

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 35.0 L 26.0	MYMENSINGH H 34.0 L 25.3	CHITTAGONG H 32.7 L 26.5	SYLHET H 34.0 L 25.6	RAJSHAHI H 34.8 L 25.3	RANGPUR H 31.0 L 24.5	KHULNA H 34.0 L 26.0	BARISAL H 32.0 L 25.6	COX'S BAZAR H 33.4 L 25.8
-------------------------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------------------------	---------------------------------	-------------------------------------

Light to moderate rain is likely to occur at a few places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Mymensingh and Sylhet divisions with moderately heavy falls at places over the country till 6:00pm today. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:43pm and rises tomorrow at 5:52am, Met office said.

61 BNP men indicted in case over 'plotting subversive acts'

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday framed charges against 61 BNP leaders and activists, including its Joint Secretary General Syed Moazzam Hossain Alal, in a case filed over plotting subversive activities in October 2014. The court fixed March 5, 2018 for starting trial of the case.

Alal and 48 BNP men, now on bail, appeared before the court and pleaded not guilty.

They demanded justice after Justice Nityananda Sarkar of the Special Tribunal-7 of Dhaka read out the charges to them.

The court, however, cancelled the bails of 12 other accused and issued arrest warrants against them as they remained absent at the court yesterday.

According to the prosecution, it was alleged that a group of BNP leaders and activists led by Alal held a meeting to plot subversive activities ahead of hartal on the first floor of Lucky Apartment in the capital's Lalmatia on October 25, 2014.

Being informed, a team of police raided Alal's Lalmatia house and arrested him along with 63 others on the spot.

Later, a case was filed under the Special Powers Act against Alal and 63 others with

Mohammadpur Police Station for their alleged involvement in plotting subversive activities.

Later, on December 31, 2015, police pressed charges against Alal and 60 others and dropped names of three others as their involvement in the incident was not proven.



With an aim to enhance awareness on sound pollution, people under the banner of "Swapnamoy Sangathan" form a human chain in front of the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in the capital yesterday. They also distributed leaflets and stickers urging people to avoid unnecessary honking.

PHOTO: STAR

Female 'JMB member' held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday claimed to have arrested a female member of Sarwar-Tamim faction of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Chawkbazar in old part of Dhaka.

The arrestee, Sadia Amin, 21, who teaches at a kindergarten in Old Dhaka, is a member of JMB's one of the two operational units, Brigade Ad-Dar-e-Kutni, according to a Rab press release.

The other unit is Badr Squad Brigade that carried out several attacks, including that at a Gulshan café in July last year, Rab said.

Rab came to know about Sadia's link from Imam Mehedi Hasan who was arrested on September 22 in the city. Once a young model, he was the commander of the "Brigade Ad-Dar-e-Kutni" of the Sarwar-Tamim group, Rab claimed earlier.

Rab officials claimed that Sadia, who passed O-levels

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

ROHINGYA CRISIS

Refugee racket gang active

20 Rohingyas rescued, another held in Dhaka airport

CITY DESK

Law enforcers have rescued 20 Rohingyas after busting a gang which ferried the refugees from Myanmar but demanded money for the boat ride, an official said yesterday, reports AFP from Cox's Bazar.

A team of Rapid Action Battalion raided a village near the border with Myanmar late Monday to free the Rohingyas Muslims who had been held there for a day, said Maj Ruhul Amin.

Ruhul, who led the operation at Sabrung near Cox's Bazar, told AFP that the 20 included seven women, five men and eight children.

"They were held there by a gang of boat owners and crew who demanded 20,000 taka (\$250) per person for a two-hour boat ride from Myanmar," he said.

A boat ride between Maungdaw and Bangladesh's main landing station at Shah Porir Dwip would cost no more than five dollars normally.

Amin said they arrested three members of the gang for profiteering.

ROHINGYA SUSPECT HELD AT AIRPORT
Armed Police Battalion (APBn) arrested a suspected Rohingya woman while she was trying to fly to Malaysia from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka on Monday night, reports out staff correspondent.

Two men -- Abdur Rahim and Amir Hossain, who helped Rohela Begum, 25, in getting a passport and tourist visa -- were also held, said APBn.

A team of the battalion noticed that the woman could not speak Bangla and the two people were with him. They then interrogated the two, who admitted that they helped the woman get a passport and visa, said the battalion.

The contract between the two and the woman was that they would be paid 7000 Malaysian Ringgit (Tk 140,000) once she arrives in Malaysia, said the armed police.

The police were quizzing them further yesterday.

Noor-e-Azam Mia, officer-in-charge of Airport

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

'Landmine blast' kills Rohingya

UNB, Bandarban

A Rohingya man was killed as a landmine exploded at Satchhari Jhiri point of the Bangladesh-Myanmar border in Naikhangchhari upazila yesterday noon.

Taslim Iqbal Chowdhury, chairman of Sadar Union Parishad, said Nurul Islam, 23, who fled Rakhine State, used to live in a makeshift camp at the "zero line" of the border.

Nurul entered the Myanmar territory after his cattle had gone there, said Taslim. At one stage, a landmine went off with a huge bang around

12:00noon, leaving the Rohingya man dead on the spot. The body was yet to be recovered from the spot.

