

WEATHER FORECAST	YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR	Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in the next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, UNB said quoting the Met office. Light to moderate fog may occur at places over the country during mid-night till morning. The sun sets in the capital today at 05:11pm and rises tomorrow at 6:29am.
		H 28.2 L 18.0	H 27.2 L 13.7	H 27.0 L 16.3	H 29.0 L 16.0	H 26.7 L 13.6	H 26.6 L 13.6	H 28.2 L 15.1	H 28.2 L 14.0	H 28.2 L 16.3	



Jatiya Oikyafront leader Dr Kamal Hossain, third from left, speaks in a press conference yesterday at the alliance's new office in the capital's Bijoynagar. Other leaders of the alliance's partners, from left, Sultan Mohammad Mansur, ASM Abdur Rob, Reza Kibria, Mostafa Mohsin Montu, Barkatullah Bulu and Abdus Salam were also present.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Receive, scrutinise Golam Rabbani's nomination

SC orders returning officer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday ordered the returning officer of Rangpur-5 constituency to receive the nomination paper of BNP-backed aspirant Golam Rabbani in the next 24 hours.

The court also ordered the authorities concerned to complete the scrutiny of the Jamaat leader's nomination paper in the following 24 hours.

A seven-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order after hearing a petition filed by the government seeking stay on a previous High Court order directing authorities to this effect.

"On November 28, Golam Rabbani went to submit his nomination paper. But, the returning officer did not accept the paper, despite having all relevant documents," said Advocate Shishir Monir, a lawyer for Rabbani.

The returning officer refused to accept the document, saying that Rabbani was late for submission, the lawyer added.

Subsequently, Rabbani filed a writ

petition challenging the returning officer's refusal to accept his nomination paper.

As per the Election Commission schedule, November 28 was the deadline for submitting nomination papers, while December 2 for scrutiny and 9 for withdrawal.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam appeared for the government, while Advocate AJ Mohammad Ali argued for Rabbani.

GOVT PETITION SEEKS STAY ON MIRZA ABBAS' NOMINATION

Meanwhile yesterday, the government filed another petition with the Supreme Court seeking stay on a High Court order that directed the chief election commissioner to forward and complete the scrutiny of BNP leader Mirza Abbas' nomination paper within 24 hours.

After a brief hearing yesterday, chamber judge of the Appellate Division Justice Hasan Foez Siddique sent the stay petition to the full bench for hearing the matter today, said Barrister AKM Ehsanur Rahman, a lawyer for Mirza Abbas.

Menon files petition against Mirza Abbas' candidacy in Dhaka-8

UNB, Dhaka

Rashed Khan Menon, a candidate of the ruling Awami League-led grand alliance, yesterday filed a petition with the Election Commission (EC) challenging the candidacy of Jatiya Oikyafront's Mirza Abbas.

Lawyer Ziad al Malum, on behalf of Menon, submitted the petition before the appellate authority of EC in the afternoon against validity of Abbas' nomination paper filed for Dhaka-8 constituency.

During Sunday's scrutiny, the returning officer declared the nomination paper of BNP's standing committee member Mirza Abbas valid for the constituency.

In Dhaka-8, Social Welfare Minister Rashed Khan Menon is also a valid contestant of the Workers Party of Bangladesh, a component of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance.

After submission of the petition, Ziad told reporters that Mirza Abbas concealed that his wife Afroza Abbas is a loan defaulter.

Both Mirza Abbas and his wife Afroza, who submitted nomination paper for Dhaka-9, provided misleading information in their affidavits filed with the Election Commission, he said.

The BNP leader mentioned in his affidavit that he has liabilities of more than Tk 70 lakh to his wife, while Afroza said she has liabilities of Tk one crore to her husband.

In Dhaka-8, a total of 22 aspirants submitted nomination papers to contest the national election, of which the returning officer rejected seven.

The EC will dispose of all the petitions submitted against decisions of the returning officers over rejection and acceptance of nomination papers, from December 6 to 8.

During Sunday's scrutiny, the returning officers accepted 2,279 nomination papers and rejected 786 submitted in the country's 300 constituencies to contest the 11th national election slated for December 30.

ENSURING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

Health minister regrets government failure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister Mohammed Nasim has expressed regrets over the government not being able to ensure universal health coverage, a UN goal of providing access to quality healthcare services for all without enduring financial hardship by 2030.

The Awami League-led government over the last 10 years made remarkable achievements in the health sector but there are failures too, he said.

"I cannot deny the failure when we consider the many achievements...we could not ensure universal health coverage. Many suffer financial hardship brought about by medical treatment," Nasim said at a press briefing at the health ministry auditorium yesterday.

