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Diarrhoea cases soar amid heat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

With a heat wave sweeping across the country, several hundred diarrhoea patients have been admitted to hospitals across the country.

There were 1,067 diarrhoea patients reported to have been undergoing treatment in the hospitals on Monday. The number was 1,096 the previous day and 844 on April 1, according to the National Health Crisis Management Centre and Control Room of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

"The number of such patients increases whenever there is a rise in temperature," said a physician at the DGHS.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), yesterday's highest temperature -- 39.5 degrees Celsius -- was recorded in Rajshahi division followed by 38.4 and 37 degrees Celsius in Khulna and Dhaka divisions.

The lowest temperature -- 32.9 degree Celsius -- was recorded in Chittagong division.

A severe heat wave swept over the regions of Pabna, Jessore and Kushtia, and a mild to moderate heat wave over Dhaka and Rangpur divisions and other parts of Rajshahi and Khulna divisions.

The heat wave may continue, said the BMD.

A huge number of the diarrhoea patients in the hospitals are women and children.

"My six-month-old daughter Sumaiya and ten-year-old

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Five-month-old Tasana being fed by her mother at the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (icddr,b) in the city's Mohakhali on Monday. The girl was brought to Dhaka from Shariatpur on that day for better treatment.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Call off strike by today or face action

Govt asks agitating jute mill workers

UNB, Dhaka

The government yesterday urged the agitating jute mill workers in Khulna to withdraw their strike and join work from today.

The call was made at a meeting between Textiles and Jute Minister M Emaz Uddin Pramanik and the leaders of the CBAs of the state-owned jute mills at the secretariat, State Minister for Textiles and Jute Mirza Azam told reporters.

The government on Monday made an allocation of Tk 1,000 crore for clearing some arrears of the workers, he said. "A process is underway to distribute the money among the workers following approval of the finance ministry. I hope the approval would be given by tomorrow [Wednesday]."

The government has directed Bangladesh Jute Mill Corporation (BJMC) to provide two weeks' wages to the workers and employees before the Pabela Baishakh.

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Baishakh sales peak

Local clothing brands look to gross Tk 1,500cr this year

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Local clothing retailers are expanding their businesses to cash in on the shopping spree ahead of Pabela Baishakh, the largest cultural festival in the country.

The Baishakhi clothing sales are projected to be around Tk 1,500 crore, up 20 percent year-on-year.

To have a larger share of this, Rang Bangladesh, a leading local clothing brand, opened a new showroom in Mymensingh last week.

"Three months ago, we opened another showroom in Dhaka, targeting the Pabela Baishakh customers," said Soumik Das, chief executive officer of Rang. "The response from the customers is good this year."

The occasion sees the highest sales after the Eid-ul-Fitr, he said.

Soumik says the middle income people are their main target. As a result, the prices of Baishakhi panjabis has been fixed between Tk 700 and Tk 2,000 a piece. But, for the upscale customers, the prices can go up to Tk 3,000.

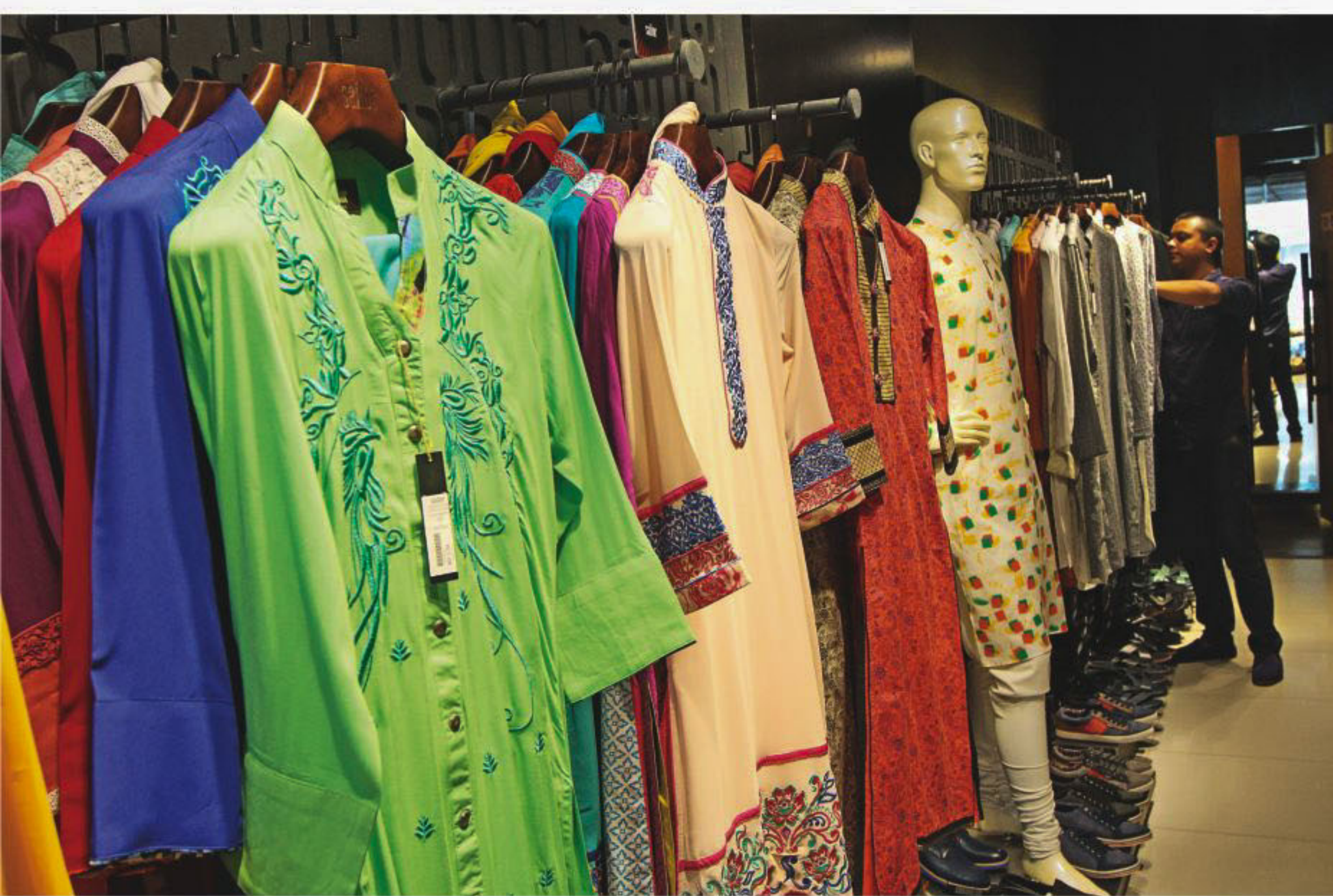
Like Rang, about 200 other local clothing brands have either expanded their operations ahead of the Baishakh celebration or are considering it for the next Pabela Baishakh.

