as well, particularly among the young leadership strongly antagonistic to fundamentalism and the politics of Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir.

"Definitely, he will play an important role against Jamaat-Shibir's politics in Chittagong," said former general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL)

Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton, also a close associate of Nasir.

Thirdly, there are grassroots leaders who accuse Mohiuddin of suppressing the emergence of new leadership while the central leaders want fresh blood.

Nasir himself has been cornered for years.

In the 1980s, as chief of the city BCL, Nasir was the protégé of late AL lawmaker Akhteruzzaman Chowdhury Babu, the archrival of Mohiuddin inside AL at that time. Since the 1990s, Nasir had tried to get into AL committee for at least thrice but was shoved away from the party frontline each time. Nasir finally overcame all hurdles and became the party's city general secretary in 2012. As a result, the politics of AL's associated bodies mainly BCL also got divided and followed the two leaders.

Fourthly, Nasir is a successful organiser. "There is no doubt that the centre of Awami League's politics will be shifted to him in Chittagong in the coming days," AL central leader Abdur Rahman said of Nasir.

But other leaders are sceptical. Mohiuddin is unmatched in AL's politics in Chittagong, said Habibur Rahman Tarek, joint secretary of central BCL. His standing,

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The new mayor of Chittagong City Corporation, AJM Nasir Uddin, treats ABM Mohiuddin, a former mayor and city unit Awami League president, to sweets at the latter's residence in Chittagong city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Three new mayors reaffirm electoral pledges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three ruling Awami League-backed mayors-elect yesterday once again expressed vows for the betterment of their respective city corporations and discharging their duties keeping people's interest in their mind.

Annisul Huq of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), Sayeed Khokon for Dhaka South City Corporation (DSSC), and AJM Nasir Uddin of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) gave their reactions in three different places after achieving victory in Tuesday's city polls.

Addressing a press conference at



Annisul

Khokon

Nasir

AL's central office on Bangabandhu Avenue, Sayeed Khokon called for all's cooperation to turn the DSSC a modern city corporation.

"I will not misuse my power as a mayor, and I will work with all, disregarding all political affiliations.

During my tenure, my competitors will also remain safe in this city," Khokon, who has emulated his father, the first elected mayor of Dhaka Mohammad Hanif.

"It is not possible for a mayor to solve all problems," he said, and

urged all to extend their support to solve public sufferings.

Khokon again said his first priority would be a traffic jam-free Dhaka city.

Talking to reporters at his Nikunja residence, DNCC Mayor-elect Annisul Huq said he would try his best to implement all his electoral commitments.

"I will work as a mayor after consulting and taking advices from all," he said, and sought all's blessings to discharge his duties.

In Chittagong city, AJM Nasir Uddin said cleanliness would be his top priority after taking charge.

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BNP's boycott of city polls regrettable

Swedish Ambassador Johan Frisell tells The Daily Star; talks of fake votes, violence

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh Johan Frisell has regretted that BNP boycotted Tuesday's city corporation elections in Dhaka and Chittagong and urged all political actors to act within the framework of the political institutions of the country.

Sharing his experiences with The Daily Star yesterday, he narrated what actually happened at Kabi Nazrul Government College in Old Dhaka during his visit and how the violence occurred between the supporters of two councillor candidates.



The ambassador, along with officials and local staff of the embassy, visited around eight polling centres to observe the election.

Asked what happened to him at the Kabi Nazrul college on Tuesday, Frisell said, "It is true that violence broke out when I and my election observation team were visiting the polling centre, but we were not in any danger. We moved to the second floor to get away from the turmoil on the ground. The police helped us."

Giving his account as a witness, he said that when a councillor candidate entered

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Child ragpickers clear the roads in Ahmedbagh yesterday of posters of Dhaka City Corporation poll's candidates to later sell them for recycling in exchange for a few takas.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Ansar draftees clash with cops for more pay

Law enforcers fire blanks, Major Road in Mirpur blocked for three hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 3,000 people hired for the city corporation election duty yesterday blocked Mirpur's Major Road for three hours and clashed with police accusing their employer, Bangladesh Ansar and VDP, of paying only half of what they were promised.

However, Hira Parvez, director of Dhaka Metropolitan Ansar, told The Daily Star last night that the remuneration for each person was indeed fixed at Tk 1,630 and the agitators were only running after rumours of the pay being Tk 3,200.

Police and witnesses said the employees, including students and garments workers, gathered inside Martyred Intellectual Graveyard in the afternoon to collect the

remuneration.

They were hired for four days from April 26, said Darussalam Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Rafiqul Islam.

They, however, got agitated when the Mirpur area in-charge of Ansar left without making any payment. They then took position at Mazar Road blocking vehicular movement.

The clash ensued around 7:30pm when the demonstrators threw brickbats at police who were trying to drive them away to clear the road.

Police fired four blank shots and charged baton during the incident in which three sustained minor injuries, witnesses said. The OC admitted blank shots being fired.

The agitators left around 9:00pm.

Report on execution of arrest warrants against Abbas

Court again asks police COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday again asked police to submit a report on execution of arrest warrants by May 14 against former housing and public works minister Mirza Abbas and four others in a corruption case.

The case was filed against them with Shahbagh Police Station on March 6 last year on the charge of allocating seven acres of land of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakkha (Rajuk) to a journalists' cooperative society at a rate lower than the actual causing a loss of Tk 16 crore.

The other accused are: former state minister for housing and public works

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Laws needed for inheritance rights of transgender people

NHRC, Bandhu Social Welfare Society seminar told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A legal framework must be established so that people of the transgender (hijra) community can inherit family property and get government jobs under a quota, said speakers at a seminar yesterday.

The state must ensure that the hijra community enjoys all basic rights -- accommodation, education, and medical treatment -- without discrimination, they added.

The seminar titled "Recognition of Hijra community as Third Gender and Future Doings" organised by National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and Bandhu Social Welfare Society at Bangla Academy in the capital.

Addressing the programme as the chief guest, Suranjit Sengupta, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the law ministry, said nowhere in the constitu-

tion is it stated that people of the transgender community cannot get family property.

He further said that it is not banned in any religion either. "So it is possible to ensure their rights to inheriting family property," he added.

NHRC Chairman Prof Mizanur Rahman said his organisation would continue mounting pressure on the government to enact a law so that people of the hijra community do not face any discrimination as citizens.

The organisers presented crests to two people of the hijra community -- Labonya and Nadi -- for their role in catching two of the killers of blogger Oyasiqur Rahman Babu.

Dhaka University teacher Robayet Ferdous presented a keynote paper on the hijra community's present condition and future challenges in the country. Advocate Tarana Halim, among others, spoke.

NIKO, GATCO GRAFT CASES

Hearing of Khaleda's challenge adjourned till today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday adjourned till 2:00pm today the hearing on two seven-year-old writ petitions filed by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia challenging the legality of Niko and Gatco corruption cases.

During proceedings yesterday, Khaleda's lawyers Ragib Rauf Chowdhury and AKM Ehsanul Karim placed the charge sheet of the Niko case and the first information report of the Gatco case before the HC.

The Anti-Corruption

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Inundated recently, Boro paddy in low-lying areas in Gaibandha have started to rot in the intense heat putting in distress farmers like this one at Mohimaganj in Gobindaganj upazila. In nearby Natore, hailstorms and nor'westers coupled with high rates being charged by the little available farmhands have overshadowed prospects of a good harvest with farmers saying the bigha-wise output has dropped by two to four maunds. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH