

**WEATHER FORECAST**

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 22.2 L 10.6	H 20.2 L 10.5	H 23.2 L 14.5	H 23.5 L 13.3	H 21.8 L 08.4	H 18.2 L 09.2	H 22.2 L 10.0	H 22.5 L 10.8	H 23.5 L 13.8

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, says the Met office. Moderate to thick fog may occur over the country during mid-night till morning and it may continue at places upto noon. **The sun sets in the capital today at 5:33pm and rises tomorrow at 06:44am.** Highest and lowest temperature recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

# Warmth to the poorest

## Faraaz Hossain Foundation gives blankets to over 3,000 underprivileged people in Rangpur and Dinajpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Amid the ongoing shivering cold spell, especially in the northern region of the country, Faraaz Hossain Foundation has set out to provide warmth and comfort to the poorest.

Over the last couple of days, the foundation has distributed blankets to more than 3,000 cold affected people -- mostly rickshaw pullers, beggars and homeless -- in Rangpur and Dinajpur.

In Rangpur, a little over 2,000 blankets were distributed at RCCI School and College ground on Sunday. The distribution work in Dinajpur city started yesterday at Station Club in association with Dinajpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI).

Reza Humayun Kabir Chowdhury Shamim, president of DCCI, inaugurated the programme by handing over a blanket to Abdul Gaffar, a 57-year-old man who uses a wheelchair for his disabilities caused by a road accident in 2000.

"This blanket will help me a lot to survive this intense cold," Abdul Gaffar said.

In a brief speech to the hundreds who

gathered to collect their blankets, DCCI President Reza, the chief guest of the event, explained how Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain has set an example of courage, friendship and humanity by sacrificing his life at Holey Artisan Bakery in Dhaka on July 1, 2016. He also requested all to pray for Faraaz's departed soul.

Anwarul Islam, vice president of DCCI and also a special guest of the programme, said the giving away of blankets to the underprivileged by Faraaz Hossain Foundation has been a timely decision as "the cold wave has affected the lives of many people, mainly rickshaw pullers and beggars who sleep alongside the streets in the open..."

Zahid Hussain, director (operations) of Transcom Consumer Products Ltd; Arif Iqbal, general manager of Transcom Ltd, Tea Holdings Ltd and Transcom Distribution Co Ltd; Zahid Hossain Faisal, marketing manager of Eskayef Pharmaceuticals Ltd; and Khalid Mahmood, assistant general manager (marketing) of Eskayef Pharmaceuticals Ltd; were present on behalf of Faraaz Foundation.



**A woman holding a baby receiving a blanket at Station Club in Dinajpur. Faraaz Hossain Foundation distributed blankets to over 3,000 underprivileged people in northern parts of the country since Sunday. The photo was taken yesterday.**

PHOTO: STAR

### MPO-LISTED INSTITUTIONS

# Teachers on hunger strike demanding nationalisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of MPO-enlisted education institutions yesterday went on an indefinite hunger strike in front of Jatiya Press Club to press home one-point demand for nationalisation of education system.

Several hundred teachers joined the hunger strike under the banner "Besarkari Shikshka Jatiyakaran Liaison Forum", a platform of six organisations of teachers and employees, around 10:00am and vowed to continue their strike until they got assurance from the prime minister.

Earlier, the teachers staged a sit-in for five consecutive days from January 10 and threatened to start the fast unto death programme if their demand was not met by Sunday.

Jaasim Uddin, joint convener of the forum, said they sat with the officials of the education ministry several times

and placed their demand to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina through the secretary of Secondary and Higher Education Division in vain.

"That is why we have started the hunger strike. We will not return home until our demand is met," he told The Daily Star.

"We cannot rely on the education minister. We want an announcement from the prime minister," he said.

If education institutions are nationalised, teachers' facilities would increase and meritorious students would join the profession, he said.

Echoing the same, Abdul Khaleque, convener of the forum, said nationalising the education system could help remove the discrimination the teachers of private institutions face and ensure quality education.

"We request the government to nationalise all the MPO-enlisted education institutions altogether without going

for nationalisation in a scattered manner. If nationalised, the government will not have to spend much additional amount, but the move will enhance the quality of education," he observed.

