

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 37.0 | L 29.0

MYMENSINGH
H 34.2 | L 24.8

CHITTAGONG
H 35.2 | L 28.3

SYLHET
H 34.2 | L 23.5

RAJSHAHI
H 37.2 | L 26.0

RANGPUR
H 33.7 | L 23.2

KHULNA
H 37.3 | L 28.4

BARISAL
H 36.8 | L 28.0

COX'S BAZAR
H 35.2 | L 28.2

Mild heat wave sweeping over Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal divisions and the regions of Rajshahi, Pabna, Chandpur and Noakhali may continue, reports UNB. Rain accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rangpur, Mymensingh, Sylhet and Rajshahi divisions and the regions of Jessore and Kushtia with hails at isolated places till 6:00pm today, says Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:39 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:12 am.

BNP unlikely to get permission for today's rally

BNP is unlikely to get permission to hold a rally in the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan today.

Maruf Hasan, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), Ramna Division, yesterday told The Daily Star, "As two political parties -- Awami League and BNP -- wanted to hold rallies at the same venue, we did not give permission to any of them."

However, BNP leader Shahiduddin Chowdhury Annie said they got permission from Public Works Department (PWD), and were waiting to get DMP's decision on the matter.

BNP had written to DMP and PWD on Monday seeking permission to hold the rally, protesting the Saturday's police raid on its Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Gulshan office.



To get some respite, children play in a pond to cool themselves off amid the ongoing sweltering summer heat in Sylhet city's Sadatikor area yesterday noon. A mild heat wave is sweeping across the country, making life difficult for all. Mercury hit 34.2 degrees Celsius in Sylhet yesterday while the highest in the country was 37.8 in Jessore.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Don't worry
Govt tells Unesco that it would use advanced technology in Rampal project to protect Sundarbans

Defending Rampal power plant project, the government has briefed Unesco that it has chosen the most advanced technology for the project to mitigate any possible adverse impact on the Sundarbans.

A delegation led by Dr Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, adviser to the prime minister on energy, power and mineral resources affairs, met the members of Unesco's World Heritage Committee and briefed them on the rationale behind the construction of Rampal power plant.

Organised by Bangladesh embassy in France, the briefing was held at Unesco Headquarters in Paris on Monday.

"We need electricity for our economic development but we are also mindful to not harm the Sundarbans, our pride possession," said the energy adviser, according to a press release of the embassy received here yesterday.

The 21-member World Heritage Committee is the responsible body to oversee conservation and protection of cultural and natural sites inscribed on the prestigious World Heritage List maintained by Unesco.

The Committee in its 41st session scheduled for July 2-12 in Poland will examine the state of conservation of the Sundarbans.

Celebrate diversity, promote equity to fight extremism

Chandrika Kumaratunga tells BISS lecture

Former Sri Lankan president Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga has urged South Asian countries to celebrate diversity and promote equity to prevent conflicts and extremism in the society.

"Accept and celebrate diversity. Don't reject it. It is the best option for reconciliation," she said while delivering a lecture on "Reconciling divided societies, building democracy and good governance: lessons from Sri Lanka".

Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) arranged the discussion at its auditorium in the capital yesterday.



"Collective vision is required to keep together separate aspirations to one collective national dream composed of the multifaceted aspirations of different communities living freely and proudly with separate identities," Chandrika Kumaratunga said.

Chandrika, who was president of Sri Lanka from 1994 to 2005, saw the tumultuous years of the South Asian country's civil war and made efforts to end the nearly 30-year-old crisis.

A member of Global Leadership Foundation, Chandrika now works to promote democratic leadership, good governance and prevent conflicts through mediations.

ASSAULT ON TEACHER
Salim Osman gets bail on surrender

Jatiya Party lawmaker AKM Salim Osman yesterday got bail after he surrendered before a Dhaka court in a case filed over an assault on Narayanganj school-teacher Shyamal Kanti Bhakta last year.

The court also fixed July 4 for hearing on charge framing and the court also exempted Salim from his personal appearance before the court. However, he has to appear on the day when the court will decide on charge framing, the court said.

One Apu is also an accused in the case.

Earlier on May 14, Osman surrendered before the same court and sought bail but the court fixed yesterday for hearing it.

In May last year, a video clip of Shyamal Kanti Bhakta, the headmaster of a Narayanganj high school, went viral on the social media. In the clip he was being humiliated by doing squats holding his ears in the presence of Salim.

Clarification

Following a Daily Star report, published on Tuesday, Zonal Commander of Bangladesh Coast Guard Force, ATM Rezaul Hasan, yesterday issued the following clarification.

"Bangladesh Coast Guard Force [has been] performing the fishery protection duties as part of their daily activities in coordination with local fishery department since inception of this force. We do not take any step without the consent of fishery department related to fishery protection operations. Giant prawn larvae were released at CG Station Pagla during highest high water time with the consultation of Senior Fishery Officer Narayanganj Mr Kohinur.

It was also confirmed from other journalists present during the releasing of giant prawn larvae."



Desperate to find any other alternatives, people travel hanging behind human hauliers in Askar Dighi area of Chittagong yesterday. As the traffic department of Chittagong Metropolitan Police is observing Traffic Week for creating awareness as well as imposing strict measures on vehicles plying without permits, lesser number of vehicles was plying the streets. As a result, the port city is facing a severe transport crisis.

'No limit' to potential of Indo-Bangla relations

Indian High Commissioner Shringla tells 'DCABtalk'

There is "no limit" to the potential of growing relations between Bangladesh and India, as the two countries embarked on a new era of cooperation for the benefits of people, said Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Harsh Vardhan Shringla.

"The opportunities are limitless...we are really looking for a comprehensive relation that can bring development, growth and betterment of the people of the two countries," he said.

He made the remarks while talking to diplomatic correspondents at a function titled "DCABtalk" at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

"If you create an enabling environment with good connectivity and easing travel, the rest will follow... The opportunities are tremendous," said the Indian high commissioner, adding that the two countries could move ahead in a cooperative manner for mutual growth and development.

Shringla in his speech touched on the irritants of the relations which include Teesta water sharing and border management issues, and reiterated that even a single death on the border is "too much".

He said the border issue is "a very valid" issue. "We have taken comprehensive border management," he said, referring to the joint efforts taken by Bangladesh BGF and Indian BSF.

The border killing has dropped significantly, Shringla said, adding, it is less than 20 per year now. The killings on the border are linked with criminal activities and most of the shooting incidents take place after midnight, he said.

"Even every death is too much. Our endeavour is to bring down it to zero."

The Diplomatic Correspondents Association, Bangladesh (DCAB) organised the programme under its flagship event "DCABtalk". President Rezaul Karim Lotus and General Secretary Pantho Rahman also spoke.

Asked whether the Teesta agreement can be signed before the general elections in Bangladesh next year, the Indian envoy said India has no intention to get involved in Bangladesh's domestic politics. "We were trying hard to keep ourselves away from your domestic issues. I think to a large extent it has been succeeded."

"Our endeavour is to create the relation which is sustainable," he said, adding, people are the stakeholders of the relations.

"We focus on constructive aspect of the relations. The government creates a facilitating environment. The rest of the thing will be taken care of by the businesses, media, and civil society."

He said Bangladesh's exports to India have increased 31 percent after New Delhi allowed duty and quota-free market access of Bangladeshi products.

He said one of the non-tariff barriers was to accept the BSTI testing results at the Indian border. This is also being addressed after joint efforts. Now, 20 major products are already cleared and time will come when all products will get direct entry with BSTI certificate.



GRAFT CASE
Khaleda's self-defence statement deferred

A special court in Dhaka yesterday fixed June 1 for placing BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's self-defence statement in connection with Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.

Judge Md Akhtaruzzaman of the Special Judge Court-5 of Dhaka passed the order after Khaleda's lawyer submitted a petition seeking adjournment of the hearing as the BNP chairperson could not appear before the court due to illness.

Earlier, the High Court transferred the case from the Senior Special Judge's Court of Dhaka following Khaleda's writ petition.

The Anti-Corruption Commission filed the case on July 3, 2008, accusing Khaleda, her elder son Tarique Rahman and four others for misappropriating over Tk 2.10 crore that was received as grants for orphans via a foreign bank.

10 killed in road accidents

Three of them are from a family

CITY DESK

In Faridpur, two children were killed as a tractor hit a motorcycle carrying them on Monikotha-Piazekhali road in Bottola area of Sadarpur upazila yesterday.

The deceased are Jahid Khan, 7, son of Majam Khan of Akotarchar village and Nusrat Jahan, 8, daughter of Ripon Khan of Akotarchar village. They were cousins.

Locals said the two were returning home after school with Nusrat's father Ripon who was driving the motorcycle. Ripon got injured in the accident.

In another incident in the district, a three-wheeler driver was killed as an unidentified vehicle rammed his three-wheeler on Dhaka-Khulna highway in Nurpur area under Bhanga municipality yesterday.

The deceased is Ajijul Mollah, 40, of Boro Kajli village under Nagarkanda upazila. He died on the spot.

In Sylhet, a four-year-old child and a teenage boy were killed as a CNG-run auto-rickshaw carrying them fell into a ditch beside Sylhet-Dhaka highway in Dakshin Surma upazila yesterday.

The deceased are Adil Miah, 4, son of Sufian Miah of Mominkhala village and Marjan Haque, 19, of Syedpur village in Sunamganj.

Police said the auto-rickshaw was driving recklessly and when a traffic surgent signalled the driver to stop in Telipara area, the driver tried to flee.

Minutes later, the vehicle plunged into the ditch as the driver lost his control over it killing the two and injuring three people.

In Mymensingh, two people were killed when a truck ran them over while they were standing beside the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Trishal municipal area yesterday.

The deceased are Maleka Khatun, 44, and Raju Mia, 22, of the area.

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