Talks with Myanmar on PM's proposals

Obaidul Quader tells press in Cox's Bazar

BSS, Cox's Bazar

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said talks with Myanmar are underway on the basis of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's five-point proposal placed in the UN general assembly recently.

"In the face of intense global pressure, Myanmar has become bound to hold talks with Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue," he said at a press conference held at a local hotel in Cox's Bazar.

Quader, also road transport and bridges minister, said the global pressure forced Myanmar to hold talks on the Rohingya issue with Bangladesh in the face of the govern-

ment's successful diplomatic efforts.

"Myanmar has in fact shifted from its rigid stand and sent its minister to Bangladesh for discussing the Rohingya issue and agreeing to work in a joint working group," he said.

Referring to BNP's remark on the Rohingya issue, he said BNP is spreading falsehood and playing drama in the name of relief distribution here, adding, "The party is also propagating malice against this popular government."

Quader said Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, neither under any pressure or on any request, ordered to open the Bangladesh border with Myanmar for the distressed Rohingyas in the

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



People walk amid vehicles risking lives on a road in Chittagong city's Muradpur area. Due to an ongoing drainage development work of the Chittagong Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, the road has been in this condition for the last couple of months. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Schoolgirl flees home to escape marriage

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

All Fahima Sultana Nodi wants is to study. Like any other girl of her age, the ninth-grader dreams of finishing school and pursuing a better life.

But her hopes were shattered as her parents fixed her marriage with an expatriate this Friday.

Desperate, she informed the matter to the principal of her school in Chittagong city's Mohora area. The principal with the help of a local NGO then sought Chittagong District Administration's (CDA) help.

Meanwhile, to avoid getting married against her will, Nodi fled home yesterday. She is staying with a friend, said the magistrate.

Contacted over the phone, Nodi said her parents forcibly arranged her marriage. "...I will not go back until they stop the marriage."

Tania Moon, CDA executive magis-

trate, said the girl is under 18 and any attempt to marry her off would be illegal. "We informed the local ward councillor about the matter. If necessary, we'll conduct a mobile court to stop the marriage."

Md Azam, the ward councillor, said, "I warned the parents already. If they arrange the marriage...the administration will take action against them."

Contacted, Jane Alam, Nodi's father, said he fixed her daughter's marriage as local youths "disturbed" her on the way to school.

Asked whether he knew that child marriage is illegal, he said he heard about it but did not know the details.

"My daughter left in the morning...I am worried about her...I can't contact her," he said. "Tell her to come back, I would stop this marriage and would think about it after she turns 18."

Last tribute to Jasim Uddin

DU CORRESPONDENT

People from all walks of life paid last tributes to veteran communist leader Jasim Uddin Mondal at the Central Shaheed Minar premises in Dhaka yesterday.



The revolutionary leader was given a guard of honour after his body was taken there around 11:00am.

An anti-British movement leader and a lifelong proponent of the socialist movement, Jasim Uddin passed away at a city hospital due to old age complications on Monday.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury and Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid were present during the guard of honour ceremony.

Among others, DU Vice Chancellor Prof Akhteruzzaman, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) President Mujahidul Islam Selim, BNP Secretary General Mirza

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

UTTARA MURDER Man gets death, another life term

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced a man to death and another to life in prison for killing an old woman at her Uttara house and looting jewelry and cash in June last year.

The condemn convict is Golam Nabi alias Robi, a guard of the victim, while lifer Lailiy Akhter Labonna, her tenant.

Monwara Sultana, 65, wife of late Dr Abu Mohammad Yusuf, was found dead at her residence on June 4, 2016.

According to the prosecution, Labonna was involved in unsocial activities at her rented house. Being informed, the victim protested it and requested her to stop it.

Later, Labonna with the help of the guard in a pre-planned way killed the victim and looted gold ornaments worth Tk 1 lakh and Tk 1,13,000 in cash.

Climate change threat on the rise

Say disaster risk management experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has been successful in different aspects of disaster management, but it needs to do more to reduce disaster risks and combat threats of climate change, experts said yesterday.

The patterns of natural calamities change frequently in Bangladesh while the climate change is posing an increased risk, they also said.

Speaking at National Conference on Disaster Risk Management 2017, they recommended that the authorities concerned should focus on urban disasters such as earthquakes and fire, and ensure an increased involvement of the private sector.

Department of Disaster Management (DDM) organised the two-day conference in the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, aiming to find a way forward in reducing disaster risk and reflect on the 5th Global Platform on Disaster Risk

Reduction held in Cancun of Mexico in May 2017.

Reaz Ahmed, director general of DDM, inaugurated the programme that was sponsored by different local and international organisations including Care, UNDP, Brac, Humanitarian Leadership Academy and Bangladesh Red Crescent Society.

During his speech, Reaz said in addition to conventional disasters such as cyclone and flood, the country is experiencing early floods and lightning strikes -- a sign of change in trend of disasters.

The government, however, has already taken several initiatives to reduce disaster risks, he added.

Ehsanur Rahman, executive director of Dhaka Ahsania Mission; Dr Mahbuba Nasreen, a professor at Dhaka University; and Suman Ahsanul Islam, director of Bangladesh Centre of Humanitarian Leadership Academy, also spoke.



With floodwater receding, children are busy catching fish in Sylhet. The photo was taken in Sadar upazila's Chhhalia area on Monday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASTR