

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 34.8 L 25.6	MYMENSINGH H 33.5 L 24.4	CHATTOGRAM H 33.0 L 23.8	SYLHET H 32.6 L 23.9	RAJSHAHI H 34.5 L 22.7	RANGPUR H 32.5 L 23.2	KHULNA H 35.6 L 25.4	BARISHAL H 34.3 L 24.5	COX'S BAZAR H 29.1 L 24.1
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Light to moderate rain/thunder showers with temporary gusty wind may occur at many places over Khulna, Barishal and Chattogram divisions, at a few places over Dhaka & Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur & Mymensingh divisions with moderate to heavy falls at places over the country in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today. UNB said quoting the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 05:38pm and rises tomorrow at 5:53am.



Covering their mouths in a symbolic protest, a number of university teachers demonstrate at Dhaka University yesterday, protesting the arrest of Chittagong University teacher Maidul Islam in a case filed under section 57 of the ICT Act. PHOTO: STAR

QUOTA FOR FREEDOM FIGHTERS' FAMILIES Protesters return to Shahbagh

STAR REPORT

Although protesters demanding reinstatement of 30 percent freedom fighters' quota postponed their countrywide blockade programme the day before, another group continued agitation at the capital's Shahbagh area with the same demand, for the sixth consecutive day yesterday.

On Monday, Muktiyuddho Moncho, the platform spearheading the protest, postponed their agitation till Sunday following assurance of fulfilling their demands by that day, from Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan.

"The minister has his own platform named 'Muktijuddher Chetona Bastobayon Mancha' and he gave the declaration [of postponement] on behalf of his platform. But we are continuing our protest independently," Mehedi Hasan, president of Muktiyuddho Sangsad Santan Command that lead yesterday's sit-in, told The Daily Star.

He also claimed that the minister has extended his support to their protest, and their programmes are in no conflict with the ministers' announcement.

The protesters started their sit-in at 4:00pm like previous days -- putting barri-

ers on the roads leading to the Shahbagh intersection.

The agitation caused severe traffic congestion on the adjacent roads, forcing many passengers to get down from buses and walk to their destinations.

Vehicles, heading to and from Science Lab, Farmgate and Motijheel, were stuck in long tailbacks; some of them were seen taking detours to avoid the Shahbagh intersection.

From yesterday's blockade, protesters declared to continue their agitation until their demands are met.

They said they would also welcome protesters demanding reinstatement of indigenous and physically-challenged quotas, if they want to join them.

"The discrimination prevailing in our country would be more acute because of the abolishment of the entire quota system. So, we would extend our support to the protesters demanding reinstatement of different quotas," said Al Mamun, who also claimed to be the convener of Muktiyuddho Moncho.

Spokesperson of the platform, Prof AKM Jamal Uddin could not be reached over phone despite repeated attempts.

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'Ensure legal services at low cost'

President tells lawyers

UNB, Dhaka

President Abdul Hamid yesterday called on lawyers to ensure legal aid to people at low cost.

He was speaking as chief guest at a reception accorded to him on the second day of a three-day visit to his home district Kishoreganj.

Kishoreganj Judges Court Lawyers Association organised the reception programme and a discussion on the District Judge Court premises.

"All people who come to file cases should not be considered rich. Most of them are poor. I will request you to consider this before charging extra money," the president said.

He stressed the need for reducing the charges for legal services. He opined that imposing tax with high rate on different legal services put extra burden on the impoverished justice seekers.

He also cautioned against favouritism and misuse of power.

The president said, "If lawyers get involved in crime, their peers should come forward to fight against them. If it does not happen, the rule of law will not be established. I do not obey the law, but others will have to abide by it... this mentality will not help ensure the rule of law."

Recalling his long-term practice at Kishoreganj District Judges Court, he said, "It hurts when I hear any negative comment about the Bar. I feel very upset. Seniors should take special care to ensure good environment. They [seniors] should play an active role in teaching etiquette and ethics."

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Three Appellate Division judges sworn in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three new judges appointed to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court were sworn in yesterday.

The oath was administered by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain at the Judges' Lounge of the Supreme Court in presence of other judges of the apex court and the HC Division.

The new judges are Justice Zinat Ara, Justice Abu Bakar Siddiquee and Justice Md Nuruzzaman.

Justice Zinat Ara is the second female judge of the apex court, said Barrister Md Saifur Rahman, special officer of the SC.

On October 8, President Abdul Hamid promoted them to the Appellate Division as per the constitution.

Following the ceremony, Attorney General Mahubey Alam and Vice Chairman of Bangladesh Bar Council Advocate Yusuf Hossain Humayun

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WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY TODAY Deprived of care they deserve

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TAPU, Pabna

Some 21 years after the Pabna Mental Hospital (PMH) -- the country's first specialised hospital for patients with mental disorders -- was upgraded to a 500-bed facility in 1997, it is still operating with the manpower of a 200-bed hospital.

It is under this reality of the current state of healthcare for people suffering from mental disorders, Bangladesh is observing World Mental Health Day today. This year's theme for the day is "Young People and Mental Health in a Changing World"; the World Health Organisation says half of all mental illnesses

begin by the age of 14.

Of the 14 doctors at the hospital, two look into the administrative functions, and considering the casual leave absentee, the hospital is left with eight to 10 doctors on duty every day. Some four to six doctors treat out-patients from 8:30am to 2:30pm, leaving only a few to take care of 400-odd admitted patients during the period.

"We have submitted a proposal to the health ministry for 649-stong manpower, including 111 first-class specialised posts of doctors and experts. In the proposal, we have urged the appointment of chief consultants of

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The blank look of a patient bears mark of the trauma he suffered due to mistreatment by his own family.

Restrict network along Myanmar border

BTRC directs mobile operators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) yesterday directed all mobile operators to restrict their networks in the Bangladesh-Myanmar border areas as well as block networks in and around Rohingya camps.

The directive came yesterday in a letter issued by the telecom regulator after an order from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) to this effect.

Following the directive, mobile operators have weakened their networks in the border areas along with Myanmar, that include Cox's Bazar and Bandarban.

Soon afterwards, complaints from subscribers in the areas started to pour in about the poor network quality, said a senior telecom executive, seeking anonymity.

Around 120 base stations in the border areas have been restricted under the directive, causing network disruption in Cox's Bazar, the executive said.

Contacted, Md Jahirul Haque, acting chairman of BTRC, said, "The decision was challenging for us, as we know it might affect subscribers in the region."

The move came following an intelligence report that said Myanmar is trying to create anarchy in the border areas using mobile communication applications.

Earlier, the government had asked mobile operators to sell SIM cards to Rohingya refugees.

However, most of the refugees have Bangladeshi SIM cards. Some mobile operators' representatives have allegedly sold those inside the camps as well.

"We are complying with the directive and cannot help the network disruption it is causing to Bangladeshis in the area," said Sahed Alam, executive vice-president of Robi.

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