

**WEATHER FORECAST**

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 30.1 L 25.5	H 26.0 L 19.5	H 31.0 L 24.0	H 25.3 L 21.8	H 32.7 L 25.2	H 28.0 L 22.0	H 33.0 L 20.7	H 32.2 L 25.0	H 30.5 L 24.8

Rain or thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at many places over Mymensingh and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka and Chittagong divisions and one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. Day temperature may rise slightly and night temperature may fall slightly over the country, says Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:14pm and rises tomorrow at 5:52am.

**SEDITION CASE**  
HC stays trial proceedings against Khaleda

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The High Court yesterday stayed the trial proceedings of a sedition case filed against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia for the next six months. The court also issued a rule upon the government and the complainant of the case to explain in four weeks why the trial court's order to accept charges should not be scrapped.

The HC bench of Justice Md Miftah Uddin Choudhury and Justice ANM Bashir Ullah came up with the order and rule following a petition filed by Khaleda challenging the trial proceedings.

Khaleda Zia's lawyer Barrister AM Mahub Uddin Khokon told The Daily Star that the HC stayed the trial proceedings on the grounds that the lower court's order to accept the charges against her was illegal, as the complainant Momtaz Uddin Ahmed Mehedi has no right to file any sedition case.

Deputy Attorney General Shaikh AKM Moniruzzaman Kabir told this correspondent that the government will move a petition before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court against the HC order that stayed the trial proceedings against Khaleda. Earlier on January 5, the BNP chief filed the petition seeking a stay on the proceedings in the case which was lodged for her comments on the count of 1971 martyrs.

According to the case, complainant Momtaz alleged Khaleda Zia on December 21, 2015, at a programme organised by Jatiyatabadi Muktiyoddha Dal marking the 45th Victory Day said: "there are controversies over how many were martyred in the Liberation War."



Teachers under the banner of Bangladesh Teachers Association hold a rally in front of Central Shaheed Minar in the capital yesterday demanding nationalisation of their jobs.

Indian army chief arrives tomorrow

**DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT**

Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army General Bipin Rawat will arrive tomorrow on a three-day visit to Bangladesh.

General Rawat will be accompanied by his spouse, Madhulika Rawat, and a four-member delegation, said a press release of the High Commission of India yesterday.

The delegation will call on the president and the prime minister and interact with the senior military leadership. The army chief will also address the student officers at the National Defence College, Mirpur.

**SNAPS & snippets**

**Habib new envoy to Maldives**

**DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT**

The government has decided to appoint Rear Admiral Akhtar Habib as the ambassador to the Maldives, according to a foreign ministry announcement yesterday.

He commanded all the major ships and bases of Bangladesh Navy. He also commanded Bangladesh Navy Fleet, Chittagong Naval Area, Naval Aviation and Navy's Special Warfare Force.

**11 fined for catching shrimplets**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal**

A mobile court in Barisal yesterday realised a total of Tk 55,000 from 11 people for catching shrimplets.

Barisal Metropolitan Police (BMP) yesterday detained them after recovering four lakhs shrimplets from their Khulna-bound truck on the Sahid Abdur Rahaman bridge. As per law, it is illegal to catch shrimplets from natural water resources.



Guests with children inaugurate the new Fantasy Kingdom park in Ashulia of Savar recently. Concord Group Managing Director Shariar Kamal, its Executive Director (marketing) Anup Kumar Sarker, and Concord Entertainment Co Ltd General Manager Maj (retd) Monjur Uddin Ahmed, were present.

Man shot dead in Savar AL infighting

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar**

A man was shot dead in a clash between two rival factions of Awami League in Savar yesterday.

Abdur Rahim, 45, son of Monowar Hossen of Chakolgram village in Pathalia union, died after being hit by a bullet in the head, said Nazmul Hassan Firoz, senior assistant superintendent of police (Savar circle).

