

WEATHER

FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S  
TEMPERATURES

DHAKA  
H 28.9 L 18.0

MYMENSINGH  
H 28.5 L 16.9

CHITTAGONG  
H 32.5 L 21.4

SYLHET  
H 27.0 L 18.0

RAJSHAHI  
H 31.0 L 18.5

RANGPUR  
H 28.0 L 18.2

KHULNA  
H 30.5 L 20.4

BARISAL  
H 29.5 L 19.8

COX'S BAZAR  
H 32.0 L 23.4

Rain/thunder showers with gusty/squally wind may occur at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal and at one or two places over Rangpur, Mymensingh, Chittagong & Sylhet with hail at isolated places over the country in next 24 hours till 6:00pm tomorrow, said the Met office. The sun sets in the capital tomorrow at 6:14pm and rises tomorrow at 5:50am. Highest and lowest temperatures recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:



Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid speaks at the inaugural ceremony of a two-day conference organised by the Institute of Education and Research (IER) of Dhaka University at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Building on the campus yesterday. Prof Dr Md Abdul Maleque, Md Sohrab Hossain, Prof Md Yousuf Ali Mollah, Kazi M Aminul Islam, Prof Syeda Tahmina Akhter, Prof Sharifa Khatun, Syed Abul Hossain were present.

PHOTO:  
STAR

## Quality teachers make the difference

Nahid tells IER conference

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A lack of quality teachers is a big challenge to achieve the expected goal in the country's education sector, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said yesterday.

"Ensuring quality education is a challenge, and we need quality teachers to meet it," said Nahid at the inaugural ceremony of a two-day conference at Dhaka University.

Many people choose teaching profession when they fail to find their desirable jobs. But, teachers must be committed because the responsibility to build the future generation lies with them, he added.

At present, the country has a total of 10 lakh teachers whereas it needs double the number, he added.

DU's Institute of Education and Research (IER) organised the national conference on "Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Bangladesh: Educational Responses, Challenges and Possibilities" at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhavan.

Prof Tahmina, who chaired the ceremony, said the education system should be reformed, prioritising quality research.

Mohammad Tariq Ahsan, professor of IER, said it is important to extend the primary education level up to class-VIII for

development of the education sector.

Modern assessment techniques and methods should be followed while classroom environment should be interesting to keep the students engaged, he added.

Sun Lei, Unesco chief of education in Dhaka, and Mahmudul Islam, joint secretary to the education ministry, presented separate theme papers on the "Agenda of SDG-4" and "Education Ministry's Readiness in Achieving SDG-4".

According to the UN website, the SDG-4 aims to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning."

Addressing the conference, Professor Emeritus Manzoor Ahmed of Brac University said not only for meeting SDGs, a comprehensive development plan is always needed for ensuring overall development of the education sector.

Abul Kalam Azad, principal coordinator (SDG affairs) of Prime Minister's Office, said both education and human skills development are required to achieve prosperity.

Prof Yousuf Ali Mollah, member of University Grants Commission (UGC), Bangladesh, said if teachers' recruitments do not remain transparent, the country cannot reap any benefit from them.

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## Man-made trauma behind Halda dolphin deaths

Says ministry report

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

Trauma and inanition (exhaustion caused by a lack of nourishment) due to injuries rendered by engine-run boats, speedboats or dredgers in the Halda river accelerated the deaths of at least 18 dolphins (Platanista Gangetica).

The aquatic mammals died in the six months from September 2017 to February this year, according to a new report.

A seven-member committee formed by the livestock ministry in February came up with the findings. The probe body submitted its report to the ministry yesterday.

The committee collected the organ samples of the dolphins from Halda River Research Institute on March 3.

It found necrosis (death of cells in an organ due to injury) and hemorrhage marks in the musculature of the left chest of the

body of dolphins in the postmortem. Such postmortems were done for the first time in the country.

Due to plying of dredgers and engine-run boats, the aquatic mammals fail to navigate through their corridors as their movements are obstructed and they often sustain injuries. As a result, their sensory systems get affected and they fail to search for food.

