

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 36.0 L 26.9	MYMENSINGH H 36.7 L 27.6	CHITTAGONG H 34.4 L 26.0	SYLHET H 36.6 L 26.5	RAJSHAHI H 35.6 L 26.6	RANGPUR H 36.0 L 27.6	KHULNA H 36.0 L 27.4	BARISAL H 36.2 L 26.5	COX'S BAZAR H 34.0 L 27.0
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Rain accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at a few places over Mymensingh and Dhaka divisions and at one or two places over Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions with moderately heavy falls at places over the country till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. Day temperature may fall slightly and night temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, said Met office. The sunsets in the capital today at 6:00pm and rises tomorrow at 5:46am.

EC preparing for Rangpur city polls

UNB, Dhaka

The Election Commission has started taking preparations to complete the second election to Rangpur City Corporation by December this year.

Under the incumbent commission, headed by KM Nurul Huda, it would be the second major election after the Comilla City Corporation polls held in March.

"After taking a decision at the commission's meeting, the election schedule is likely to be announced in November," EC acting secretary Helaluddin Ahmed told the news agency.

The five-year tenure of Rangpur city mayor will expire on February 14 next year. But the commission will complete the polls by December ahead of a public examination in early 2018.

The maiden election to Rangpur City Corporation was held on December 20, 2012. Pro-Awami League candidate Sharfuddin Ahmed Jhantu was elected mayor, defeating Jatiya Party-backed candidate.

Jhantu won the election securing 1,06,255 votes, while his nearest rival Jatiya Party leader Mostafizur Rahman polled 77,805 votes.

There is a legal obligation for the EC to complete the election to any city corporation within 180 days before the expiry of the tenure that starts with the first meeting of the elected representatives.

Besides, the EC has also a plan to arrange elections to five other city corporations -- Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet, Barisal and Gazipur -- by August 2018. About the five city corporations, the EC acting secretary said the elections to the five city corporations would be held in time before the expiry of the five-year tenures of the public representatives.

The Huda-commission formed in February will conduct

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Demanding arrears and reopening of the factory, several hundred workers of Jhuma Fashions Limited demonstrate in front of the BGMEA building in the capital's Karwan Bazar area yesterday. They said the factory, located in Jirani of Savar, was supposed to open on September 10 after the Eid holidays.

Microplastic threatening lives: It's time to ban

Workshop told CITY DESK

Health, beauty and environmental experts, and concerned stakeholders yesterday in a workshop demanded a ban on the use of microplastic, especially microbeads, to combat environmental pollution and thus protecting human lives and marine health in the Bay of Bengal.

The event was organised by Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO at a hotel in the capital, said a press release. The session was chaired by ESDO Chairperson Syed Marghubur Murshed, a former secretary.

Microbeads are plastic particles less than 1mm in size that can be spherical or irregular in shape and produced in a multitude of colours. In Bangladesh, microplastics pollution is a new phenomenon and manufacturers and consumers are not aware of the negative impact of microplastic and the microbeads, said speakers.

Microbeads in beauty products and toothpaste can be harmful for skin and teeth.

According to a study finding of ESDO, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet city dwellers release a huge quantity of microbeads every month which are dumped into water bodies and wetland. The huge amount of microbeads content accumulate toxic contaminants and can also cause heart disease, type-2 diabetes, cancer, obesity in human body, small tears in skin leaving it vulnerable to bacteria.

ESDO is going to kick off a project with an aim to reduce the use of microplastics in Bangladesh.

MD Ziaul Haque, director (AQM), Department of Environment (DoE), and Mahmood Hasan Khan, former DoE director, were present among others.

Look into 'game of money'

For ensuring credible polls, analysts suggest EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) must scrutinise the candidates' return of election expenses comparing with their pre-election budget, political analysts said at a roundtable yesterday.

They alleged that candidates had spent crores of taka in the previous elections, but their return of election expenses submitted to the EC did not reflect it. Amount cited in the return statements was almost similar to what they submitted as pre-election budget, said the analysts.

This practice has largely turned the country's electoral system into a "game of money", they added.

Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Sujan), a civil society platform working for good governance, organised the roundtable on "Shustho Nirbachoner Jonno Shusposhto Koronio" [Specific tasks for a credible election] at the capital's Jatiya Press Club.

The speakers said the EC has to verify the candidates' affidavit forms properly for a credible election.

They urged the EC to remove differences between men and women voters as the number of female voters at present is 26 percent less than the male ones. They further stressed the need for proper demarcation of constituencies before the next national polls.

Former cabinet secretary Ali Imam Majumdar said past references suggest that the EC did not scrutinise the return of election expenses.

