

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 31.5 L 22.4

MYMENSINGH H 28.3 L 19.0

CHITTAGONG H 32.0 L 25.0

SYLHET H 29.0 L 20.5

RAJSHAHI H 33.0 L 21.7

RANGPUR H 32.2 L 20.0

KHULNA H 33.0 L 25.0

BARISAL H 31.6 L 24.5

COX'S BAZAR H 32.8 L 24.5

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at a few places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Khulna and Barisal divisions with isolated hails at places till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:21pm and rises tomorrow at 5:35am, Met Office said.

SIX GAIBANDHA MEN ICT again defers closing arguments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday once again deferred the closing arguments to May 8 in a case filed against six Gaibandha men over committing crimes during the Liberation War in 1971.

Yesterday was fixed to begin the arguments but prosecutor Syed Sayedul Haque Sumon sought more time for preparation, which the two-member tribunal led by Justice Anwarul Haque allowed.

On March 14, the tribunal deferred the closing arguments to April 16 as its Chairman Justice Anwarul Haque was abroad for treatment.

Among the accused, Abu Saleh Md Abdul Aziz Mia, a former Jamaat lawmaker and alleged commander of local Razakar force; Ruhul Amin alias Manju, Abu Muslim Md Ali, Najmul Huda, and Abdur Rahim Mia, are on the run. Only Abdul Latif is in jail now.

The six face three charges and the prosecution produced 15 witnesses including two investigation officers of the case and documents to prove the charges. Defence declined to produce any witness.

Meanwhile, the tribunal deferred the date to May 30 to decide whether it will take the charges into cognizance brought against three Moulvibazar men for allegedly committing crimes during the Liberation War.

The prosecution pressed five charges against the three on February 5.

Among the accused, Abdul Aziz alias Habul and Abdul Mannan alias Monai, were arrested and are now in jail, while Abdul Matin, brother of Habul, is on the run. All the accused are from the district's Barolekha upazila.



Death anniversary

CITY DESK

Today is the 47th death anniversary of Lt Col Muhammad Abdol Qadir, who embraced martyrdom on this day in 1971.

Special prayers will be offered at Qadirabad Cantonment Central Mosque today, says a press release.

The Qadirabad Cantonment in Natore was named after him for his role in the Liberation War.

The government also issued a postage stamp in his honour.

Qadir's grave was found in 2007 and he was reburied with full state and military honour in 2011 at Qadirabad Cantonment.

He is the father of eminent journalist Nadeem Qadir, who is currently the minister (press) of Bangladesh High Commission in London.



Jockeys with their horses take part in a traditional horse race on the Mymensingh Circuit Ground on Saturday afternoon. Some 40 participants from Mymensingh, Sirajganj and Bogra competed in the race in separate groups. The event was organised by Mymensingh Municipality as part of its three-day celebration of Bangla New Year.

PHOTO: STAR

GAS CRISIS IN SAVAR

Illegal users take in huge gulp

AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH, Savar

An acute gas crisis has been disrupting the life of authorised users in Savar, as the illegal intruders take a huge gulp of the total supply.

There are around 50,000 residential customers in Savar, according to Savar zonal office of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company.

But different syndicates have set up distribution lines at 800 to 900 points of the main supply line, feeding to around 7 lakh illegal gas stoves, said an official of the zonal office on condition of anonymity.

The practice of extending illegal gas connections from the main line deprives the government of huge revenue and the legal users of adequate gas.

Roma Akter, who lives in a rented house in Kotbari area under Savar municipality, struggles to finish her cooking as the gas pressure remains very low during day time.

Due to scanty supply of gas, she wakes up before sunrise to start cooking. "But I cannot complete the



Left, An illegal gas line over a drain in Aukpara area of Savar. Right, Another illegal line in Rajfulbaria area is being uprooted yesterday. Titas Gas authorities the same day disconnected over 2,500 illegal lines connected to a single point of the main supply line.

PHOTOS: AKLAKUR RAHMAN AKASH

that the situation was no different in Bank Colony, Razasion, Talbag, Bokterpur, Kotbari, Nama Bazar, Ganda, Ullail, and Radio Colony.

The sufferers alleged that illegal gas connection was responsible for this crisis.

An influential cartel of local politicians from the ruling party,

in January this year.

Recently, some followers of AL-backed Chairman of Savar union parishad (UP) Shohel Rana offered them gas connection and took TK 8,000, the woman claimed.

Another woman in the area, who also did not want to be named, claimed she managed to obtain a gas connection around one year ago by bribing a Jubo league leader of Birulia union Tk 50,000.

But Titas authorities removed it around nine months into the installation. She said they have recently taken the connection again by paying a local influential AL leader Tk 10,000.

Contacted, UP Chairman Shohel Rana trashed the allegation, and said his men are not involved in such illegal practice.

If any of them are found involved in such act, he said, stern action will be taken against them.

Allegations run rife that local administration and police also join hands in making some quick bucks from the bustling trade. But The Daily Star could not verify the claim.

Eleja Begum, a resident of Vatpara area under Savar municipality and also a legal customer, said due to the gas crisis, she uses electric stove that adds to the financial burden of her middle-income family.

Whoever can afford uses gas cylinder, kerosene stove and electric rice cookers to deal with the gas crisis. But the remaining ones have to either wait for hours for the

supply or use earthen stoves, said Yusuf Ali, a resident in Talbag area.

