

**WEATHER FORECAST**

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAH	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 36.5 L 28.2	H 34.0 L 26.7	H 33.0 L 23.2	H 32.7 L 23.2	H 36.0 L 27.5	H 35.3 L 27.7	H 34.0 L 23.0	H 34.6 L 28.5

Severe heat sweeping over Rajshahi and mild to moderate over Dhaka, Tangail Faridpur, Maizicourt, Khulna, Jessore and Chuadanga may continue. Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:26pm and rises tomorrow at 5:25am.

## Gulshan Lake will get more bridges

Says Mosharraf while inaugurating newly built Gulshan-Badda bridge  
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to construct seven to eight more bridges over Gulshan Lake in order to ease public and vehicular movement in the capital's Badda, Rampura and Gulshan areas, said Housing and Public Works Minister Mosharraf Hossain yesterday.

The minister said this while inaugurating a newly built Gulshan-Badda link bridge near National Shooting Federation Complex, as part of the Hatirjheel project.

The 93-metre long bridge built at a cost of Tk 7 crore will directly link Merul Badda to Hatirjheel and Gulshan Lake walkway.

The minister also said the beautification work in the areas is underway. Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Annisul Huq and Hatirjheel Project Director Maj Gen Abu Sayeed M Masud were present at the inaugural programme.



People flock to various telecom operators' stalls set up on a footpath near the capital's Gulshan-1 intersection yesterday, as tomorrow is the last day to complete SIM re-registration biometrically. The last minute rush is also proving to be cumbersome for the operators, who sought more time from the authorities. PHOTO: STAR

## US reaffirms support for free thinkers, dissenters

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States has reaffirmed its support for the Bangladeshi secular bloggers, online activists, publishers, teachers and dissenters who are in "imminent danger".

"...for some of these individuals who are in imminent danger, they can pursue, under those circumstances, a request to the Department of Homeland Security to consider something we call humanitarian parole," a diplomat of the US Embassy in Dhaka said yesterday.

However, the diplomat made it clear that applications for humanitarian parole must meet a high standard of proof.

According to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), humanitarian parole is an extraordinary measure sparingly used to bring an otherwise inadmissible alien into the United States for a temporary period of time due to a compelling emergency.

"Humanitarian parole is the last resort for those who are in extreme danger," said Andrea Brouillette-Rodriguez, counsellor for Political and Economic Affairs of the US Embassy in Dhaka.

Speaking at a roundtable discussion with a select group of diplomatic correspondents at the American Centre yesterday, US diplomats from political, economic and consular sections of the US embassy called on the government and the people to work together and reject extremists' ideology.

They also said it is the responsibility of the government of Bangladesh to protect the lives of all citizens, especially those who are in extreme danger and threat.

The US Department of State reiterated its interest in trying to provide shelter to those in danger following the gruesome killings of two LGBT rights activists Xulhaz SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

## Leaders of all major religions stand together against terror

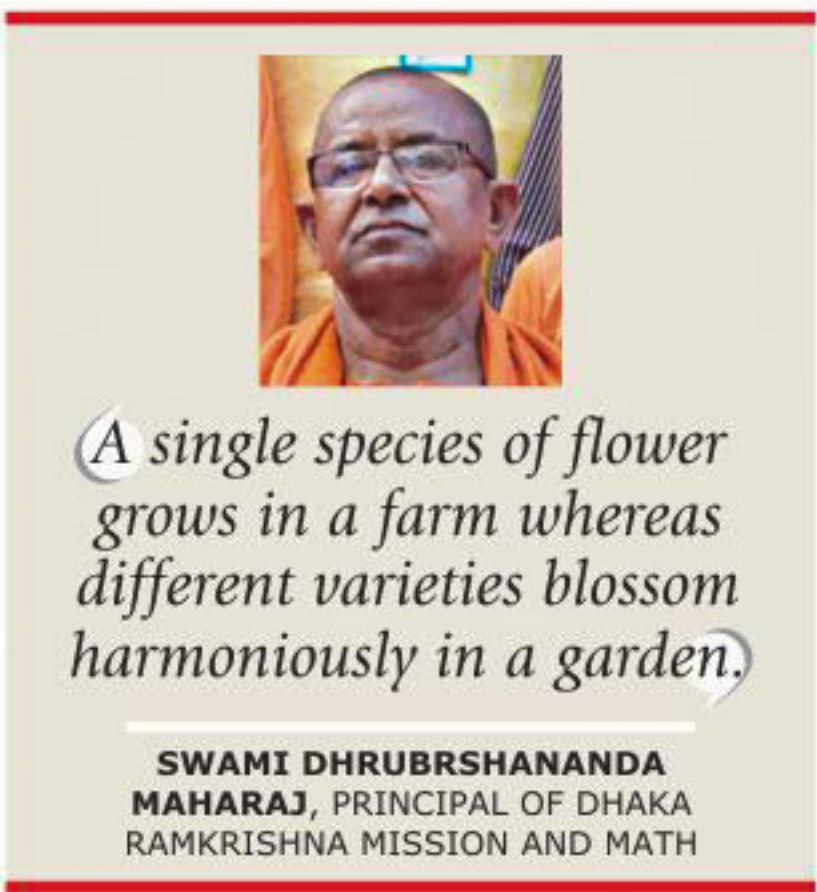
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of various religious communities yesterday stressed strengthening religious harmony to tackle the possible rise of extremism in the country.

