

**WEATHER FORECAST**

**YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES**

**DHAKA**  
H 34.0 | L 22.6

**CHITTAGONG**  
H 34.3 | L 22.4

**SYLHET**  
H 31.9 | L 21.7

**RAJSHAHI**  
H 33.0 | L 22.9

**KHULNA**  
H 34.7 | L 22.5

**BARISAL**  
H 34.8 | L 22.8

**RANGPUR**  
H 27.2 | L 19.2

**COX'S BAZAR**  
H 34.2 | L 25.1

Rain or Thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty/squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Sylhet, Rajshahi, and Dhaka divisions and at or two places over Rangpur, Khulna, Chittagong and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:34pm and rises tomorrow at 5:16am.

**WAR CRIMES TRIAL**

**One issue shouldn't cloud ties with Dhaka**

*Says Islamabad, calling for a forward-looking approach in spirit of 'forget and forgive'*

UNB, Islamabad

Apparently showing its affection for the war criminals standing trial in Bangladesh, Pakistan has said the relations between the two countries "should not be clouded" over a single issue.

"Bilateral relations shouldn't be kept hostage to a single issue as it's much broader in terms of trade, culture and people-to-people contact, and should, therefore, be expanded," Pakistan Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry told a Bangladesh media delegation at his office on Friday.

He made the remark amid a diplomatic row between the two countries that saw summons of each other's envoys in Dhaka and Islamabad following the latter's interference in Bangladesh's internal affairs after the execution of war criminal and Jamaat-e-Islami chief Motiur Rahman Nizami.

"We need to make a more forward-looking approach rather than catch up the past," the Pakistan foreign secretary told the nine-member media team of Bangladesh, presently visiting Pakistan.

The Bangladeshi journalists raised the issue of Pakistan's repeated interferences in Bangladesh's internal affairs and its attempt to present factually incorrect claims centering on the trials of war criminals in Bangladesh.

The Pakistan foreign secretary said the people of Bangladesh and Pakistan were "bound by the ties of shared history, faith and culture", and there was a need to improve relations, particularly people-to-people exchanges, student

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**A resident of the Baptist colony in Barisal city shows the injury he suffered during the Friday's attack on them by some hired goons of a real estate company in an alleged land grabbing attempt, to panicked women and children yesterday. The families are living in a constant fear. Inset, a few others even abandoned their homes and belongings behind, locking the doors, and fled the area seeking sanctuary in other places.**

PHOTOS: ARIFUR RAHMAN



**FRIDAY'S ATTACK ON BARISAL BAPTIST COMMUNITY**  
**Fear now permeates lives**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A tense situation is prevailing among the people of the Baptist colony by Baptist Mission Road in Barisal city after the hired goons of a real estate company allegedly attacked them on Friday during a land grabbing attempt.

After visiting the colony it was found that the 25 families of Baptist Christians on the 2.53-acre land, mostly carpenters and labourers were in panic as the cops, posted in the area to stop any further incidents, were already withdrawn.

"We do not know what will happen to us. What if they attack again?" said a frightened

Shova Bala, 60, who also got injured during the attack.

Johnson Merry Guha, assistant secretary of Baptist Church in the colony, claimed Olympic Properties Limited on the basis of fake documents and some eight to 10 hired goons carrying sticks tried to take possession of a portion of the community land, injuring seven colony members in the process.

The land grabbing bid failed as the community members refused to leave, she said.

She informed a case was pending with a court against the real estate company, which claimed to have purchased the land. "We

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**Allowing religion based politics leads to minority repression**

*National dialogue of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Unity Council told*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leaders from almost all political parties, academics, right activists and civil society members yesterday blamed the use of religion in politics for repression of ethnic and religious minorities.

They also demanded removal of contradictory articles of the constitution to make the country secular, saying religious minorities were being denied constitutional rights.

The demand was raised at a national dialogue, organised by Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Unity Council, in the capital's Cirdap auditorium, where it was discussed how to realise the council's seven-point charter of demands placed in a grand rally in December last year.

The demands included ensuring a 20 percent representation from minorities in the administration, reserving 60 seats in parliament from the communities, dropping Islam as the state religion from the constitution, creation of a minority ministry and full

implementation of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace treaty.

The council announced country-wide demonstrations on May 20 to press for the demands.

The council's president, Usaton Talukder, presided over the dialogue, while the general secretary, Rana Dasgupta, moderated it.

People who addressed the dialogue include Awami League leaders Suranjit Sengupta and Mohammad Nasim, Workers Party chief Rashed Khan Menon, BNP leaders Lt Gen (retd) Mahbubur Rahman and Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury, Oikya NAP leader Pankaj Bhattacharya, Communist Party of Bangladesh President Mujahidul Islam Selim, Samyabadi Dal General Secretary Dilip Barua, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal leader Khalequzzaman, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal General Secretary Shirin Akhter, cultural activists Kamal Lohani, Golam Quddus, columnist Syed Abul Maksud, rights activists

Sultana Kamal, Shahriar Kabir, Khushi Kabir, Dhaka University teacher Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, popularly known as Santu Larma, and Gonoshasthaya Kendra founder Zafarullah Chowdhury.

The speakers called upon the Awami League-led government to take necessary measures to ensure the rights and security of the minorities.

Suranjit said it was unfortunate that the minorities were being repressed during AL's rule.

He called on the government to take steps to implement the demands of the minorities immediately.

Health Minister Mohammad Nasim said people who were involved in torturing minorities and grabbing their prosperities would not be spared. He also said the government was sincere about protecting the minorities' interests.

Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed Khan Menon said they failed to

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