



YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 34.6 L 27.0

MYMENSINGH H 33.5 L 26.8

CHITTAGONG H 33.0 L 26.5

SYLHET H 33.5 L 26.6

RAJSHAHI H 34.7 L 26.8

RANGPUR H 33.0 L 27.0

KHULNA H 34.5 L 26.2

BARISAL H 34.2 L 26.0

COX'S BAZAR H 31.5 L 25.3

Light to moderate rain/thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Rangpur and at a few places over Rajshahi, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna and Barisal till 6:00pm today, reports UNB quoting Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:08pm and rises tomorrow at 5:43am.

Teenage gang violence on the rise in Dakkhin Khan

Eight arrested over murder of 17-year-old

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and MUNTAKIM SAAD

Teenage gang feud was behind the murder of 17-year-old Mehedi Hasan Shuvo, who was killed by his rivals in the capital's Dakkhin Khan area on August 31, said police.

Police said enmity between groups is nothing new, and clashes often ensue over show of muscle power, establishing supremacy or "drawing respect" from peers.

In a latest development, a team of detective branch of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday arrested eight teenagers including a key suspect of the murder from Dakkhin Khan area, Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) told a press briefing at DMP Media Centre.

The arrestees are Saif, Monir, Arafat, Saiful, Mehrib, Apel, Sifat and Sohel. Police also recovered a switchblade from Saif, the key suspect.

Police said there are several teenage groups like "Jim-Jiad group", "Shanto group", "Arafat group", "Kamal group" and "Ansargroup" in Dakkhin Khan.

Most gang members are from higher and

upper middle classes of the society. Some of them end up taking drugs and have been involved in various crimes like extorting, mugging, stalking and so on.

To show off their strength, these gang members -- aged between 16 and 24 -- often drive motorbikes rowdily, and clash with other group members, said police and locals.

Among them, "Shanto group" and "Arafat group" have 60 to 70 members each, who have backing from local political leaders as they often take part in political activities, according to locals.

The DC said the two teenage gangs were active in Dakkhin Khan's Nogoria area and the victim was a member of "Shanto group".

Some 15 days before Eid-ul-Azha, altercations ensued between one Kawsar of "Arafat group" and Mehedi from "Shanto group", over a trivial matter of showing disrespect. Following that, members of "Shanto group" including Mehedi beat up Kawsar and Saif of "Arafat group" in two separate attacks. Two general diaries were also filed in these connections.

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PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Members of Rapid Action Battalion stand guard, in Tejgaon, in front of the seized trucks loaded with sacks of stolen rice meant for selling among the poor under Open Market Sale (OMS) programme. Inset, Sarwoer Alam, executive magistrate of Rab-3, inspects stolen sacks of flour at a warehouse in Krishi Market in Mohammadpur. Rab in separate drives yesterday seized 215 tonnes of rice and flour, smuggled out of a government silo.

Committee formed for bus route rationalisation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday formed a 10-member coordination committee for bus route rationalisation and bringing all public buses under a fixed number of companies, to bring public transport in the capital under discipline.

The Local Government Division released a gazette notification, making Dhaka South City Corporation Mayor Sayeed Khokon the convener and panel mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation the joint convener.

The committee was asked to work on the issue and coordinate it considering the steps of late Mayor Annisul Huq, who envisioned the initiative.

The committee will also regularly inform progress of its work to the Prime Minister's Office, Local Government Division, and Road Transport and Highways Department.

Other members of the committee are chairman of Bangladesh Roads Transport Authority, chairman of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation, chairman of Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha, Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner, public transport expert Dr SM Saleh Uddin, secretary general of Bangladesh Road Transport Owners' Association, president of Bangladesh Road Transport Workers' Federation and executive director of Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority.

Annisul Huq had taken the initiative to facilitate the introduction of 3,000 new buses to be run by only five operators.

Food ministry in overdrive

Buys 13 lakh tonnes of Boro, decides to get 4 lakh more

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

After facing strong criticism last year over poor food reserve due to failure in procuring targeted amount of rice from the domestic market, the Ministry of Food has made a complete turnaround this year.