They said the core message of all religions is peace and a religion does not support extremism.

The government has to come forward and law enforcers should find out the persons and reasons behind the terrorist incidents and take appropriate measures against them, they added.

Against the backdrop of the recent attacks, Bangladesh Police held the event titled "Religious Harmony Conference" in the Krishibid Institution, Bangladesh auditorium in the capital. Police in November and December



Swami Dhrubrshananda Maharaj, principal of Dhaka Ramkrishna Mission and Math, said there is no last year held several views-exchanges with the country's alem-ulema in a bid to eliminate extremism through co-operations. SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

This time, police decided to involve all other religious leaders to spread the message and create awareness among people against extremism under a common platform.

At yesterday's event, Bangladesh Jamiatul Ulema Parishad Chairman Maulana Farid Uddin Masuod said, "There is no place of hatred in Islam. Religious leaders have to be careful about instigation while preaching and giving sermons."

As part of a campaign to curb extremism, the country's ulema have collected about 76,000 signatures of Imams from all over the country, he added.

Swami Dhrubrshananda Maharaj, principal of Dhaka Ramkrishna Mission and Math, said there is no SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

## Street children demand rehabilitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Laying stress on their basic rights, street children yesterday demanded their rehabilitation to make lives better.

"Street children are not born in the street, they are born in some family," said Salma, a 13-year-old girl who used to live on the street before being rehabilitated by an NGO.

Addressing an opinion sharing meeting at the capital's Kamalapur, she said the street children must also enjoy the five basic rights -- food, clothing, home, education, and healthcare.

Salma is now taking education under the rehabilitation programme of Aparajeyo Bangladesh.

Describing her condition, she demanded the same facilities for all children who came to the streets for different reasons like poverty or parents' separation, death and carelessness.

The women and children affairs ministry organised the discussion as part of an initiative to rehabilitate street children.

According to the estimates of NGOs, the number of street children is 11 lakh in the country, including 4 lakh in the capital.

"I came to the street at the age of eight, as a woman brought me near Babu Bazar Bridge luring me to give food. Since then I have not found my family as I could not remember the address and the name of any of my family members," said Sayeed Hossain, 14, now a student of class VIII.

The government has taken an initiative to rehabilitate street children of two wards of the two Dhaka city corporations on a pilot basis, said Dr Abul Hossain, director of Street Children Rehabilitation Programme.

He said they had selected ward-26 of Dhaka North City Corporation (Karwan Bazar, Tejkunipara, and Railway Colony) SEE PAGE 17 COL 5



Even a day ago, this would have been unthinkable as Ilias, 10, was chained to an electric pole opposite Tejaon Polytechnic Market by his father, a rickshaw-puller, who barbarically left him in the scorching heat for the last one month, every time he went to work in the morning and then took him home at night, as an excuse of saving him from his step-mother's torture and by claiming that Ilias was mentally unstable. After several print media published Ilias's ordeal, he was rescued yesterday by officials of Tejaon Industrial Police Station. Md Abdur Rashid, officer-in-charge of the station, looks fondly at Ilias as he reads a newspaper at the OC's office. The police have also undertaken the responsibility of his rehabilitation. PHOTO: PRABER DAS

## CHILDREN FORCED INTO PROSTITUTION EU project aims to rescue 1,000

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A European Union-funded project aims to rescue in the next four years at least 1,000 children forced into prostitution and provide them shelter, food, clothing, healthcare, education, psychosocial counselling and skills training in Dhaka and Tangail.

"Our failure is that we cannot afford to help all victims," said Mahmudul Kabir, country director of Terre des

Hommes Netherlands Bangladesh, yesterday while sharing objectives of the project, "Combating Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CCSEC)".

"But we will work with some other NGOs that work with children in other districts," he told the inauguration in the capital's Cirdap auditorium, adding that children, especially girls, fall victim to sexual exploitation over the internet and cellphones.

Terre des Hommes Netherlands Bangladesh, Social and Economic Enhancement Programme, Society for Social Services, and Breaking the Silence will address the issue under this project, he said.

Jatiya Sangsad Deputy Speaker Fazle Rabbi Miah launched the project's website, www.ccsectdhn.org, as the chief guest, saying the activities should be spread to all districts. SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

## PROF REZAUL KILLING

### Suspect Shibir man sent to remand

RU protests continue for 6th day

STAR REPORT

Protests continued in Rajshahi University (RU) for the sixth consecutive day yesterday over Prof AFM Rezaul Karim Siddiquee's murder in the city's Shalbagan area on April 24, reports our RU correspondent.

Meanwhile, a Rajshahi court allowed police to take Islami Chhatra Shibir's ward 19 unit President Hafizur Rahman on a four-day remand over the killing. The second year public administration student was picked up from Chhotonongram on April 24 and later shown arrested.

Over 200 members of Rajshahi University Teachers' Association staged a sit-in in front of the senate building by abstaining from teaching in the classes, announcing to do so from 11:00am to 12 noon till May 3, the end of their seven-day ultimatum seeking the killers' arrest, when they plan to hold a "grand rally". Teachers and students of the English department SEE PAGE 5 COL 3

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