

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 34.6 L 24.4	MYMENSINGH H 33.8 L 24.0	CHATTOGRAM H 33.6 L 26.0	SYLHET H 32.7 L 24.4	RAJSHAHI H 33.5 L 23.4	RANGPUR H 33.0 L 24.5	KHULNA H 35.6 L 25.4	BARISHAL H 34.6 L 24.3	COX'S BAZAR H 33.0 L 25.7
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Rain/thundershowers with temporary gusty wind may occur at one or two places over Mymensingh, Chattogram and Sylhet divisions in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, UNB said quoting the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 05:39pm and rises tomorrow at 5:53am.



Clockwise, A freedom fighter's widow takes centre-stage at a Shahbagh intersection sit-in, demanding 30 percent quota for freedom fighters' wards in civil service; she says she travelled all the way from Narsingdi "to protect the rights of her two children". She is joined by other activists with the same demand. A group of visually impaired youths also demand that their quota be retained.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

No one will be implicated in 'fictitious cases'

Assures law minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said investigations will be conducted to find out whether any of the cases recently filed against the BNP leaders and activists are false or fictitious.

"If anybody does not involve themselves in the offences, they will have no apprehension to be implicated in any case; they will be cleared of the cases through final reports submitted to the courts," he said.

The law minister said this while talking to reporters after inaugurating Muktijuddho Corner of Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) and visiting its extension building in the afternoon.

In response to BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir's claim that around 4,000 fictitious cases have been filed in last 35 days across the country, Anisul Huq said cases will be filed against those who commit offences mentioned in the jurisprudence.

If there is no evidence or documents against the accused, they will be cleared of the charges, he said.

According to BNP, 4,135 cases have been filed against 85,604 identified and 274,703 unidentified BNP leaders and activists from September 1 to October 4 across the

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Selling corporate SIM cards to criminals

Rab arrests Grameenphone official, distributor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pre-activated SIM cards are being used to issue threats, extort money, run VOIP business and other criminal activities -- making it difficult for law enforcers to track down the culprits using them.

Rab made the claims yesterday, a day after arresting Tanvirur Rahman, a senior executive (business sales) of Grameenphone and Towfiq Hossain Khan, a SIM distributor from the city's Mirpur area.

Towfiq used to make all the arrangements to pre-activate SIM cards, duplicating the information and fingerprints provided by institutions earlier, to avail corporate SIMs. Tanvir used to activate them without verification, said Chowdhury Monjurul Kabir, commanding officer of Rab-4, at a press briefing at Rab media centre.

Around 867 SIM cards were pre-activated this way in the name of 42 companies between June 9 and June 11 this year, he said.

Rab officials seized more than 550 pre-activated corporate SIM cards, a laptop and nine tablet PCs from their possession.

The SIMs were being sold for Tk 500 to 5000, mostly to criminals. The current price of a SIM card is around Tk 100, Rab officials said.

A company or institution can collect as many corporate SIM cards as needed, using valid documents, National ID card (NID), and fingerprint of the nominated person, Rab said. An individual can purchase up to 15 SIM cards against their NID.

The distributors used to pre-activate the SIM cards once a company collected corporate SIMs from them, according to Rab sources.

The law enforcement agency came to know about this forgery while investigating a general diary filed by a Sri Lankan national with Bhashantek Police Station on September 19.

One Mamun called the foreigner from two Grameenphone numbers and demanded Tk 10 crore as extortion, threatening to kill him if he

failed to pay up.

While investigating the allegation, Rab officials found the calls were made using corporate SIM cards registered in the name of an institution. However, it appeared that the institution had never applied for the said SIM cards.

They then tracked down the distributor Towfiq, and subsequently the Grameenphone official Tanvirur, Rab said.

A large number of pre-activated SIMs -- registered biometrically with duplicate fingerprints and NID -- are streaming into the market, Rab said. Unscrupulous distributors are using individuals' NID and fingerprints to pre-activate SIMs.

Rab officials said they received allegations

from at least 17 companies of pre-activating SIMs, forging their documents and fingerprints of nominated persons. Many individuals have also made the same complaints.

Rab urged individual users and institutions to check the number of SIM cards registered with their documents and fingerprints from time to time.

"We are aware that a GP employee was detained by Rab. We are not aware of the details of the allegations nor whether the employee has been formally charged. Therefore, we are unable to comment at this time. Grameenphone has full respect for the laws of the land," Grameenphone said in a statement yesterday.



SIM cards and equipment recovered by Rab.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

BNP slams govt silence on BJP leader's 'threat to invade Bangladesh'

UNB, Dhaka

Terming Indian BJP leader Subramanian Swamy's "threat to invade Bangladesh" unexpected, BNP yesterday urged him to withdraw his remark.

Speaking at a press conference at BNP's Nayapaltan central office, party senior joint secretary general Ruhul Kabir Rizvi also criticised the government for not registering any protest against such a comment.

"Indian ruling party BJP's influential leader Subramanian Swamy at a recent press conference threatened to invade Bangladesh if continued repression on Hindus is not stopped. But our government didn't give any reaction to it," he said.