The most important element of universal health coverage (UHC) is reducing the out-of-pocket health expenditure, which has gone up from 64 percent in 2011 to 67 percent now in Bangladesh. The global average is 32 percent.

"Out-of-pocket health expenditure" refers to direct payments made by individuals to health care providers at the time of service.

At the briefing, the health ministry launched a book titled "Shafolyer Joare Bangladesher Shasthya Bishwer Bishshoi!" [Bangladesh's success in health sector is a global marvel] detailing the Awami League-led government's achievements in the last two tenures.

According to a comparative analysis presented at the briefing, life expectancy in Bangladesh, which was 66.5 years in 2008, has

gone up to 72.8 years. Child mortality has gone down from 65 in 2008 to 29 per 1000 live births now.

Maternal death that was 320 in 2008 has come down to 176 per one lakh births.

Bangladesh has achieved the honour of receiving 16 international awards, including three from the UN, for its achievements in health sector, claimed Nasim.

The government, over the last 10 years, has re-launched 13,779 community clinics to take healthcare to the doorsteps of people and set up 24 public medical colleges (including six under the armed forces), according to a government report.

The government set up 10 new specialised institutes and hospitals, and four new general hospitals. It also increased 10,983 beds at public hospitals, recruited 15,596 doctors

and 15,000 nurses, the report said.

"The government introduced modern healthcare technologies, including telemedicine, initiatives on mental health and autism, and a pilot health insurance programme," Nasim told reporters.

In the 2008-09 financial year, the health budget was Tk 3,420 crore, which increased by seven times and stood at Tk 23,383 crore in 2018-19.

A journalist asked why the government has not been able to make the best use of health facilities and equipment at public hospitals, better manage the health personnel at the establishments, and regulate the thriving private healthcare sector.

The minister did not reply, instead

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With vehicles streaming on both sides of the road and a footbridge few metres away, a man squeezes through a narrow space in the median fence. The photo was taken in Purana Paltan recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Take effective steps to stop violence against women

Mahila Parishad urges govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a human chain yesterday demanded effective action from the government to stop rape and all kinds of violence against women.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) organised the event in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital as part of their 16-day programme (from November 25 to December 10), marking the period between International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and International Human Rights Day.

Mentioning that violence against women is on the rise in spite of different programmes, attendees urged political parties to pledge for empowerment of women through initiatives including increment of reserved seats in parliament, election for those seats, and implementation of National Women Development Policy 2011.

Ayesha Khanam, president of BMP, pre-

sided over the event while a number of women's rights activists spoke at the occasion.

"The country has developed in terms of GNP and GDP, with women playing an important role. But they [women] are still abused everywhere. We want to see what the political parties have promised for women in their electoral manifesto."

As part of their campaign, they distributed leaflets, in which they demanded justice for rape victims through speedy trial tribunal, and implementation of Pornography Control Act 2012.

They also urged all political parties not to form alliances with war criminals, Jamaat, dictators and smugglers, and to ban religion-based politics.

In her address, Maleka Banu, general secretary of BMP, said, "Despite different programmes, violence against women is on the rise. The government should maintain zero tolerance to violence against women."

Islami Andolan contesting polls for the people

Says its ameer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Attempts to occupy the polling centres would be resisted by people of the country, said Ameer of Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IAB) Mufti Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim (Pir Shaheb of Charmonai) yesterday.

IAB will take part in the national election for the sake of the country and its people, he said.

Rezaul Karim was speaking at a meeting at Barishal with leaders and activists of the Barishal unit of IAB, said a press release. He is contesting the polls from Barishal-5.

The IAB chief alleged, "Ruling party men continue to attack opposition men ahead of polls. Law enforcers are disrupting the atmosphere for polls by filing cases and arresting opposition party men."

CAMPAIGN FOR PEACEFUL POLLS

39 political leaders honoured

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

US-based Democracy International (DI) yesterday awarded 39 leaders of different political parties, including Awami League, BNP and Jatiya Party, for promoting peaceful coexistence in the upcoming national polls.

Titled "Champion of Peace", the awards are part of DI's "Shantite Bijoy" (win with peace) campaign, funded by USAID and UKaid, said a press release. A ceremony was held at a hotel in Dhaka on the occasion.

Under the campaign, the awardees participated in various events such as peace rallies, dialogues and workshops between candidates and voters and encouraged party leaders and activists to participate in constructive multiparty events across the country.

At the ceremony, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's Political Adviser HT Imam said, "This award will inspire

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