Samsunnaheer, a teacher from Narayanganj, said, "It is the teachers who help build the nation. If they are neglected, the whole nation is neglected. We will not move until our demand is met."

Holding different placards, the teachers chanted slogans and delivered speeches. At least 30 of them fell sick by yesterday evening, claimed the leaders of the forum.

The teachers of independent ebtdai madrasas have meanwhile continued their hunger strike for the seventh day.

However, in a positive development, a delegation met State Minister for Technical and Madrasa Division

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**Rooms made of tin atop a two-story building burning during a fire in the capital's Tejkunipara area yesterday. Nearly four of these rooms were completely gutted. However, no casualty was reported in the fire originating from a kitchen stove, said fire officials.**

PHOTO: COLLECTED

### ASK concerned over Mockbul menacing students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights body Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday expressed concern at the incident of former Awami League lawmaker Mockbul Hossain threatening the demonstrating students and interns of MH Samorita Medical College in the capital.

Mockbul, founding chairman of the college and hospital, intimidated the demonstrators when they were protesting the fee hike every year in front of the college in Tejgaon Industrial area on Sunday morning.

In a video clip, Mockbul, also known as Alhaj Mockbul, was seen pointing fingers at the students and saying, "The government has expressed solidarity with me... they said 'blow off the heads of those who behave badly'. Police are here, they will blow your heads off."

He repeatedly misbehaved with the students and interns, hurled abuse at them and even tore up a leaflet containing the demands of the students.

"Such behaviour, which goes against people's constitutional rights to freedom of speech, thought and assembly, cannot be expected from a person who holds a responsible position," the rights body criticised in a press statement.

Such an incident might create distrust among the students, worsening the situation, said ASK, adding that the body expects more sensible conduct from him (Mockbul) as a guardian of the institution.

The demonstrators left the place on Sunday afternoon after the college authorities said their demands would be met.

### ALLEGED DEATH THREATS

# Journos demand action against DIG Mizan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalist leaders yesterday demanded action against Deputy Inspector General of police Mizanur Rahman for allegedly issuing death threats to two journalists over their reports.

They also expressed deep concern as police members at Bhatara Police Station refused to record a general diary (GD) in this regard.

Journalists from different media outlets made the call in a demonstration organised by Crime Reporter's Association of Bangladesh (CRAB) on its office premises in the city.

DIG Mizan allegedly issued threats to Nesarul Haque Khokon, senior reporter of Bangla Daily Jugantor; and Abdullah Tuhin, special correspondent of Jamuna Television; while he was talking to a TV presenter over the phone.

The threats came after the journalists ran reports of alleged forced marriage and torture on a woman by the official.

Following the reports, a three-member committee led by an additional inspector general of police has been formed to probe the allegations.

Mizan was an additional commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) before being withdrawn and attached to the police headquarters on January 9.

Demanding action against the police official at yesterday's demonstration, Dhaka Reporters' Unity president Saiful Islam said it is unacceptable that journalists will receive threats when they make reports on misuse of power by a police official.

Crab president Abu Saleh Akon said the incident of torturing journalists and issuing

threats for their professional work have been recurring due to the prevailing culture of impunity in the country where killers of journalists do not even receive punishment.

Dhaka Union of Journalists General Secretary Sohel Haider Chowdhury urged the authorities concerned to withdraw all the facilities Mizan enjoys as a DIG so that he can not interfere in the probe.

He also demanded a judicial probe committee alongside the departmental investigation.

DRU former general secretary Sajjad Alam Khan Topu expressed frustration as journalists were denied police protection by the Bhatara police's refusal to record the GD.

Meanwhile, DMP Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia, while responding to a query in a different programme, said the police have to register a GD whenever anyone wishes to do so at a police station.

"If anyone was denied lodging of a GD, he can file a complaint with high officials [of police]. I am the police commissioner, but I don't receive any such complaints...complaints can also be lodged with the court," he said.

The DMP chief further said that it would not be right to conduct a "media trial" or exert influence by bringing up the issue repeatedly.

Contradicting his claim, journalist Khokon said on January 11 he had complained to the DMP boss over phone about police's refusal to record the GD. He claimed that he has a voice recording of the conversation.

CRAB General Secretary Sarwar Alam, former general secretary Kamruzzaman Khan, also spoke during the demonstration.

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