

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 34.0 L 22.8	H 33.3 L 25.0	H 34.3 L 22.8	H 34.6 L 21.7	H 34.2 L 22.4	H 34.0 L 23.4	H 32.4 L 19.0	H 34.4 L 26.8

Rain or thunder showers would likely occur at one or two places in Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka, Sylhet, Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions in the next 24 hours. Day and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:31pm and rises tomorrow at 05:18am. Country's highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Sitakunda, Rangamati and Sathkira and lowest 19.0 degree in Rangpur.

25 injured as two AL MPs' men clash in Mirpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 25 people were injured, most of them hit by pellets, in a clash between supporters of two of the ruling Awami League's (AL) lawmakers who brought out processions in the capital's Mirpur 1 denouncing Jamaat-e-Islami's hartal yesterday.

The clash ensued between men loyal to Aslamul Haque Aslam of Dhaka 14 constituency and Sabina Akter Tuhin of reserved seat 35 for women around 11:30am in front of Mukta Bangla Shopping Complex, said police.

Witnesses stated of hearing gunshots and that the opponents chased and pelted each other with brick chips.

A car and a shop were reportedly vandalised during the clash, which created panic among pedestrians and forced traders to shut business outlets for several hours. None has been arrested.

A trader of a market opposite the complex, preferring anonymity, claimed that a shotgun bullet struck his shop and that though a good number of police were deployed marking the hartal, they "did not take due steps".

Shah Ali Police Station Officer-in-Charge Anwar Hossain said police dispersed the warring groups and took the situation under control firing several rounds in the air.

The injured claimed that the clash was over rivalry centring the recent formation of AL's ward and thana committees, the "important" posts in which were bagged by Sabina's supporters.

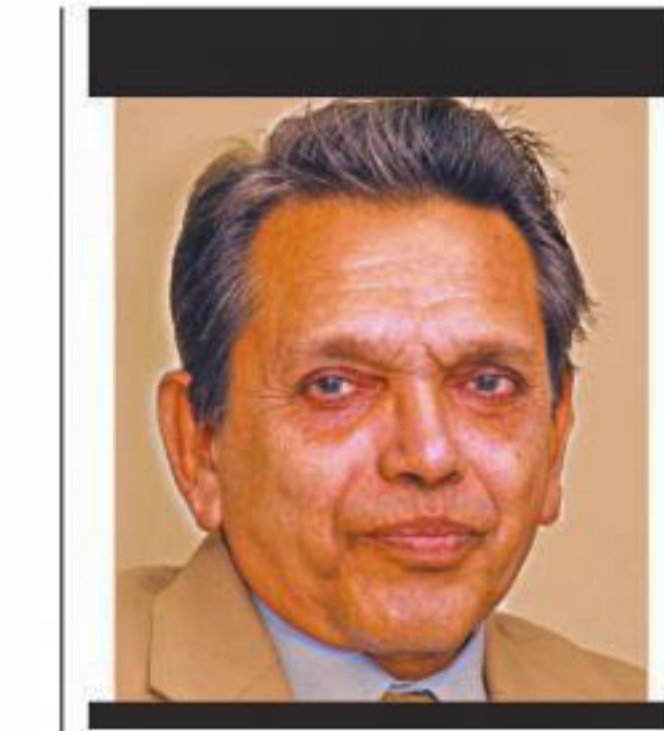
But locals said it was over running extortion rackets at the Gabtoli terminal and the area's footpaths.

Fourteen of the injured

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The back of a youth riddled with shotgun pellets at Dhaka Medical College Hospital. He was one of those injured in a clash between the supporters of two ruling Awami League lawmakers in the capital's Mirpur 1 yesterday. Inset, another man with pellets lodged in the face being shifted from one room to another at the hospital. The fighting started over holding of yesterday's anti-hartal processions, in front of Mukta Bangla Shopping Complex.



Veteran journo Madan Shahu passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He was scheduled to visit The Daily Star on Saturday because he wanted to publish his autobiography, an idea he had shared with his longtime colleague in the newspaper, Asma Khanam.

"That was possibly the last thing he wanted to complete..." said Asma. The manuscript was ready, and he wanted to have it composed, she added.

A modest, soft-spoken man, Madan Shahu was one of the most senior journalists in Bangladesh. He breathed his last at 1:58pm yesterday at the capital's Birdem Hospital, after suffering from asthma for a long time. He got a fever and his

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Dhaka asks UAE to restart hiring Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Against the backdrop of restrictions imposed on recruiting Bangladeshis for jobs in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) since mid-2012, the government has requested the Gulf nation to hire skilled workers.

"The UAE is the first choice for Bangladeshi jobseekers. A good number of Bangladeshis working there are contributing to both countries' economic development," said Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Nurul Islam yesterday.

He was talking to UAE Ambassador to Bangladesh Saeed bin Hajar Al Shehhi during a courtesy call by the latter at the minister's office in the capital's Probashi Kalyan Bhaban, said a ministry press release. The envoy assured discussing the issue with his government.

