

WEATHER
FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S
TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 35.6 L 28.0

MYMENSINGH
H 34.0 L 23.7

CHITTAGONG
H 35.1 L 25.5

SYLHET
H 33.2 L 23.2

RAJSHAHI
H 35.7 L 27.0

RANGPUR
H 32.0 L 20.5

KHULNA
H 35.7 L 27.0

BARISAL
H 35.3 L 26.9

COX'S BAZAR
H 35.5 L 26.2

Light to moderate rain/thunder showers with temporary gusty wind and lightning flashes may occur at many places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Mymensingh & Sylhet and at one or two places over Dhaka, Khulna, Chittagong and Barisal divisions with moderately heavy falls at places over northern part of the country in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, UNB said quoting the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:41pm and rises tomorrow at 5:11am.



With Eid shopping gathering momentum, garment workers in Keraniganj also get into full throttle with dyeing and washing denim trousers. These factories mostly cater to the local market demand, with the products shipped to various districts throughout the country. The photos were taken on Sunday.



PHOTO:
PRABIR DAS

Is pasteurised milk safe?

BFSA collecting samples for testing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA) yesterday began collecting samples of pasteurised milk from different retail stores of Dhaka to check whether it's safe.

"We have already formed a committee. It has started collecting pasteurised milk. We would test the samples at our designated laboratories and then prepare a report to be submitted to the High Court," said Mohammad Mahfuzul Hoque, chairman of BFSA.

BFSA Member Monzur Morshed Ahmed is heading the committee comprised of representatives from icddr, food ministry, Food and Agriculture Organization, Bangladesh Standards Testing Institution (BSTI), Department of Livestock Services, milk companies and media. A total of 120 samples of pasteurised milk will

SEE PAGE 5 COL 6

Tough and compassionate

MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA, back from South Sudan

Today marks the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers. Behind every Bangladeshi army personnel deployed in UN peacekeeping missions, there is a story of sacrificing the comfort of family life in favour of keeping the people of a distant country safe. For female army officers, it's often more than that.

Female Bangladeshi peacekeepers are hard to find in UN missions; Maj Farzana Shakil is currently one of only a handful of female Bangladeshi army personnel stationed in South Sudan.

She came to South Sudan six months ago, leaving her four-year-old son Araf back home in Bangladesh.

"When are you coming back, Ammu?" -- Araf keeps asking his mother every time they talk over phone or Skype.

"It breaks my heart every time he says that but that is the life of a soldier and when I chose this profession, I knew I had to prioritise my duties above

my emotions," said Maj Farzana.

She had promised her son that she would be back for his birthday last month, but she couldn't. She couldn't even talk to him on his birthday because she was away from the mission headquarters on field duty.

Even six months ago, Maj Jesmin Akter lived a happy family life with her husband and her three-year-old daughter Nafeesa in Dhaka. But when she was sent to peacekeeping duties in South Sudan, she had to leave her husband with her mother in Bogra. Her husband, who works for a private company, is living in Dhaka alone.

"That is how it is for an army personnel. The three of us now live in three different places. All I get to do now is talk to my daughter and husband over phone or social media," said Maj Jesmin.

If at all, these sacrifices only make the female army personnel more determined at work.

"For a mother, nothing is harder than staying away from her children. But, we forget everything when we see

the smiling faces of the people in distress here. They love us for the service that we are providing to maintain peace and stability in their country. It means a lot, truly," said Capt Faria Islam, adjutant of Bangladesh Signal Company 13 at the peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

There was a time when the general concept was to keep the female peacekeepers off tough assignments. But officers like Maj Farzana, Maj Jesmin and Captain Faria have changed that.

"Our female colleagues have always been really up to the task. They are as good as our male officers if not better. We are really proud of them, especially because of the fantastic work they have been doing, leaving their families back at home," said Maj Shanawaz Tuskin, currently stationed in South Sudan.

At present, a total of 157 female peacekeepers are working in various contingents in different countries along with their male colleagues to establish peace and stability.



A total of 157 female Bangladeshi army personnel are working as peacekeepers in various contingents in different countries.

PHOTO:
MOHAMMAD AL-MASUM MOLLA

Thai Princess Sirindhorn in city

UNB, Dhaka

Thailand's Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn arrived in Dhaka yesterday on a four-day visit, at the invitation of Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali.

The princess is leading an 11-member high-profile Thai government delegation to visit philanthropic projects she set up in Bangladesh in 2011 under her father, late King Bhumibol's Royal Chai Pattana Foundation.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs M Shahriar Alam received her at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on her arrival in the afternoon.

On her first day, the

SEE PAGE 5 COL 7

Ensure equal opportunity for people with disabilities

Speakers demand at consultation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers yesterday demanded better employment opportunities for the persons with disabilities as recent study showed 79 percent of them have very limited access to education.

The demand came at a consultation titled "Role of Literacy in Employment, Job Satisfaction and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities in Bangladesh" held at Dhaka University.

The people with disabilities are being denied of healthcare and health

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Take prompt measures to reform quota system

Sector Commanders' Forum urges govt



Speakers of Sector Commanders' Forum during the national dialogue held yesterday at Officers' Club in Dhaka.

PHOTO:
STAR

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said the government needs to take prompt measures for making necessary and logical reforms to the present job quota system, keeping in mind spirit of the Liberation War.