"If they do not scrutinise the statements, then why do they ask for submission?" he questioned.

Former election commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Sakhawat Hussain said holding a fair, neutral and credible election is barely possible without changes in the political culture.

He said changes have to be made in issues like politicisation of administration and security.

Tk 333 crore was spent on security purposes during the last parliamentary election, which was unbelievable, he said.

Moderating the roundtable, Sujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said, "If the EC decides to check candidates' wealth statement affidavits, many applicants will refrain from participating in the election."

The country will fall into deep crisis if the next parliamentary election is not held in a fair manner, he said, adding, the EC must ensure a fair and credible election and the government has to help the EC in this regard.

Columnist Syed Abul Maksud said

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Eight parties for army deployment in polls

EC dialogue with 8 others begins today

UNB, Dhaka

Most of the 10 registered political parties which have already joined the Election Commission's (EC) ongoing dialogue suggested the deployment of army and dissolution of parliament ahead of the 11th national polls.

Out of the 10 parties, eight proposed that the EC deploy the army during the next election, while one party (Bangladesh Sangskritik Mukti Jot) suggested that the army can be engaged, if necessary. The remaining one party (Islamic Front Bangladesh) is silent over the issue.

About the dissolution of parliament, seven parties recommended that parliament be dissolved ahead of the polls, while three others -- Mukti Jot, Bangladesh Islamic Front and Bangladesh Kalyan Party -- is mum about it.

The EC on August 24 started its dialogue with 40 registered political parties to receive their opinions over its preparation for the next parliamentary elections likely to be held in December 2018.

So far, 10 parties joined the dialogue -- five each in the first phase (Aug 24 to Aug 30) and second phase (Sept 10 to Sept 14). Two parties did not take part in the talks.

The third phase of dialogue with eight other political parties will begin today. And the ongoing talks will end by October as per the EC's existing plan.

About the election-time government, three parties proposed installation of election-time non-partisan government, while five others suggested bringing some key ministries, including the public administration, home and local government ministries

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Fishermen mend their nets in Natun Bridge area of Chittagong city. They are passing busy days because of the ongoing peak catching season. The photo was taken on Friday.

Losing a son on the way

REUTERS, Telnaf

A crying Rohingya mother in a yellow headscarf cradling her five-week-old infant son who died after their boat capsized is one of the most powerful Reuters images of Muslim refugees fleeing violence in Myanmar.

Hamida, her husband Nasir Ahmed and their two young sons were among 18 refugees on a small fishing boat crossing the Bay of Bengal to the Bangladesh village of Shah Porir Dwip.

As they neared the shore, the boat capsized and they were tossed into the murky water.

Reuters photographer Mohammad Ponir Hossain was taking pictures of exhausted refugees on the beach when he heard an auto-rickshaw driver shouting that a boat had capsized.

"I rushed to the spot and found people crying over the dead body of a child," Ponir said.

He took a picture of Hamida, cradling the tiny pale body of her child, Abdul Masood. He appears to have died as the survivors scrambled through the crashing waves to shore.

Another picture showed the anguish on the face of Nasir Ahmed as he carried his son away from the crowd.

Hamida's family was among tens of thousands of Rohingya who embarked in a rickety fleet of small wooden fishing boats on the crossing from Myanmar's coast to southern Bangladesh, a journey that can take up to five hours.

"They are so desperate that they are risking their lives to escape Myanmar. The pictures show what is going on here," Ponir said.



Hamida cradling her dead son.

Include human mobility in policies to face disasters

Experts tell Kathmandu workshop

UNB, Dhaka

Experts have stressed the need for integrating human mobility in national policies on climate change, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development across the Hindu Kush Himalayan region that extends 3,500km over all or part of eight countries from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east.

In 2016, they said, natural disasters, including floods and earthquakes, forced more than 24 million people globally to leave their homes. This level of disaster displacement and environmental migration poses significant regional challenges in the 21st century.

To discuss and address disaster challenges, a two-day regional workshop ended at the ICIMOD headquarters in Kathmandu

UNDP lauds success in protecting ozone layer

BSS, Dhaka

UNDP acting country director Koyko Yokosui yesterday appreciated Bangladesh's success in protecting the ozone layer through proper implementation of the Montreal Protocol.

She praised Bangladesh's efforts while addressing a discussion at Ban Bhaban in the capital, marking World Ozone Day with Environment and Forests Ministry Secretary Istiaque Ahmad in the chair.

Environment and Forests Minister Anwar Hossain Manju addressed the discussion as the chief guest.

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