

**WEATHER FORECAST**

**YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES**

<b>DHAKA</b> H 27.0 L 18.2	<b>CHITTAGONG</b> H 26.0 L 19.0	<b>SYLHET</b> H 26.5 L 18.5	<b>RAJSHAHI</b> H 28.0 L 18.2	<b>KHULNA</b> H 30.0 L 18.2	<b>BARISAL</b> H 29.7 L 18.4	<b>RANGPUR</b> H 26.5 L 15.8	<b>COX'S BAZAR</b> H 26.0 L 21.0
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Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur and Dhaka divisions till 6:00pm today. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:15pm and rises tomorrow at 5:50am. Country's highest temperature 30.8 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Khepupara and lowest 15.8 degree in Rangpur.

## Suranjit rips into EC over poll deaths

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Ruling Awami League leader Suranjit Sengupta yesterday lambasted the Election Commission because of its "inaction" to prevent violence in the Union Parishad polls.

"When we observe...nine people were killed today [in the second phase polls], we cannot keep our eyes shut," he told a programme at the capital's Dhakeshwari national temple.

Suranjit said EC was the most powerful commission in the world. "It can cancel an election or accept it, if it wishes. Even it can sack anyone. But what is this? It does not move."

Suranjit, also president of the parliamentary standing committee on law, justice and parliamentary affairs, criticised the commission for its failure to hold trials over the violence.

He urged the commission to be more active to stop violence.

Like the first phase, violence and irregularities marked the second phase UP polls on Thursday, leaving at least eight people dead and around 130 others wounded in clashes and firing.

In the first phase election, held March 22, at least 10 people lost their lives. Besides, 11 more were killed in polls-related violence since the announcement of the election schedule on February 11.

Suranjit also criticised EC for its inaction in preventing attacks on minorities during the election period.



People cross a devastated Nayapara-Kadomtoli road in the capital's Shanir Akhra yesterday, with rain worsening the condition still. Not only has the bitumen been eroded away, this portion of the road has now turned into a huge crater. Although the situation has been prevailing over the last two years, authorities are blasé about public sufferings.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Two abducted Brac staff still traceless

Brac authorities claim victims are fine; good news soon

BELAL HOSSAIN BIPOLO

The news came a day after she sat for her fourth-year final examinations, and since then she could not concentrate on her study.

Fatematuz Zohra Labony, 20, skipped the exams when informed that her father Shawkat Ali, 50, a Brac official, was abducted by unknown people in Afghanistan on March 17.

"The news came like a bolt from the blue. We didn't even take our meal on that night. My mother just completed her Esha prayers and I was studying in our residence," said the architecture student of the Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology in Dhaka.

Criminals abducted engineer Shawkat Ali and Sirajul Islam Sumon, 37, another Bangladeshi Brac official, along with two local Afghan staff of the NGO in Kunduz Province.

The Afghans, however, were released later, and no militant group claimed responsibility for the abduction. But Brac officials said they had good news about their two colleagues.

Labony said, "My father used to talk to my grandmother, mother, me and my younger brother 10 to 12 times every day. As he used to go on field supervision on Thursdays, he had to call us at night."

It was also a Thursday night when the family received



## CJ wants to introduce evening court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Evening shifts will be introduced at courts if the government and lawyers agree to the plan for reducing the backlog of cases in the country, said Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha yesterday.

He was speaking at the inaugural ceremony of a two-day workshop, "Strengthening Judicial Performance Evaluation and Establishing Criteria for Measuring Success."

The Supreme Court organised it at Brac Centre in Savar, on the capital's outskirts, in association with USAID.

Justice Sinha said, "The case backlog is now a hot issue in our country and somehow we feel uncomfortable when this issue

is raised in any discussion. We do not have any magic wand. One of the main reasons behind this is [an] awful shortage of judges in both tiers of the judiciary, lack of infrastructure and impediments created by the concerned ministry in the process of recommendation of competent officers to the coveted posts."