Dr Abu Hadi Nur Ali Khan, a professor of pathology department at Bangladesh Agricultural University, said the injury marks on the dolphins' body, believed to be caused by sharp instruments like propellers or blades, were found in the fins and chests of six dolphins examined at the lab.

"Those injuries left them unable to navigate through the river because they suffered from a sensory loss due to the injury," said Dr Abu Hadi, also a member of the committee.

The mechanised vessels are responsible for that, he said. "However, there weren't any more deaths since February as plying of those vessels was stopped by the administration," he added.

Dolphins are mammals and breathe air into their lungs. Dolphins cannot breathe under water like fish can as they do not have gills. Dolphins breathe through a nostril, called a blowhole, located right on top of their heads.

They sustained the injuries when they came to the surface of the river water to breathe, he said.

Due to the injuries, their sensory system does not function properly, and they are unable to locate fish. This result in exhaustion caused by a lack of nourishment, which finally results in their death, he added.

Dr Masud Hossen Khan, chief scientific officer of Bangladesh Fish Research Institute, said pollution in the Halda had not reached a level that could cause the deaths.

"In our research, we came up with the decision that the mechanised vessels plying the river and the injury sustained

due to those vessels resulted in their deaths," said the chairman of the investigation committee.

Manzoorul Kibria, a professor at zoology department of Chittagong University, and also a member of the investigation team,

told The Daily Star that the authorities took an initiative to save the brood fish in the Halda. "It is now time to focus on dolphins."

"No initiative has been adopted as of today to protect the endangered dolphins. We must do something to save these species, internationally enlisted by IUCN as endangered."

The committee also made six recommendations in their report that include a ban on dredgers and mechanised boats, a ban on using current nets and exercising a strict law to stop industrial pollution.

The recommendations also include creating awareness among people living on the riverbanks, rectifying the existing fisheries law to protect the dolphins and conducting researches for finding a way to increase their numbers.



The carcass of a dolphin in Kantoralia Hat area of Chittagong's Hathazari upazila in January.

FILE PHOTO

## 187 women raped in three months

Of them 19 were killed, two committed suicide, says ASK

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 187 women were raped and 29 women faced sexual harassment across the country in the last three months, according to a report of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).

Among the rape victims, 19 women were killed and two committed suicide after rape, the ASK said in a press statement yesterday.

Of the 29 women who faced sexual harassment, one committed suicide while two men were killed protesting such incidents, the report added.

"Crimes like rape have been increasing in the society gradually," it said.

The rights body published the report at a time when rape and murder of Beauty Akter in Habiganj's Shayestaganj upazila has created an outrage in the country.

Rape of a Marma girl in Rangamati's Bilaichhari upazila was also mentioned in the ASK statement. Sister of the Marma girl was also harassed sexually "by state force", it added.

Assault of Yan Yan, queen of the Chakma circle, over the issue, is also mentioned.

The rights body has prepared the report based on its own findings and reports published in eight leading national dailies.

The ASK said killing and torture of children in different parts of the country was "alarming" as 422 children were either killed or tortured in the three months since January.

Of them, 71 children were killed and 26 committed

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## Patients overrun CMCH cardiology ward

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

The cardiology ward at the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) is facing difficulties in coping with the number of patients due to a shortage of beds, equipment and staff.

The 60-bed ward on the first floor of the hospital building has to accommodate an average of 350 patients a day, making it difficult for the nine physicians on duty to treat patients with coronary artery disease (CAD).

This is the only specialised cardiovascular disease treatment centre in a government hospital in the greater Chittagong area. Though some private clinics and hospitals in the port city provide treatment to patients with CAD, a majority of patients cannot afford the expensive procedures.

To tackle the bed crisis, an extension of the ward was opened earlier this month on the fourth floor of the hospital building with 64 beds. However, the gap is still so much that patients are seen on the floor and in the corridors outside the ward, leading to sleep deprivation and minimal privacy.

Dr Prabir Kumar Das, an associate professor and head of the ward, said, "The cardiology ward remains very busy. The situation is worse as there is a shortage of staff and testing equipment."