Engineer Md Moksedur Rahman, deputy general manager of Titas Gas Savar zone, said the demand is increasing due to the rise of illegal users whereas the supply remains the same, resulting in gas crisis for the legal users.

Contacted, Engineer Md Siddiqui Rahman, manager of Titas Gas Savar zonal office, said, "The drive to snap illegal gas connections is always on. A good number of illegal gas connections were removed in several drives in the recent past."

Admitting that gas theft through illegal connections is responsible for the recent gas crisis, Siddiqui said a huge quantity of gas is being wasted because of the unauthorised connections.

Asked about the total supply of gas in Savar, Siddiqui said they do not have any information in this regard. He suggested contacting Titas head office.

Meanwhile, the Titas Gas authorities yesterday disconnected over 2,500 illegal connections from a single point in Rajfulbaria area.

Siddiqui, who was present during the drive, said none was arrested during the drive.

Assistant Commissioner (land) of Savar Md Kamrul Hasan, also executive magistrate, said such drive to snap illegal gas connections will continue.



A recent photo shows a woman cooks on an earthen stove beside her gas cookers at her Kotbari residence as there is no gas supply.

cooking, because the gas pressure gradually starts declining from midnight," said Roma, adding that she has been using earthen stove to deal with the situation.

Roma's neighbour Ferdousi Begum has a similar story to tell. She said she faces trouble in cooking as the gas pressure remains very low during weekdays, which compels her to use earthen stove to finish cooking.

During a recent visit, it was found

Titas contractors and officials are allegedly involved in stealing gas by setting up illegal lines, they said.

The cartel is making a fortune as each household pays between Tk 35,000 and Tk 50,000 for gas connection.

Seeking anonymity, a woman in Kolma area, said, they took an illegal gas connection giving TK 45,000 to a middleman for using a stove around one year back, but Titas authorities removed the connection



Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury administers the oath to Joya Sengupta, newly elected member of parliament (MP) from Sunamganj-2 constituency, at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday. Wife of late veteran lawmaker Suranjit Sengupta, Joya was elected in the by-election to the constituency held on March 30.

PHOTO: PID

NEWS IN brief

JS goes into session May 2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid has convened the 15th session of the 10th parliament on May 2.

The House will sit at 5:00pm, said a press release. Sources at the Parliament Secretariat said the session was likely to continue for a short period of time.

According to the constitution, the president must convene a session within 60 days from the last sitting of the last session.

After 31 working days, the last session ended on March 11.

Three lakh students receive stipends thru' mobile banking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around three lakh students of secondary schools across the country yesterday received government stipends through bKash.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid inaugurated the stipend disbursement via bKash as chief guest at a programme held in the capital.

bKash Ltd, a mobile money transfer service, has partnered with state-owned Agrani Bank to facilitate distribution of the stipends in 2,916 secondary schools of the country. Disbarment through bKash is a convenient, hassle-free, transparent, and cost-saving solution to the beneficiaries, the minister said at the programme.

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka turns 12

CITY DESK

To mark its 12th founding anniversary yesterday, Apollo Hospitals Dhaka organised a programme at the hospital, said a press release.

Among others, Chief Operating Officer of the hospital Dr Ratnadeep Chaskar, Independent Director of STS Group Chaklader Mansurul Alam, Chief Operating Officer of STS Group Parvez Saiful Islam, and Dr Shahabuddin Talukder, senior consultant of Clinical and Interventional Cardiology, were present at the event.

Apollo Hospitals Dhaka will launch an advanced cancer treatment centre for all types of cancer patients and has a plan to establish another hospital in Chittagong in 2018, said Dr Ratnadeep.

Obituary

CITY DESK



Sirajul Islam, a newspaper agent in Mymensingh, died due to brain hemorrhage at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital on Saturday. He was 65.

He left behind his wife, a son and a daughter, said a press release yesterday.

Death anniversary

CITY DESK



Today is the 17th death anniversary of Shabnam Huq; wife of Arham Masudul Huq, senior executive vice-president and company secretary of Dhaka Bank Ltd.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to pray for the salvation of her departed soul.

Govt to help get back genuine

FROM PAGE 3

the country in the last two days found their accounts blocked.

Echoing the secretary, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) Chairman Shahjahan Mahmood said they have responsibility to help the genuine account holders. However, he did not mention how they would help those who have found their accounts blocked.

Earlier, the government requested the Facebook authorities to block fake accounts, which are mostly used for running criminal activities, spreading militancy contents, and posting defamatory comments.

Talking to journalist at her office yesterday, State Minister for Posts and Telecommunications Tarana Halim said the social media authorities have blocked the accounts on their own initiative.

Meanwhile, Facebook's move has also resulted in a "sudden fall of likes" on Facebook pages of some organisations.

Rajib Ahmed, president of e-Commerce Association of Bangladesh (e-CAB) said, "We don't want people with fake IDs to be engaged with us, but we don't want to lose real people either," he said. Nobody could mention how many Facebook accounts were blocked. But unauthenticated sources said the number might be around one million from Bangladesh.

There are 2.6 crore Facebook accounts operating from Bangladesh, according to a report of "Digital in 2017 Global Overview" run by We Are Social and Hootsuite.

পাওয়ার গ্রীড কোম্পানী অব বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড
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e-Tender বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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96367	Replacing existing main gate with new one and extension of approach road attached to main gate of Chapai Nawabgonj 132/33 kV Grid Sub-Station under GMD, PGCB, Rajshahi.	03/05/2017 at 11:00

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