Compared to 16 crore people, 1,600 judges are too inadequate, he said. "Until and unless the present strength of the judges is not increased at least no dramatic change can be expected."

The CJ believes only appointment will not suffice. The judges must receive frequent training and logistic supports, he said.

"Even with all the shortcomings that



Until and unless the present strength of the judges is not increased at least no dramatic change can be expected

- Surendra Kumar Sinha

### CAUSES OF BACKLOG

Acute shortage of judges

Lack of courtrooms, training

Barriers in recruiting competent officers

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

## Two killed in clashes

Land, family disputes behind the district incidents

STAR REPORT

Two elderly men were killed and 16 others injured in two separate incidents in Satkhira and Gopalganj yesterday.

They were Moslem Ali Sana, 50, a farmer of Deyara village in Kolaroa upazila of Satkhira; and Ali Kha, 60, of Borni village under Mukshudpur upazila in Gopalganj.

Moslem and his two brothers Idris Sana and Golam Mostofa Sana had an altercation over a family dispute triggering a clash between the two sides on the premises of their houses on Thursday night, our Satkhira correspondent reports.

During the clash, Moslem was attacked with sharp weapons, killing him and injur-

ing six others from both of the sides.

Moslem died on the way to Kolaroa Upazila Health Complex early yesterday.

Deyara Police Camp Sub-inspector Lutfor Rahman said they filed a case against 11 persons from both of the groups.

Meanwhile, Ali Kha was killed on the spot and 10 others were injured in a clash over a land dispute in Mukshudpur upazila yesterday, reports our Gopalganj correspondent.

Supporters of Titu Molla and Yead Ali were involved in the clash, said Sendiaghat Police Camp Sub-inspector Md Giasuddin.

The body was sent to Gopalganj General Hospital for an autopsy, he said.

However, no case was filed till yesterday evening.



A citizens' rally in the capital's Shahbagh yesterday, seeking justice for the murder of Sohagi Jahan Tonu as protests have been sweeping the country since the 19-year-old student of Comilla Victoria College was found dead on March 20. They also demanded death penalty as a punishment for rapists.

PHOTO: STAR

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## Naogaon govt pry schools limping for teacher shortage

UNB, Naogaon

Academic activities at a considerable number of government primary schools in Naogaon district are being seriously hampered due to an acute shortage of teachers.

The crisis is affecting normal school functioning and the rate at which recruitment is done every year is very poor compared to the posts vacant. Several schools are also continuing academic activities with only 2/3 teachers.

Consequently, the guardians are forced to enroll their children in English and Bangla medium kindergartens.

District Primary Education Office sources said some 642 posts of teacher, including 109 of headmaster, have remained vacant for long in nine upazilas, which is increasing every year. Of the head teacher posts, 10 are lying vacant in Atrai upazila, four in Dhamairhat, 14 in Sadar, 12 in Niyamatpur, 11 in Patnitola, five in Porsha, nine in Badalgachhi, 18 in Mohadebpur, six in Manda, 14 in Raninagar and six in Sapahar. In some of the schools, assistant teachers are performing the headmasters' duties.

In addition, the recently nationalised schools are also facing the crisis. There are 25 posts of teacher lying vacant in the newly nationalised schools of Atrai upazila, 53 posts in those of Dhamairhat, 33 in Naogaon, 52 in Niyamatpur, 62 in Patnitola, 68 in Porsha, 66 in Badalgachhi, 62 in Mohadebpur, 30 in Manda, 43 in Raninagar and 59 in Sapahar.

Despite willingness to provide a standard education, the authorities of the schools are not being able to do so for the crisis. Md Aminul Islam, district primary education officer, said they had sent a letter to the Education Ministry seeking immediate appointment to the vacant posts. "The rate of recruitment is far less than the requirement. If the crisis cannot be resolved soon, the primary education sector will inevitably face a severe setback," he added.

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