The UAE imposed the embargo allegedly over different malpractices of mainly brokers and private recruiting agencies, causing a significant drop in migration to the oil-rich country with the largest labour market for Bangladeshi jobseekers. Earlier, over 1 lakh Bangladeshis used to find

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UNION PARISHAD ELECTIONS 2016

Ballot stuffing by polling officers ominous

Experts, EC officials tell The Daily Star

PANKAG KARMAKAR

The tendency of polling officials increasingly getting involved in stuffing ballot boxes in the ongoing union parishad (UP) polls has become a major concern, say experts and Election Commission officials.

The main reasons behind this are underhand dealings, unhealthy political culture, and the Election Commission's lack of control over administration, they told The Daily Star.

In the four phases of UP election, police detained at least 23 polling officials in Comilla, Jamalpur, Mymensingh and Jessore, while a presiding officer was jailed for one month in Sherpur and two were withdrawn from duties in Bogra and Chuadanga, according to media reports.

"Our electoral system has already been on the verge of ruination due to massive violence and irregularities by supporters of candidates. Involvement of polling officials with irregularities will make the destruction faster," said former election commissioner M Sakhawat Hussain.

Polling officials dare commit such irregularities as the EC has lost control over administration, he observed.

Abdul Alim, director of monitoring body Election Working Group (EWG), termed the tendency "dangerous" and said it would encourage use of black money and bribery in elections.

"In addition to the voting day irregularities, polling officials in many cases take

money from candidates during campaigns," he said.

EWG is an alliance of 28 civil society organisations.

Talking to The Daily Star, several EC officials expressed anger as they think the responsibility of polling officials' misdeeds fall on the EC and its officials.

"Polling officials in many cases face pressure from political parties to favour the party-nominated candidates," said a deputy secretary of EC, seeking anonymity.

When asked, Election Commissioner Shah Nawaz said the EC had taken action against officials, who were involved with irregularities.

In UP polls, the district election officers in coordination with returning officers (RO) appoint presiding officers, assistant presiding officers, and polling officers from different government and non-government institutions.

An RO is on the whole responsible for holding election to a particular UP, while a presiding officer oversees a particular polling station with assistance of assistant presiding officers and polling officers.

Because of lack of coordination, people affiliated with a political party were often seen appointed polling officers.

In Gangni upazila of Meherpur, a college teacher, who is also a leader of the local Awami League, was appointed a presiding officer of Sholotaka UP in the fourth

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Technical, vocational education being restructured

Claims Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government initiatives are already underway to thoroughly restructure technical and vocational education, aiming to ensure enrolment of 20 percent of SSC and HSC-level students by 2020 and 30 percent by 2030, said Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday.

Deemed crucial for national development, the sector is the government's top priority, he said, adding that 13 percent of the students were now attaining technical education and this was less than one percent eight years ago.

Nahid said this while making public the addition of \$100 million in funding from the World Bank for an ongoing Skill and Training Enhancement Project (STEP), run by the Directorate of Technical Education.

This fund will ensure vocational skills for 420,000 students, helping them find better jobs at home and abroad, said the organisers at the programme, arranged at a hotel in the capital by the education ministry and World Bank.

Launched in 2010, the project already provided stipends to over 110,000 diploma students in 93 private and public polytechnic institutions, they said.

Moreover, nearly 77,000 youths received free six months' vocational training in 38 trades including that in electrical, automotive and garment sectors, they said.

Of the students, nearly one-third were females, 95 percent completed courses and 42 percent got jobs within six months of completing courses, they added.

Nahid said technical and vocational education created a big opportunity for jobs and self-employment.

"Despite receiving higher education, some youths are still unemployed, but none of those who received technical education or a vocational training is unemployed. They get jobs soon after graduation," he said.

He said the government updated the curriculum of technical courses and launched double shifts in state-run polytechnic institutes.

There are over 7,000 private technical institutes and a modern technical teachers' training college will soon be set

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The traffic situation in Dhaka city during Jamaat-e-Islami's hartal yesterday. Except for the inter-district buses, all types of public transport were on the street and it was like a normal day. The party called the strike protesting upholding of the death penalty of party chief Motiur Rahman Nizami, who was convicted of committing war crimes in 1971. The photo was taken on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue near Karwan Bazar. PHOTO: STAR

DEATH OF FOUR FROM ELECTROCUTION IN SUNAMGANJ

Why directives should not be issued to compensate family

HC tells govt, Palli Bidyut to explain in four weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule upon the government and Palli Bidyut authorities to explain in four weeks why they should not be directed to compensate the family, with Tk 4 crore, four members of which were recently electrocuted in Sunamganj.

The deceased were Ranjit Sarker, Rita Sarker, Jagadish Sarker and Sonali Sarker of Ramdigha village in Dharmapasha upazila of Sunamganj.

They reportedly died after coming in touch with a snapped electric wire on April 26.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Obaidul Hassan and Justice Krisna Debnath came up with the rule following a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Chanchal Kumar Biswas.

In the same rule, the HC bench asked the authorities concerned to explain as to why their inaction and failure to set up safe rural electricity lines in the area should not be declared illegal, and why they should not be ordered to take effective as well as proper measures in setting up safe electricity lines there.

Chanchal submitted the petition on

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