Sector Commanders' Forum (SCF) - Muktiyuddho '71 arranged the discussion on "Pride of the Liberation War: Present Context and Cautiousness" at Officers' Club in the capital. SCF Chairman Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiullah, Bir Uttam chaired the discussion.

Speaking there, former chairman of Bangladesh Public Service Commission Ikram Ahmed said, "It is necessary to make logical reforms in the present quota system."

He said the commission during his tenure had asked the government on several occasions for review of the quota system, and suggested changes. "But no step was taken," he said.

Cultural personality and freedom fighter Nasiruddin Yousuff said alongside upholding spirit of the Liberation War, it is important to establish rule of law and curb corruption in the country.

"Otherwise, people's grievance will not come down," he added.

Prof Mesbah Kamal of Dhaka University said freedom fighters' quota in government jobs should be in place, considering their contribution to the nation. But, it can be reduced to 10 from present 30 percent, he said.

National Human Rights Commission Chairman Kazi Reazul Hoque said opportunities have to be created for people, who were left behind as the country's constitution assures equal rights of all.

Prof Anwar Hossain, former vice chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, said quota reform agitation reflected growing demand of the country's youths.

Journalist Ajay Dasgupta said SCF and other pro-liberation platforms should reach out to youths, and engage them more in pro-liberation war activities.

Former Chairman of National Curriculum Textbook Board M Shafiqur Rahman said reform in education system is required with recruiting more pro liberation teachers and school management members.

Journalist Sohrab Hossain, Supreme Court lawyer Subrata Chowdhury, women's rights activist Sharmin Murshid, retired bureaucrat Khandker Shawkat Hossain, and SCF Secretary General Harun Habib spoke at the event, among others.

Instil spirit of Liberation War in the youth

Says President

UNB, Dhaka

President Abdul Hamid, on Monday, said the children, adolescent and youth should be imbued with the spirit of the Liberation War and non-communalism to protect them from the poison of fanaticism, communalism, drugs, and terrorism.

"Cultural activities play a vital role in instilling discipline, nationalism, and communal harmony among the adolescent and youth," he said.

"We have to inform them that there's no place for militancy or communalism in our beloved motherland, as we have a long tradition of communal harmony. I firmly believe cultural activities will play an important role in grooming the future generation as a modern, culture-oriented and creative nation," he added.

The president came up with the remarks while giving away 'Bangladesh Shilpakala Padak 2017' at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) auditorium.

He also underscored the need for taking Bangladesh's culture to the

rest of the world.

Mentioning the courageous role of the cultural personalities in inspiring the masses during the Language Movement and the Liberation War, Abdul Hamid said, "Their role is always praiseworthy and exemplary. Cultural activists played a bold role in need or crisis of the nation."

Turning to the awardees, he expressed the hope that the awards will encourage them to make more contributions to their respective fields. "Young artists will also be encouraged by your success," he said.

He also hoped that Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy will continue its relentless efforts to uphold the country's traditions and culture.

At the programme, the president handed over the awards to seven cultural celebrities. Each awardee received a cheque for Tk 1 lakh, a certificate and a gold medal.

The awardees are Aluddin Mia in instrumental music; Sharmila Bandyopadhyay in dance; Nasir Ali Mamun in photography;

SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

Getting ready for monsoon

UNHCR steps up emergency training for Rohingya refugees

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has trained thousands of Rohingya volunteers on emergency preparedness and skills ahead of what is expected to be one of the most challenging periods since the refugee influx last year -- the approaching monsoon season.

The UNHCR and its partners, working closely with the government of Bangladesh, stepped up emergency training and awareness sessions at the refugee settlements several months ago.

It is estimated that up to 200,000 refugees could be at risk of flooding and/or landslides, said an UNHCR press release yesterday.

"As heavy rains and strong monsoon winds approach, it is critical that our stands firmly with the Rohingya refugees we serve," said Kevin J. Allen, UNHCR head of operations in Cox's Bazar. "It is equally important that we empower and train refugees to play their role in the response, working hand-in-hand with the national authorities, sister UN agencies and

PHOTO: UNHCR

civil society."

Some 262 Community Outreach Members (COMs) received a wide range of training on basic awareness and landslide risk mitigation, basic first aid training, and preparing for weather hazards like cyclones, heavy rains, flash floods and landslides.

They are now helping families understand how they can stay safer,

where they can go to get help and what they should do in the event of an emergency. Having also received Psychological First Aid training, the COMs can also help to allay people's worries, as well identify those in particular distress needing referrals to other health service providers and expert help.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

KILLING PARENTS State seeks death penalty for Oishee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has filed an appeal with the Supreme Court, seeking death penalty for Oishee Rahman in the sensational case filed over killing her parents in 2013.

The attorney general's office recently submitted the appeal to Appellate Division of the SC, challenging a High Court verdict that had commuted Oishee's death sentence to life imprisonment.

In the appeal, the government has urged the apex court to uphold the verdict of the trial court that sentenced Oishee to death for killing her father Mahfuzur Rahman, a police officer, and mother Swapna Rahman in 2013.

Sufia Khatun, advocate-on-record at the office of the attorney general, told The Daily Star that the date for the appeal's hearing will be fixed by the apex court at a later date.

Oishee has already filed another appeal with the SC, seeking a verdict of acquittal for the conviction.

Advocate Sujit Chatterjee, one of Oishee's lawyers, told this correspondent that advocate Afzal H Khan has filed the appeal on Oishee's behalf.

Oishee's death sentence was commuted

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1