

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 26.0/L 13.0	H 24.6/L 13.2	H 25.0/L 13.7	H 24.5/L 09.2	H 25.0/L 11.8	H 25.7/L 11.5	H 25.4/L 10.5	H 25.0/L 14.3

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today. Light to moderate fog may occur at places over the country during mid night till morning, said Met Office. Mild cold wave, sweeping over some parts of the country, may continue. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:21pm and rises tomorrow at 6:41am.



Protesters intercepted by police near Gulshan-2 intersection in the capital yesterday while heading towards the residence of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia to besiege it, condemning her comments questioning the officially circulated number of the Liberation War martyrs. Several hundred people from all walks of life joined the demonstration. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Khaleda's remark on martyrs draws public wrath

More voices join call for passing law making it a criminal offence to challenge Liberation War facts; politicians, academics ask BNP to clarify its position about country's independence; BNP claims her statement being distorted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Aggrieved by BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's controversial remarks over the number of Liberation War martyrs, several hundred people took to the street at Gulshan-2 intersection near her residence in the capital yesterday and demanded her trial for sedition.

They also called for passing a "Liberation War Denial Crimes Act" with provisions of punishment for denying historically established facts and settled issues regarding the Liberation War.

The former premier should seek apology for her remarks, said the protesters.

Freedom fighters, political leaders, cultural and social activists, and people from all walks of life joined the sit-in that began at 10:00am.

The area was reverberated with slogans demanding trial of Khaleda and her party leader Goyeshwar Chandra Roy for their remarks.

After the two-hour sit-in, the protesters started for Khaleda's residence to besiege her but were stopped by police.

Meanwhile, speaking at a discussion eminent politicians and academics yesterday asked BNP to clarify its "position" on the country's independence.

They urged unity of the progressive and pro-liberation

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SIX GAIBANDHA 'RAZAKARS' File charges on Feb 18

War crimes tribunal tells prosecution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday asked the prosecution to submit formal charges, if any, against six Gaibandha men, including a former Jamaat-e-Islami lawmaker, on February 18 for their alleged involvement in crimes committed during the Liberation War.

The tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Haque fixed the date following a prosecution time prayer.

The accused are: Abu Saleh Md Abdul Aziz Mia, 65, a former Jamaat lawmaker from Gaibandha; Ruhul Amin alias Manju, 61; Abdul Latif, 61; Abu Muslim Md Ali, 59; Najmul Huda, 60; and Abdur Rahim Mia, 62, of Gaibandha's Sundarganj upazila.

The investigation agency on Sunday said it had found evidence of war-time crimes against the six and submitted the probe reports and related documents to the prosecution on that day.

Prosecutor Syed Haider Ali yesterday prayed for 45 more days to scrutinise relevant

WAR CRIME CONVICTION Full verdict on Sayedee's appeal to be released soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court is likely to release its full verdict within few days on the appeal of war criminal Delawar Hossain Sayedee challenging the death penalty handed down to him by a war crimes tribunal, SC sources said.

The release of full judgment will pave the way for both the government and defence to move petitions before the apex court seeking review of its judgment that sentenced the Jamaat-e-Islami leader to imprisonment until his death.

On February 28, 2013, the International Crimes Tribunal-1 sentenced Sayedee to death for committing crimes against humanity and war crimes during the country's 1971 Liberation War.

The SC on September 17 last year announced a short order in which it commuted his death sentence to imprisonment until death.

A five-member bench of the apex court, headed by the then Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain, delivered the verdict based on majority views after hearing an appeal filed by the convict.

Of the judges, Justice Md Muzammel Hossain (now retired), Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha (now the chief justice) and Justice Hasan Foez Siddique gave Sayedee imprisonment until his death, Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah acquitted him of all charges, and Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik (now retired) upheld the capital punishment, according to SC sources.

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina adorns a cadet with an apulate at the President's Parade (Winter) 2015 at the Air Force Academy in Jessore yesterday. Seventy-five flight and officer cadets were commissioned at the ceremony, and 11 of them were females. PHOTO: PHO

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Raushan demeans journalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition Raushan Ershad yesterday said most journalists had chosen the profession because they did not find other jobs.

"Don't mind. I know you have taken up the profession as there are not enough employments in the country," she said.

Raushan made the comments at a press conference at the media centre of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban when journalists told her that the stands of Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad and Raushan were different over the municipality polls which take place today.

Ershad recently said the Election Commission (EC) did not have a backbone, and several leaders of his party came under attack during campaigning.

But at the conference, Raushan, JP's senior presidium member, differed with Ershad, and expressed her confidence in EC, saying there was no attack on her party men, and the media sometime played up simple issues. However, she urged EC to hold a neutral and peaceful election.

She also said there are 40 television stations in the country where only 10-15 would suffice.

When journalists strongly protested her remarks, State Minister for Labour Mujibul Haque Chunnun and Jatiya Party lawmaker Quazi Feroz Rashid tried to calm them.

Raushan then said, "Listen to me. Journalism is a noble profession. I am not discouraging you because the youths are taking drugs after failing to get good jobs... I actually spoke about raising your perks and benefits."

When a journalist asked a question, she criticised him and said, "You always complicate questions."

She said Ershad always tried to encourage his party men through his speeches. She also said her party would not quit the polls, no matter what

Persons with disabilities are more productive workers

Access Bangladesh Foundation-ActionAid discussion told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Persons with disabilities are often more productive and loyal to their employers than employees without disabilities, said speakers at a discussion in the capital yesterday.

They said their turnover rate and absenteeism was also lower, but the challenge was finding trained personnel.

The programme styled "Meet the Training and Employment Needs of Young People with Disability" was organised at The Daily Star Centre by Access Bangladesh Foundation and ActionAid.

Referring to a study by Action on Disability and Development International study, Salahuddin Kasem Khan, president of Bangladesh Employers' Federation, said, "In Bangladesh, the cost of disability due to forgone income, from lack of schooling and employment, of both people with disabilities and their caregivers is estimated at US\$1.2 billion annually or 1.7 percent of GDP."

"We need more labour, but we do not know the skill of persons with disabilities -- what they can do and in which area we can employ them," said Ayub Ali, senior assistant secretary of research and development, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

"Out of 3,600 of our workers, 600 plus are persons with disabilities. Not only are they more productive, they are also very good at pacifying aggressive workers and handling unrest," said Syed Shakeel Ahad, manager of

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