Anjans, another local brand, plans to open a showroom in Sylhet next week, taking the total number of its outlets to 18, said Shaheen Ahmed, CEO of Anjans.

"We are very happy with the sales trend this season. We expect 20 percent higher sales this year than that of last year, thanks to favourable economic and political conditions."

The Baishakhi allowance for the public servants, introduced

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Apparels on display at a boutique on Satmasjid Road in the city. Sales of fashionable clothes have seen a rise in recent weeks as people are eagerly waiting to celebrate Pabela Baishakh, the first day of Banglali New Year. The photo was taken late last month.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Alarming rise in child suicide bombers: UN

AFP, Libreville

The number of children used by Nigeria's Boko Haram to stage suicide bombings has risen more than 10-fold in one of the most "horrific" aspects of the Islamist insurgency, the United Nations said yesterday.

Experts said the group, which has been weakened by a multinational military offensive, is now trying to spread terror by using children for attacks in crowded markets, mosques and even camps for people fleeing Boko Haram violence.

This has had disastrous consequences for children, especially girls, who had survived captivity and sexual violence by Boko Haram, said a report by UN children's agency Unicef.

"The number of children involved in 'suicide' attacks in Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger has risen sharply over the past year, from four in 2014 to 44 in 2015," Unicef said.

More than 75 percent of the children involved in such attacks are girls, it added.

"Let us be clear: these children are

victims, not perpetrators," said Manuel Fontaine, Unicef regional director for west and central Africa.

"Deceiving children and forcing them to carry out deadly acts has been one of the most horrific aspects of the violence in Nigeria and in neighbouring countries," he said.

The report was released two years after Boko Haram kidnapped 276 teenagers in the dead of night from the small town of Chibok in northern Nigeria. A total of 219 students are still missing.

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PAHELA BAISHAKH SEX ASSAULT

One year on, culprits still at large

JAMIL MAHMUD

A year has gone by but law enforcers could not even properly identify the people responsible for the sexual assault on women on Pabela Baishakh last year.

Three separate police bodies had been entrusted with the probe, but they came up with almost nothing.

All they could do is release a number of photos taken from CCTV footage.

The police had even given in and sub-

mitted a final report.

However, the arrest of a suspect, about nine months after the incident, prompted them to revive the case.

"We have identified a few people by scrutinising television [CCTV] footage, but their details could not be known," said Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Asaduzzaman Miah.

"The investigation is on," he told reporters on Monday at the DMP Media Centre.

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Criminals pick up student

Snatch Tk 4 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three criminals posing as DB police picked up a university student from Elephant Road in the capital and robbed him of Tk 4 lakh yesterday.

Parvez Rana, 25, a LLB student of a private university in Dhanmondi, was picked up after he drew the money from a bank on Elephant Road around 1:00pm.

Labelling Parvez was a drug dealer, the criminals handcuffed Parvez and forced him to get into a private car. After roaming around different areas in

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Marriage 'good for cancer patients'

REUTERS

Married people with cancer have better survival odds than their single peers - and not for money reasons, a US study suggests.

Unmarried men were 27 percent more likely to die of their tumours, and single women were 19

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JP not real opposition

Says Ershad

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad yesterday said his party has become a "domestic opposition party" as it failed to play its role as the real opposition.

Ershad, also a special envoy to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, claimed that the political changeover of 1/11 emerged as the Iajuddin Ahmed-led caretaker government had moved to hold the elections minus the JP chief.

"We waged a movement demanding that there would be no polls without Ershad. And the elections were not held finally, which led to the creation of 1/11," he said.

The JP boss made the remarks while addressing the party's national council

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JAMAAT	5-10	1-15	5-00	6-28
			8-15	

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

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