

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 34.5°C L 26.0°C

CHITTAGONG
H 32.7°C L 25.5°C

SYLHET
H 31.6°C L 24.5°C

RAJSHAH
H 36.0°C L 25.3°C

KHULNA
H 35.0°C L 25.1°C

BARISAL
H 34.0°C L 25.5°C

RANGPUR
H 32.8°C L 23.0°C

COX'S BAZAR
H 30.7°C L 24.5°C

Mild heat wave is sweeping over the regions of Rajshahi and Jessore and it may spread over some parts of Khulna and Rajshahi divisions. Day and night temperature may rise slightly over the country, said Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:36pm and rises tomorrow at 05:14am.

Chhatra Union launches campaign to muster public support against sex assault

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra Union yesterday launched a countrywide campaign to collect 10 lakh signatures from the masses in support of its six-point demand over prevention of sexual harassment of females.

Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury inaugurated the 15-day campaign, till June 1, at Aparajeya Bangla of Dhaka University.

He said the state had completely failed to give security to its people. The molestation on Pahela Baishakh reflects a society, where no female is safe and justice is elusive, he added.

Referring to the sex assault on a schoolgirl at Mohammadpur Preparatory School, Prof Serajul said, "Schoolgirls are not safe on their campus. Even they fall victim to harassment by teachers. Because the perpetrators have strong political clout, they escape punishment."

After mustering people's support through the campaign, Chhatra Union will submit a memorandum to the prime minister seeking measures for implementation of its demands. "Hopefully, we can get all the people united to raise voices against molestation by this signature campaign," said Mujahidul Islam Selim, president of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB).

On April 14, some youths sexually assaulted around 20 females on DU campus for an hour, but the DU proctor and police on duty nearby allegedly did not respond in time. Moreover, Chhatra Union activists protesting police failures to arrest the molesters were beaten up by cops on May 10 when they tried to besiege the Dhaka Metropolitan Police headquarters.

The demands of the left-leaning student organisation



Dhaka University students pen their names at a countrywide campaign launched by Bangladesh Chhatra Union yesterday to collect 10 lakh signatures from the people in support of its six-point demand for prevention of sexual harassment of females.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Al-Badr's killing of intellectuals was planned

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam tells SC at hearing of Mojaheed's challenge against his death penalty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Al-Badr killed the country's intellectuals and professionals in a planned way in 1971, Attorney General Mahbubey Alam told the Supreme Court yesterday, arguing for sustenance of the death sentence on Jamaat-e-Islami leader Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, a then leader of the anti-independence force.

He placed arguments on the sixth day of the apex court's hearing on the appeal that the Jamaat secretary general filed against the death penalty on him.

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 sentenced Mojaheed to death for abducting and killing eminent journalist Serajuddin Hossain and merged this offence with the charge of killing intellectuals and professionals, the attorney general said.

A four-member Appellate Division bench headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha adjourned the hearing till May 24.

Earlier, Mojaheed's lawyer SM Shahjahan submitted

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CHEATED RETURNEE MIGRANT WORKERS FROM IRAQ Ensure damages, cancel agencies' licences

They demand at Dhaka Reporters Unity press confce

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Returning empty-handed from Iraq around 18 months ago after being allegedly cheated by two recruiting agencies, 19 Bangladeshi workers yesterday demanded that the government cancel their licences and compel them to provide compensation.

Holding a press conference in the capital's Dhaka Reporters Unity under the banner "Anirban Survivor Voice", the 19 accused the expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry of not taking punitive measures despite the allegation being proven through several hearings.

"It has been 18 months since we started making our demands...through the ministry and BMET (the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training)," Md

Masud, one of the 19, read out from a written statement.

"But the government bodies concerned are not taking any action, rather are harassing us," he said in frustration, adding that they could see no hope of getting justice.

A total of 27 Bangladeshis went to Iraq between February and March of 2013 through four agencies -- Morning Sun Enterprise, Meghna Trade International, East Bengal Overseas and Idea International.

Each spent about Tk 4 lakh for jobs with a monthly salary of US\$ 350.

After being practically confined the whole time, 22 were able to come back in two phases in November 30 of 2013 and February 17 last year while the whereabouts of the remaining five remained unknown since they fled from captivity.

Three got their money back from East Bengal Overseas and Idea International.

One of the remaining 19 filed two separate cases centring trafficking and fraudulence with the capital's airport police station against the agencies and Bangladesh Migrant Foundation (BMF), which arranged the jobs.

Police arrested two persons, including the BMF chairman, but they came out on bail.

The victims said the BMF chairman was now intimidating them and had filed a robbery case against one of them, Emaz Uddin Pramanik, in Naogaon.

This correspondent's calls over the phone for comments from the ministry secretary and BMET director general were not received at the other end.

JOBS OF DOMESTIC HELP IN SAUDI ARABIA Selection for women

May 24-30

BMET asks aspirants to contact district manpower offices on schedule

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) yesterday asked females seeking jobs as domestic helps in Saudi Arabia to bring necessary documents and get selected through 42 district manpower offices from May 24 to 30.

Through an advertisement, the BMET said the applicants, aged between 25 and 45 years, must go to their respective manpower offices where boards would make the selections.

The documents include 12 copies of passport size photographs, machine readable passport or National Identity Card or birth certificate, and a citizenship certificate attested by the respective union parishad chairman or member.

No money will have to be spent as visa fee and air travel, says the ad, adding that 114 private Bangladeshi recruiting agencies would be involved.

On Thursday, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Khandker Mosharrar Hossain announced that Saudi Arabia would hire 20,000 female Bangladeshis as domestic helps before Ramadan.

"A worker will be paid 800 Saudi Riyal equivalent to Tk 16,000, a month," he told journalists in the capital's Probashi Kalayan Bhaban after holding a meeting with a visiting Saudi delegation.

A ministry official said around 10,000 visas have already been issued from the Saudi labour ministry through private recruiting agencies of both countries.

However, only 3,100 females have registered online with the BMET following a deal Dhaka and Riyadh inked on February 10 for 12 types of workers such as domestic helps, drivers, housekeepers, security guards and gardeners.



NGO representatives at a networking meeting with iProbono, a global platform giving free legal aid to NGOs, at Manusher Jonno Foundation office in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

iProbono offers free legal aid for NGOs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A non-government organisation in need of legal assistance in any area of its functions or for itself may seek it free from iProbono, a global network of civil society bodies.

The online networking platform connects practicing lawyers, law firms, law students and schools with the organisations needing legal aid, Shaveena Anam, Bangladesh country director of iProbono, told a meeting of NGOs at Manusher Jonno Foundation office in the capital yesterday.

With such networking not widely in practice in Bangladesh, iProbono started its journey here last November engaging 11 lawyers from four law

firms with the network, she said.

So far, iProbono Bangladesh has undertaken five projects on resolving issues requiring legal assistance on registration, trademark, intellectual property rights, advice, tax, employment training, and contractual reviews, said Shaveena.

It saves NGOs money and provides them access to legal expertise regarding registration, compliance, contract signing, and victim support, added Priyanka Dahiya, programme director of iProbono in India.

An NGO can register or post a specific need of legal assistance on the iProbono website, she said, adding that the platform facilitated two sets of professionals for legal assistance until

an issue was settled.

In Bangladesh, one can directly contact the country director too.

iProbono has so far accomplished 610 projects on resolving legal issues of 1,200 civil society organisations from 28 countries making a social impact worth \$6.6 million, said Priyanka.

It provides a platform for good social exposure for lawyers, she said. "It gives them a feeling of fulfilment that they made a professional contribution to the society in a big way."

Sk Farzana Ahmed, advocacy officer of Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), said iProbono networking would create a sense of responsibility among the lawyers

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WAR CRIMES TRIAL OF NETRAKONA 'RAZAKARS' Another witness corroborates abduction, killing of AL man

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The 6th prosecution witness yesterday corroborated the abduction of an Awami League (AL) man in Netrakona by the Pakistani occupation army, accompanied by local Razakars, who was later shot dead during the 1971 Liberation War.

Gias Uddin of Purba Dattakhina village of Netrakona's Barhabta upazila said war crimes accused Obaidul Haque Taher was the commander and Aatur Rahman Nani a member of Razakar Bahini, the Pakistani army's auxiliary force.

On Sunday, Siddiqui Rahman, brother of the AL man, Fazlur Rahman, had testified seeing Fazlur being

detained and taken away by Taher and Nani and later hearing that the duo had killed him.

However, Gias did not directly implicate Taher and Nani with the abduction and killing.

The 59-year-old said the Pakistani army established their camps in Netrakona town in the last part of April and they left for their village home.

He said they later heard that Manjurul Haque, a top Nezam-e-Islami leader and Taher's father, formed and became chairman of Peace Committee, an anti-liberation organisation, in Netrakona. Later Manjurul formed Razakar Bahini and appointed Taher and Nani, said Gias.

The Razakar Bahini and Pakistani

army attacked Bausia Bazar, populated by Hindus, on August 17 and looted and torched houses and shops, he said.

They picked up Fazlur, Hannan Chowdhury and Abdul Hay but released Hannan and Hay after torture, said Gias.

The Pakistani army took away Fazlur as his father was local AL leader. He was shot dead near Trimohini Bridge in Netrakona town that night, added Gias. He, however, did not say whether he had witnessed it or heard from others.

The three-member tribunal led by justice M Enayetur Rahim after proceedings until May 31 after Taher and Nani's counsels completed cross-examining Gias. Taher and Nani deny the six charges they face.

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