

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA 27.8°C 17.3°C MYMENSINGH 27.2°C 15.9°C CHITTAGONG 29.0°C 17.3°C SYLHET 28.5°C 17.0°C RAJSHAHI 27.8°C 12.5°C RANGPUR 25.7°C 15.6°C KHULNA 28.0°C 14.5°C BARISAL 27.8°C 14.2°C COX'S BAZAR 28.2°C 17.5°C

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. Light to moderate fog may occur at places over the country during late night till this morning. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:11pm and rises tomorrow at 6:24am, Met Office said.

EC ready, if govt wants polls in advance: CEC
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner KM Nurul Huda yesterday said holding election before the scheduled time depends on the government.

"The government takes the decision of holding election in advance... If government wants to hold election in advance, we are ready," he told journalists after emerging from a meeting with a two-member delegation led by European Union Ambassador in Bangladesh Rensje Teerink at Nirbachan Bhaban in the capital.

The next parliamentary election is scheduled to be held early 2019 and the commission had announced a roadmap keeping that in mind.

Huda said, "EU has full confidence in us. We also assured them that congenial atmosphere will prevail during the polls. We are firmly determined to hold a free and fair election."



Dhaka University student, Walid Ashraf, who has been on a hunger strike since November 25, has been staying in a tent on the premises of Memory Eternal on the DU campus. He went on strike demanding election to DUCSU (Dhaka University Central Student's Union) by December 16.

RESPONDING TO URBAN DISASTERS Govt has no policy to guide volunteers Experts tell Prothom Alo roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The benefits of urban community volunteers, an auxiliary force of fire fighters, could not be obtained properly as the government has no particular guideline and policy to recruit and lead them, experts said yesterday.

The volunteers are the first responders of urban disasters, like fire and earthquake; therefore, the concerned government bodies should institutionalise them by forming some policies and maintaining an updated database that contains their information, they said.

In addition, the volunteers should be given adequate training and incentive so that they feel more encouraged, the experts recommended at a roundtable discussion.

Bangla daily Prothom Alo in association with Save the Children and the Social and Economic Enhancement Program (SEEP) organised the roundtable on institutionalisation of urban community volunteers at the newspaper's office in the capital.

The government has set a target to train a total of 62,000 such volunteers within 2020 thinking of the country's vulnerability to earthquake, and 33,000 of them have already been trained, said Syed Matiul Ahsan, deputy director (disaster risk reduction) of Save the Children.

"But the volunteers have not been institutionalised yet, because it is not clear which government body will lead them. Besides, there is no particular policy to recruit and guide them," he said.

Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defence maintains a manual database for the volunteers, but it has not been

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Experts seek global community role in Rohingya repatriation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts, academics and researchers at an international conference yesterday sought attention of the global community for a solution to the Rohingya crisis, bringing to the fore the necessity of their peaceful repatriation from Bangladesh.

They said the Myanmar army had conducted atrocities on the Rohingyas to the extent of genocide, which is evident in testimonies of the refugees.

The perpetrators should be tried in an international court, they added.

Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) with the help of Euro-Burma Office, a Brussels-based organisation promoting the development of democracy in Myanmar, organised the conference on "Ending the Slow Burning Genocide of Rohingyas by Myanmar" at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Building of Dhaka University.

The participants included scholars, academics, genocide researchers, civil society members, the Rohingya diaspora and rights activists from Myanmar.

More than 620,000 Rohingyas have fled from Myanmar's Rakhine State to Bangladesh since the latest atrocity began on August 25.

Noted academic Prof Serajul Islam Choudhury said the Rohingyas are not guilty of anything yet they have been victimised and forced out of their

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Mirza Shahjahan during his 10-kilometre run for Rupa, who was raped and murdered on a running bus in August.

PHOTO: MIRZA SHAKIL

Senior citizen runs for cause

He vows to continue the run until rape victim Rupa's killers are hanged

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Law student Rupa Khatun's murder after rape on a moving bus caused an uproar in the social media after her body was recovered from near Tangail-Mymensingh road in Tangail's Madhupur upazila in August.

A 65-year-old, father of two grown up sons, was so much shaken by the gruesome crime that he could not sleep for days.

Motivated by his wife, the man, Mirza Shahjahan, decided to do something for Rupa, who could have been a daughter he never had.

With a sign stating "hang Rupa's rapists", attached to the back of his shirt, Shahjahan, from Akheda village in Basail upazila, now gets out of his house in Tangail town every Wednesday and runs 10 kilometers on the town streets.

He said he started the run on September 6 and would continue it until all the perpetrators of the crime are hanged.

Police found Rupa's body near Madhupur in Tangail on August 25. Police buried the body as an anonymous person and her

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Rajuk failed to protect wetlands Says public works minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Admitting Rajuk's failure in protecting the wetlands, Housing and Public Works Minister Engineer Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said grabbing and filling up of water bodies continued despite various efforts to protect those.

Addressing as the chief guest a memorial meeting on late journalist Omar Faruk at Jatiya Press Club, Mosharraf said malpractices were going on though there are laws to protect the wetlands.

He urged journalists to frequently write on land grabbing and filling up of wetlands as it might help check the crimes.

Nagar Unnayan Sangbadik Forum Bangladesh arranged the programme to hand over a cheque for Tk 3 lakh to Faruk's wife.

Amitosh Pal, president of the forum, presided over the meeting, moderated by its general secretary Abdul Matin.



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