Locals said there had been a longstanding conflict between AL-backed Pathalia union parishad Chairman Parvez Dewan and AL general secretary of the union Moazzem Hossen over establishing supremacy in the area.

At noon, supporters of both the leaders locked into an altercation in Noyarhat Bazar area. At one stage, the activists carrying sharp weapons and arms attacked each other, leaving Rahim bullet-hit and injuring three others, said Shamim Hasan, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Ashulia Police Station.

Rahim, also a cousin of Moazzem, was declared dead at Savar Enam Medical College Hospital, he added. On information, police rushed in and recovered some sticks and sharp weapons, said Mohshinul Kadir, OC of the police station.

The Daily Star tried to reach Parvez and Moazzem over the phone but their mobile phones were found switched off.

Meanwhile, Shamim Hossen, Bangladesh Chhatra League president of Ashulia Thana unit, alleged his brother was picked up by police in the same evening.

Rahim's body was kept in Enam Medical College morgue. No case was filed till filing of this report as of 1:00am today.

Thousands of Rakhines left Bangladesh

**SAYS CIVIL SOCIETY GROUP AFTER VISITING PATUAKHALI, BARGUNA**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The Rakhine community of Angkujan Para in Taltali upazila of Barguna has been using the burial ground, "Khaddya Song Chansai" for the last 150 years, but a few months ago a group of people grabbed it by force.

Backed by influential locals, they grabbed almost the entire around 10 acres of the land except for some monuments. Even the path leading to the monuments has been grabbed.

A civil society probe body, who visited the Rakhine community in Patuakhali and Barguna districts recently, said this at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

The burial ground is not the only one which was grabbed by influential people, several settlements, ponds and temples of the Rakhine community were also illegally occupied, they added.

Due to land grabbing and oppression, around 95 percent of the Rakhine population in the districts has decreased in the last hundred years, while 81 percent of the Rakhine settlements were illegally grabbed.

The 13-member probe body comprising civil society representatives, including rights activists, university professors and journalists, went on a two-day visit to the Rakhine areas in the districts on March 17.

According to old documents and books, more than 50,000 Rakhine people used to live in 237 villages of the districts between 19th and 20th centuries. But in 2014, a Caritas survey found that only 2,561 of them were living in 45 villages, they said.

Most of the Rakhines were forced to leave the country and migrated to Myanmar due to suppression and land grabbing, they added.

The probe body also gave some recommendations to protect the community from becoming extinct.

The recommendations are -- forming a separate land commission for the community to recover and handover their lands, returning their grabbed ponds, burial grounds and temples, punishing the grabbers, and forming a cell at the deputy commissioner's office in the ethnic minority inhabited districts to address and solve their problems.

Noted columnist Syed Abul Maksud; Pankaj Bhattacharya, president of Oikya NAP; Robayet Ferdous, an associate professor at Dhaka University; Shamsul Huda, executive director of Association for Land Reforms and Development, and Sanjeeb Drong, general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, spoke among others.

HC rejects tannery owners'

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environment (DoE) to immediately shut the tanneries in Hazaribagh.

The ministries of home, environment, industries, inspector general of police and the commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police were asked to assist the DG in complying with the order.

The HC asked the DG to submit a report after complying with its directives by April 6 and fixed April 10 for holding further hearing on the issue.

The March 6 HC order will remain in force and the DG of DoE has to submit a report after complying with the order by April 6 following yesterday's HC order, Advocate Sayeed Ahmed Kabir, a lawyer for Bela, told The Daily Star.

On March 12, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court upheld the HC's March 6 directive and dismissed a petition filed by the chairman of Footwear Exporters Association seeking a stay on the HC order.

Lullaby for Ekush

Baby found in garbage container finds 'mother'

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg**

Maybe it is because his name is Ekush or maybe the number of kind-hearted human beings out there is larger than our imagination.

The port city's most sought-after baby boy, 37-day-old Ekush, will too have a mother who will cradle him in her arms and comfort him while singing lullabies.

Out of an astounding 11 aspiring mothers who lined up at the court yesterday seeking Ekush's custody, Shakila Akhter walked away with tears of joy.

In one of the most anticipated verdict in the city, Chittagong Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge Jannatul Ferdous, who is also the judge of Chittagong Children's Court, awarded custody of Ekush to Shakila, one of 16 applicants.

As the judge called out her name in the jam-packed courtroom, Shakila, standing before the court along with 10 other aspiring mothers, became emotional and tears rolled down her cheeks.

Zakirul Islam, her husband of 19 years and a physician by profession, was also happy at the verdict.

Biologically incapable of being a



added, saying that the baby will be handed over to the couple after they turn in the insurance documents to the court by April 5.

Among other conditions of the custody, following the handover of the baby, the couple will need to appear before the court after three months and six months. And every year in January, they will have to be present before the court with a report of the baby.

If in future the biological mother of the baby comes forward and claims the baby and the claim is proven with proper documents supported by a DNA test, then the baby will have to be handed over to the mother along with the valid insurance, said the PP.

An hour before the midnight on February 20, on the eve of the Amar Ekushey and the International Mother Language Day, Akbar Shah police recovered a newborn Ekush from a garbage container in Prashanti Residential area of Colonel Hut after several local youths reported of a baby's cry coming out of it. Officer-in-Charge Alamgir Mahmud of the police station adorned the baby with the name "Ekush".



Hawkers block a portion of a road stretching from Jatiya Press Club to Purana Palatan intersection from 10:00am to 1:00pm yesterday, demanding rehabilitation for the recently-evicted hawkers from the footpaths in Motijheel and Gulistan areas. The three-hour road block created severe gridlock in the area causing public sufferings.

DSCC starts collecting particulars of New Market hawkers

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Dhaka South City Corporation has started collecting the particulars of hawkers of the capital's New Market area.

It is part of the government's plan to rehabilitate hawkers, said DSCC Chief Estate Officer Mohammad Kamrul Islam Chowdhury.

Earlier, the DSCC recorded the details of 2,502 hawkers of Gulistan.

Meanwhile, a section of hawkers under the banner of "Hawkers Sangram Parishad" rallied in the capital's Jatiya Press Club area yesterday protesting the ongoing eviction drive against them.

PM'S FLIGHT GLITCH

Three Biman staff remanded again

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit to submit on May 7 the probe report of the case filed over the technical glitch in Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's flight on November 27 last year.

Metropolitan Magistrate Ahsan Habib passed the order after CTTC Inspector Mahub Alam, also investigation officer (IO) of the case, failed to submit the probe report complying with a court order.

Earlier on January 12, the same court asked CTTC unit to submit by yesterday the probe report.

Another Dhaka court yesterday placed three Biman staff - Technician Siddiqui Rahman, Engineer (technician) Shah Alam and Engineer (officer) Najmul Haq -- on a one-day fresh remand.

Metropolitan Magistrate Sharifuzzaman Ansari passed the order after the IO produced them before the court with a five-day remand prayer.

On last November 27, a Biman flight carrying the prime minister had to make an emergency landing at the Ashgabat International Airport in Turkmenistan on her way to Budapest as engine-1 of the plane was losing oil pressure.

RAKIB MURDER

HC to deliver verdict April 4

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The High Court will deliver a verdict on April 4 on the death reference and appeals in the sensational 13-year-old Rakib murder case in Khulna.

The HC yesterday set the date after hearing two appeals filed by convicts -- Omar Sharif and Mintu Khan.

Earlier in November, 2015, a Khulna court handed down death penalty to Rakib's former employer Sharif and his accomplice and uncle Mintu for killing Rakib by pumping air into his rectum on August 3, 2015, as a punishment for leaving his old job and joining elsewhere.



Shakila Akhter, in tears of joy, walks out of the courtroom with her husband following the verdict that gave them the custody of baby boy Ekush.