

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA 26.0°C 15.6°C MYMENSINGH 27.0°C 12.5°C CHATTOGRAM 25.8°C 14.5°C SYLHET 26.9°C 13.9°C RAJSHAHI 25.0°C 12.0°C RANGPUR 26.2°C 12.7°C KHULNA 25.7°C 12.6°C BARISHAL 26.3°C 11.6°C COX'S BAZAR 26.8°C 15.5°C

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky 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 05:18pm and rises tomorrow at 6:38am.

Fully implement pledges made in election manifestos

Shujan calls on all political parties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expressing concern over recent polls-related violence, Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Shujan) yesterday said continuation of such incidents may adversely affect polls day (December 30).

Hopefully, it [polls-related violence] will be reduced or stopped as the Election Commission (EC) is trying to address this while army will also be deployed for maintaining the law and order situation, Shujan President M Hafizuddin Khan told a press conference.

Shujan, an organisation working to ensure good governance, arranged the press conference on "Kon dol-er kemon ishtehar" (parties and their manifestos) at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

Shujan called upon the political parties to fully implement pledges they have made in their election manifestos once they form the government through the upcoming polls.

Over the years, despite making many admirable pledges, political parties did not implement those or forgot all about them once assuming power, it said.

Hafizuddin, also adviser to a former

caretaker government, said that people lack trust in the present EC because of its activities and past record of holding elections.

"Nothing has happened yet that can help regain trust of the people," he said, adding that the overall polls situation has so far been "disappointing".

Free and fair election is the starting point for democracy and good governance, he said.

"Had that happened from the beginning, we could have made significant progress towards ensuring a democratic society," Hafizuddin added.

Shujan Secretary Badiul Alam Majumdar said the election is going to be inclusive because of participation of major political parties.

However, it may not be participatory in true sense if voters' presence on election day is not satisfactory.

The election will truly be participatory and inclusive when all sectors of the society, particularly the religious and ethnic minority groups, can overcome fear and cast their votes freely, he added.

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Molasses made of date juice, a popular winter treat, being transported to Dhaka in large clay pots. The photo was taken in Boliarpur of Savar yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Dr Kamal supporting anti-Liberation War forces in the name of Oikyafront

Peshajibi Samannay Parishad claims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University.

Zeenat Huda, a professor at Dhaka University's sociology department, said Dr Kamal is deceiving freedom fighters by supporting candidates of BNP-Jamaat.

Golam Kuddus, president of Sammilita Sangskritik Jote, said that many cricketers of the national team are seeking vote for "boat" while one of them [Mashrafe] is going to contest in the election so that people can enjoy the fruits of Sheikh Hasina's leadership.

Cultural personality Kamal Lohani said people will give their just verdict against Dr Kamal's alliance.

Journalist Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul alleged that BNP's candidates have been

"nominated" by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan and that is why many BNP leaders, who are progressive, are now joining AL.

Among others, DU VC Akhteruzzaman, cultural personalities Ramendu Majumdar and Pijush Bandyopadhyay, and former president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) Kazi Akram Uddin Ahmed also spoke at the rally. Representatives from Krishibid Institution, Bangladesh College Teachers' Association, DU Teachers' Association, Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh Medical Association, Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists, Bangladesh Economics Association, among others, expressed solidarity at the rally.

The information ministry is set to launch a media centre at Pan Pacific Sonargaon hotel in the city, to provide election-related information from December 29 to 31.

State Minister for Information Tarana Halim made the announcement at her secretariat office yesterday.

The media centre will remain open round the clock, where seven officials each will work in three shifts.

Bangladesh Television will live telecast election results provided by the Election Commission through digital screen at the media centre. Besides, updates of the commission will also be displayed on the screen, said Tarana.

Besides, a total of nine officials will

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Media centre to be opened to provide polls info: Tarana

UNB, Dhaka

Arrest BNP-Jamaat attackers: AL to admin

lised," the AL leader claimed.

He also accused BNP of filing "false allegations" with the Election Commission against the ruling AL.

Imam claimed that there had been a "big attack" on Asaduzzaman Noor.

"BNP-Jamaat activists launched attacks and opened fire in 24 places and torched 11 vehicles. They also attacked two police vehicles," he said.

HT Imam also accused BNP-Jamaat alliance of attacking minorities. "We are receiving reports of attacks on minorities from different parts of the country. Fear is spreading among these communities," he claimed.

"The BNP-Jamaat alliance has again chosen the path of violence against minorities like it did in 2001," he added.



Veteran professionals and intellectuals at Central Shaheed Minar yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Donation boxes at High Court mazar looted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Miscreants broke open the locks of 11 donation boxes kept inside the High Court mazar (shrine) and an adjacent mosque in Dhaka early yesterday, and stole the money within.

The burglary occurred between Saturday night and early hours of yesterday, Abul Hasan, officer-in-charge (OC) of Shahbagh Police Station, told The Daily Star. There was approximately Tk 4 lakh to Tk 5 lakh, which followers had donated, he said.

A closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera showed a man wearing a mask taking away the money from the boxes, said the OC, adding that they are looking into the footage to identify him.

The donation boxes are usually opened after every seven to 15 days. Police have been interrogating the security personnel in charge of the donation boxes.

However, no case was filed until filing of the report around 8:00pm yesterday.

'BCL men' beat up quota reformists

DU CORRESPONDENT

A group of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men yesterday attacked quota reformists at Dhaka University's Teachers Student Centre (TSC) area, leaving at least five of them injured, claimed Bangladesh Sadharan Chhatra Adhikar Sangrakshan Parishad.

The injured -- Bin Yeamin Mollah, Tarek Rahman, Ahmed Kabir, Jashim Uddin Akash and Sohrab Hossain -- are all joint conveners of the Parishad, a platform that spearheaded the quota reform movement.

BCL men carried out the attack half an hour prior to their programme, scheduled to be held at the base of Raju Memorial Sculpture at 3pm.

Witnesses claimed that a group of people attacked the quota reformists when they were going to get lunch. The attackers allegedly padlocked the gate of TSC and beat them up.

Of the attacked, Sohrab Hossain was critically injured and is now undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Rest of the injured took primary treatment there.

Talking to The Daily Star, Bin Yeamin Mollah said they were supposed to hold a human chain demanding a violence-free election, under the banner "Nirapad Bangladesh Chai" ("We want a safe Bangladesh").

"At around 2:30 pm, when we went inside TSC to have lunch, around 20 to 25 BCL men including Shahidul Shan, school affairs secretary of Shaheed Sergeant Zahirul Haque Hall unit and Sohanur Rahman, vice president of Ziaur Rahman Hall, attacked us without any provocation," Yeamin claimed.

They hurled abuses, punched, kicked and slapped us

No motorised vehicles to ply on polls day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Authorities have imposed a ban on plying of all motorised vehicles on land and water will remain suspended between midnight of December 29 and midnight December 30. "No motorcycle can ply from midnight of December 28 till midnight of January 2," it said.

The ban will not be applicable to candidates, law enforcers, armed forces, admin officials, election observers and polling agents. Election observers and polling agents must use stickers provided by the EC on their vehicles. The ban will not be applicable on national highways.

Meanwhile, a circular from Road Transport and Bridges Ministry yesterday said ban on motorcycles will be in place from midnight of December 28 to January 1.

However, it said journalists with valid identity cards and emergency vehicles will remain out of its purview.



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