Having already procured 13 lakh tonnes of Boro exceeding the target of 10 lakh tonnes, the Food Planning and Monitoring Committee yesterday decided to procure another four lakh tonnes of rice from the domestic market.

The decision came at a meeting with Food Minister Qamrul Islam in the chair where Finance Minister AMA Muhith was also present.

An official concerned said the meeting discussed the overall food stock and food situation in the country.

Arifur Rahman Apu, director general of the Directorate of Food, told The Daily Star that they had decided in favour of

additional procurement to encourage farmers, and because of good Boro production.

The official said they had already procured 13 lakh tonnes of Boro rice and the other four lakh tonnes would be procured in the next few days.

According to food ministry data, Boro rice procurement target was 12.5 lakh tonnes in 2017 against which only 3.37 lakh tonnes was procured.

Boro production was low last year as some rice was lost in flash floods in haor areas, floods and blast disease in paddy. As a result, rice price increased abnormally in the local market, but the government's procurement price did not rise keeping pace with that.

The food ministry official said this time Boro procurement price was Tk 38 per kg, 12 percent higher than that of the previous season.

The official added that favour-

able weather, adequate input as well as water supply and attractive rice price contributed to the production exceeding the target.

The agriculture ministry has fixed a target of 1.9 crore tonnes of Boro production this year, but the food ministry official said the production hit 1.97 crore tonnes.

As a result, the food reserve has reached 15.94 lakh tonnes, the highest in last 20 years, according to the food ministry.

The reserve scenario was totally different during this time last year. The volume came down to 1.98 lakh tonnes, resulting in desperate moves to import rice by both the government and private sector.

Experts blamed an imprudent food stock policy that the government pursued, allowing market manipulators to raise the prices of coarse rice up to 42 percent compared to the previous year's price.

No passenger suffered during AL's electioneering tour: Quader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday claimed that no passenger suffered during the party delegation's electioneering tour to the northern districts by train on Friday.

The passengers spontaneously participated in the electioneering programmes organised at different railway stations in the northern districts, said the minister who led the AL team that took a passenger train to launch its campaign for the upcoming national polls.

The minister was talking to reporters at a press conference held at Saidpur Airport in Nilphamari.

Quader, also the minister for road transport and bridges, made the claim refuting media reports on the

ordear of passengers as the train, Nilsagar Express, was over five hours late because of the ruling party's programmes held at stations.

The minister said no passenger suffered during the journey. "Several lakh people attended the programmes. Not a single untoward incident occurred," he added.

"Media often spreads propaganda. They did so during quota reform movement and student protests for safe roads. People have proved yesterday that BNP does not even qualify for an opposition party," Quader said.

Asked about the election-time government, the minister said it will be a small cabinet.

Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor, AL Joint

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Lagunas allowed on feeder roads

DMP says after meeting with owners

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human hauliers, popularly known as Laguna, can operate on feeder roads in the city from today, following a decision made in this regard at a meeting between Laguna owners and officials of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) yesterday.

However, the vehicles and its drivers must have all documents updated and no underage drivers will be allowed to drive them.

The decisions were taken at a meeting at DMP headquarters attended by 20 to 22 Laguna owners and top officials of DMP's traffic division, police and Laguna owners said.

DMP on September 4 announced that Lagunas will not be allowed on the streets of the capital from the following day. But banning them without putting any alternatives in place caused immense sufferings for its regular users across the city.

Bangladesh Auto-trickshaw-Auto-Tempo Transport Workers Federation protested the ban, claiming that Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) gave registration to more than 4,000 Lagunas in the city and the Regional Transport Committee (RTC) gave route permits for the vehicles on 159 routes.

Lagunas will be operated on the feeder roads only, not in main roads where buses are available, Mofiz Uddin Ahmed, joint commissioner of traffic (south), who attended the meeting, told this newspaper. He also claimed Laguna drivers stopped

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Amid much enthusiasm, students of the United International University participate at an activation programme of "Rise High Bangladesh 2018" on the university campus in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Rise High Bangladesh 2018 kicks off at UIU

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third season of the 'Rise High Bangladesh' contest, a platform to promote fresh and innovative export ideas, kicked off yesterday with campus activation programme at United International University (UIU) in Badda, Dhaka.