There are only nine physicians currently working at the ward, he added. "We have one associate professor and two assistant professors; the rest are either associated with other wards or working as officer on special duty. There are no posts for a professor or medical officers."

"Despite this, it is the lone, trusted place for patients; they are happy with the treatment and the behaviour of the doctors and nurses."

Das said the ward also has a shortage of equipment. "The exercise treadmill test (ETT) machine is out of order for two years now. At present, we have one echocardiography machine but we need two more, along with two more electrocardiogram (ECG) machines," he said.

"The lack of available inpatient beds and equipment remains a major impediment to the delivery of good health



Patients admitted to the cardiology ward lie on the floor at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH). Due to an acute shortage of beds at the only state-run specialised cardiac institute in greater Chittagong, patients are forced to receive treatment this way. The photo was taken recently.

care," said Das. "The ward ideally needs two professors, four associate professors and six assistant professors."

"I recently wrote to the health ministry to create a post for at least one professor," he said.

With the ward extension being on a separate floor, and the coronary care unit (CCU), a place for critical patients, and testing equipment all on the main floor, it is time consuming to transfer patients from one floor to another, said hospital staff.

The presence of medical representatives has also become a matter of worry in the already overcrowded wards.

According to CMCH rules, medical representatives are allowed to visit the wards on Sundays and Wednesdays, between 1:00pm and 2:00pm.

However, in the last week of February, it was seen that medical representatives were intruding into the CCU in the evenings as well. They were taking pictures of patients' prescriptions with their smart phones.

Jakir Hossain, a patient attendant, said it was annoying that at least four medical

representatives insisted that he purchase their brand of pacemakers for his father, who was admitted to the ward.

"My father had to stay on floor for the first three days of his weeklong stay, as there was no vacancy at the ward," Hossain later went for the pacemaker brand that the doctor recommended.

Shuvechchha Ghosh brought her father Kajal Kanti Ghosh to the hospital after he complained of chest pains last week. "My father's health deteriorated twice on the first night, but the doctors promptly gave the necessary treatment and saved his life," she said.

Abdul Hai, who is in his mid 80s, came from Lakkhipur area when he felt unwell. He suffered from a second heart attack.

"Whenever I feel unwell, I inform the doctors and they immediately give me the treatment to make me feel better," he said.

Another patient, Taposh Barua, said the doctors are cordial and polite but not the other staff.

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Boat makers are passing a busy time in Barisal ahead of the upcoming fishing season. The photo was taken at Rasulpur Char in the Kirtankhola river yesterday.

PHOTO:  
SUSHANTA GHOSH

## Ahmadiyya mosque comes under attack

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Some 22 people were injured as a mosque of Ahmadiyya community came under attack in Madarganj upazila of Jamalpur district on Friday.

Members of the community said a group of 70-80 people -- emerging from a local mosque following Juma prayers -- carried out the attack equipped with lethal weapons. They said they were then listening to the Friday sermons at their mosque at Folarpur village in Jorkhali union of the upazila.

Shahidul Islam, president of the Madarganj upazila unit of Ahmadiyya community, said he donated the land to build the mosque for his community.

On the occasion of its inauguration, Ahmadiyya Imam Moulana Hafej Abul Khayer was invited. When the sermon was going on around 1:30pm, all on a sudden a group of people attacked them, said Shahidul, also resident of the village.

Other guests -- including SM Asaduzzaman Razib, an Ahmadiyya imam

of Hosnabad village in Sarishabari upazila of the district, and Faridul Islam, president of the upazila unit of the community -- also got injured during the attack.

Razib alleged that the attack was carried out under the leadership of Monirul Islam Monir, religious affairs secretary of the upazila unit of Awami League. Soon villagers rushed to the spot and rescued the people from further beating. Razib said, adding that he had informed the local police over the phone.

On information, police rushed to the spot and took the people of the community to the police station on security grounds, said Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge (OC) of Madarganj police. This correspondent could not reach Monirul for his comment.

But the OC said Monirul and his men were asked to visit the police station.

The issues were settled there after both sides agreed that they would refrain from any untoward incident in future, added the OC.

Meanwhile, Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at expressed its concern over the attack saying

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