The BNP leader further said his (Swamy's) threat against Bangladesh's independence and sovereignty is unwarranted and undiplo-

matic. "We strongly condemn it and urge him to withdraw his comment."

Rizvi said the government's silence over Swamy's comment has not only exposed the government's "knee-jerking" foreign policy, but also its utter failure to protect the dignity of the country's independence and sovereignty.

He alleged that the government is not raising its voice against the BJP leader's comment only to cling to power. "The current government doesn't represent the country's people; it is ruling the country as representative of others."

The BNP leader said their party believes in ensuring constitutional rights of all, irrespective of religion. He urged the government to look into the BJP leader's allegation about the repression on Hindus, and take effective steps in this regard.

Mahalaya today

BSS, Dhaka

The Hindu community in the country is celebrating Mahalaya, the auspicious occasion heralding the advent of goddess Durga, today.

With the beginning of "Devipaksha", Mahalaya is observed seven days before Durga Puja, the biggest religious festival of the Bengali Hindu community.

Mahalaya marks an invitation of sorts to goddess Durga to begin her journey from Kailash to her paternal home (earth), along with her children.

This invitation is extended through the chanting of mantras from Sri Sri Chandi and singing devotional songs. Countdown of Durga Puja begins with the celebration of Mahalaya.

On October 15, Durga Puja will begin

with different rituals on the day of Maha Shashthi.

Mahanagar Sarbajanin Puja Committee is arranging special programmes of Mahalaya at Dhakeshwari National Temple, starting at 5:30am today. Noted singers are performing at the programme.

Similar programmes are also being arranged at different temples in the capital and across the country. Gulshan-Banani Sarbajanin Puja Parishad is arranging programmes at dawn on the Banani ground.

Sanatan Samaj Kalyan Sangha is also celebrating Mahalaya through different programmes at dawn on the premises of Krishibid Institution.

On this day, Hindus remember and pay homage to the deceased ancestors by performing a puja, and offering Brahmins clothes, food and sweets in their name.

PM irked by doctors' absence at upazila-level hospitals

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday expressed frustration at the absence of doctors at upazila-level hospitals.

"We've taken various steps to upgrade upazila hospitals... we've upgraded the ten-bed hospitals to 50-bed ones. There should be at least 10 doctors in every hospital but in some places only one doctor is there, at best four. Doctors aren't staying there (upazilas)," she said.

The prime minister made the remarks while addressing a physicians' conference at her official residence Gono Bhaban.

"We've created posts. Doctors are given postings but we aren't getting doctors there. Why people are being neglected!" she said.

Sheikh Hasina clearly mentioned that the people of the country do not expect such attitude from doctors who have government jobs. "I request you (doctors) all to think about it."

The prime minister said the government is aware about the accommodation crisis of government officials at the upazila level, and said her administration has taken a move to construct multi-storied buildings there to provide better accommodation for them.

She said her government's aim is to take all public services to the doorsteps of people. "With that aim, we're doing various types of work so that people could get medicare services at their doorsteps."

"Medical services will have to be ensured all over the country, not only in Dhaka. I hope you'll pay a special attention to that. The quality of the services has to be improved," she said.

Talking about private medical colleges, Hasina said there should strong monitoring on what the private medical colleges are teaching their students, what their curricula are and whether they have appropriate hospitals nearby to provide proper training to their students. "These have to be ensured so that doctors coming out from these medical colleges can give proper medicare services to patients."

Hasina said the government always pays attention to education and considers medical education very important. "That's why we're establishing one medical university in each division of the country."

The prime minister also briefly described various programmes taken for the

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Verdict on Maya's appeal against conviction today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday deferred till today the delivery of its judgement on an appeal filed by Relief and Disaster Management Minister Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya against a lower court verdict that had sentenced him to 13 years' imprisonment in a corruption case.

The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice KM Hafizul Alam passed the deferment order as Maya's lawyer Advocate Sayed Ahmed Raja yesterday placed further arguments before it.

The bench, which was scheduled to deliver the verdict yesterday, will hear arguments from Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan and then announce the verdict today, said Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik.

Following a leave to appeal petition filed by ACC, the Supreme Court's Appellate Division on June 14, 2015 cancelled a previous HC verdict that had acquitted Maya of corruption charges.

The same day, the apex court directed the HC to hold re-hearing on and dispose of Maya's appeal against the lower court verdict.

The ACC filed the case against Maya, also an Awami League leader, with Sutrapur Police Station on June 13, 2007.

A special court on February 14, 2008, convicted and sentenced him to 13 years in jail, fined him Tk 5 crore and ordered confiscation of about Tk 6 crore of his "ill-gotten" wealth.

Maya, who was on the run during the trial, did not stand in the 2008 parliamentary elections. He returned home after his party came to power.

He filed the appeal with the HC on May 25, 2009, which on October 27, 2010 acquitted him. In 2011, the ACC filed the leave to appeal petition with the SC challenging the HC verdict.

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