The activation programme will continue throughout this month at 15 public and private universities, including Dhaka University, Jahangirnagar University, Brac University and North South University.

Rise High Bangladesh is an initiative of The Daily Star and Crown Cement to recognise and encourage youngsters to contribute to the country's progress by generating export ideas.

The event on UIU campus started at 10:00am and went on till 5:00pm. The venue was decorated with banners and posters containing information on the contest. There was a huge gathering of students from different departments.

Volunteers of the platform explained the objectives, incentives and rules of participa-

tion in the contest to the students.

The part of the programme that drew the biggest crowd was the puzzle-solving game where participants were required to pick a clue card, containing export information of an unnamed country. All they had to do was to recognise the country. The winners were given token gifts.

After winning the game, Mostafizur Rahman, a BSc student, said, "I run a small online shopping business. I think my practical experience can help me come up with a competent idea to participate in the contest."

Praising the initiative, Vice Chancellor of UIU Prof Chowdhury Mofizur Rahman said, "Using the innovative ideas of youngsters, our country can reach new heights. They have many good ideas that deserve to be considered. Rise High Bangladesh is providing a platform to promote such ideas."

Last date for registration is September 30. Each participating team must have three members. The top three teams will be given prize money, while the 1st prize winner will also avail an international trip.

Current parliament to have one last session in Oct

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There will be another session of the 10th parliament at a convenient time in October after the current 22nd session, which began yesterday, concludes on September 20 with 10 working days.

The decision was taken at the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban yesterday with Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury in the chair.

Sources said this 23rd session will be the last one of this parliament. The committee decided that the Speaker might extend or reduce the working days of the current session if she wants.

At the meeting, it was said that the parliament received notices of 11 government bills in this session. Besides, there are 12 other government bills in the House. Of the 12, three are at final stages for passing while the others are under scrutiny.

The parliament also earlier received

notices of seven private member bills. Of these, one is at the final stage of passing.

Committee members Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Opposition Leader Raushan Ershad, and Jatiya Party President HM Ershad, among others, attended the meeting.

At the beginning of yesterday's session, Speaker Shirin Sharmin Choudhury nominated a five-member panel of chairmen to preside over sittings in absence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker.

Members of the panel are: Emran Ahmed, AB Tajul Islam, Mahbubul Alam Hanif, Fakhrul Imam and Noor Jahan Begum. They will preside over the sittings as per numerical order.

Later, the House unanimously adopted a condolence motion on the deaths of Awami League lawmaker SM Mostafa Rashidi Suja and Opposition Chief Whip and Jatiya Party MP Tajul

Islam Chowdhury, and others distinguished personalities who died since prorogation of the last session of parliament on July 12.

Participating in the discussion on the motion, Hasina paid rich tributes to Mostafa Rashidi Suja and Tajul Islam, saying the nation has lost two competent MPs.

She said the BNP-Jamaat government after coming to power in 2001 unleashed inhuman torture on the numerous Awami League leaders and workers.

She claimed that due to this torture, Suja's physical condition deteriorated seriously.

On Tajul Islam, she said the JP leader had played a strong role in the January 5, 2014 election.

PM and other MPs who took part in the discussion prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls and conveyed profound sympathy to the bereaved families.

Mobile internet pricing set for adjustments

UNB, Dhaka

Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology Minister Mustafa Jabbar yesterday said the government has taken an initiative to adjust prices of data packages of mobile internet services.

The minister was talking to reporters after a meeting with an eight-member delegation

of Estonia led by its Foreign Minister Sven Mikser at the secretariat.

Terminating the lifeline of digital Bangladesh, Jabbar said the government has taken a special initiative to make it easy for customers to use internet.

"The government has taken an initiative to bring discipline in the price of internet in

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