

WEATHER
FORECAST



YESTERDAY'S
TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 26.4 L 12.0

MYMENSINGH
H 26.2 L 09.0

CHATTOGRAM
H 25.8 L 13.5

SYLHET
H 26.8 L 12.5

RAJSHAH
H 24.0 L 09.0

RANGPUR
H 23.8 L 11.4

KHULNA
H 26.4 L 10.0

BARISHAL
H 24.4 L 08.5

COX'S BAZAR
H 27.2 L 14.3

Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today, reports UNB quoting Met office. Mild to moderate cold may continue to sweep over Tangail, Faridpur, Madaripur, Gopalganj, Mymensingh, Sitakunda, Moulvibazar, Rajshahi, Pabna, Naogaon, Dinajpur, Syedpur, Panchagarh, Kurigram, Khulna, Satkhira, Jashore, Chuadanga, Barishal and Bhola. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:26pm and rises tomorrow at 6:43am.



BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir consoles the woman at Noakhali General Hospital yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

'You're not alone'

Fakhrul, BNP and Oikyafront leaders visit Noakhali rape victim

STAR REPORT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday assured the gang-rape victim of Noakhali's Subarnachar upazila that his party and Jatiya Oikyafront would stand by her.

Standing next to her at Noakhali General Hospital, where she is undergoing treatment, an emotion-choked BNP secretary general said, "Sister, you've got nothing to worry about... we're with you."

A teary-eyed Fakhrul placed his hand over her forehead and said, "You're not alone." Trial must be held for such brutality and justice has to be ensured, he added.

The woman's husband, BNP and Oikyafront leaders were also present there. It was a heartbreaking scene at the hospital as everyone tried but could not hold back their tears, reports UNB.

Fakhrul on behalf of BNP and Oikyafront handed over financial aid to the victim's family members for her treatment and other purposes.

After Fakhrul, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD-Rob) President ASM Abdur Rob and Krishak Sramik Janata League President Kader Siddique visited the victim and consoled her.

They spoke to the family members and

doctors, inquired about her health condition and provided her with financial assistance, reports our Noakhali correspondent.

Later, talking to journalists, Fakhrul said Awami League has deceived people by depriving them of their voting right. "They [AL] have turned into public enemy through snatching away people's voting right and taking a stance against them."

He alleged that many were injured in violence unleashed by the ruling party men before, during and after the election. Even a mother of four was not spared, he said, adding, "We strongly condemn it and seek justice from people."

Fakhrul said along with people, they will put up a resistance against Awami League's move to "establish one-party rule in the country by annihilating democracy."

Earlier in the day, Fakhrul, senior BNP and Oikyafront leaders started their journey for Noakhali from BNP chairperson's Gulshan office around 7am, six days after the incident. They reached the hospital by 12:30pm.

On Monday, the mother of four was gang-raped allegedly by 10 to 12 Awami League activists. The 35-year-old woman claimed that she was raped for voting for "sheaf of paddy", the electoral symbol of BNP, during Sunday's national polls.

Woman's body found inside septic tank

Family claim they saw husband dumping it

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Police recovered the body of a woman from a septic tank in Gazipur yesterday, after her family members claimed to have seen her husband dumping the body there around midnight.

The deceased, Afroza Khatun, 25, was an RMG worker.

She used to live at a rented house in Bhaoraid Uttar Para area with her husband Shahjahan Miah and their six-year-old daughter, said police quoting family members.

Afroza's cousin and his brother-in-law, who also lived nearby, claimed that they saw her husband dumping a body inside a septic tank

around midnight and running away.

Suspicious, they informed the matter to the ward councillor, who along with locals went to the spot and found the body, said police.

The body bore injury marks on the throat, said Reaz Uddin, sub-inspector of Gazipur Sadar Police Station. "She might have been strangled," he added.

The SI said Shahjahan, who is on the run, works at a steel mill in Jolarpar area.

The couple got married around eight years ago. They had been quarreling for the last couple of days over

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Cold paralyses life in Lalmonirhat

S DILIP ROY, Lalmonirhat

Normal life is being disrupted in Lalmonirhat as an intense cold wave is sweeping over and thick fog blanketing all five upazilas of the northern district.

People -- especially from low-income groups, homeless and those living in the Teesta and Dharla basins -- are the worst sufferers.

Met office said people of the border district are exposed to such cold weather due to close proximity to the Himalayas from where extreme cold wave comes.

Farmers and day labourers are not being able to work at fields and workplaces because of the cold wave.

Many are seen fighting the bone-chilling cold by burning heaps of straw and old tyres. The

cattle are covered with jute sacks in sheds.

"We're burning straw as we have no warm clothes," said Bachcha Rani Bala, 48, from Uttar Saptana village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

Farmer Sunil Chandra Roy, 62, from the same area said he cannot go to the farmland due to cold wave and dense fog.

According to Rangpur Met Office, the lowest temperature was recorded at 8.5 degrees Celsius yesterday. The mercury stood at 7.8 degrees on Friday morning in Lalmonirhat.

"I can't bring myself to go out of home to pull rickshaw amid severe cold. Even if I go out I would not get passengers," said rickshaw-puller Mazibar Rahman, 48, from Khochabari

village in the upazila.

Cold-hit people are also seen gathering at local shops to buy old warm clothes at high prices. Meanwhile, a section of traders are taking advantage of the situation.

Shafiul Arif, deputy commissioner (DC) of Lalmonirhat, said the district and upazila administrations have been distributing warm clothes among the cold-hit people in remote and char areas on a daily basis.

As the assistance is inadequate, a letter was sent to the relief ministry on Thursday, seeking more warm clothes, he said.

People of the region urged the government and other socio-cultural organisations and the well-off to give them warm clothes to ease their sufferings.

Two bullet-hit during scuffle in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Two youths sustained bullet injuries during a scuffle between two groups of people in Sreepur upazila of Gazipur yesterday.

The groups were at the loggerheads over renting trucks to a puffed-rice making factory in Mulaid MC Bazar. The bullet-hit are Rajon 25, of Mulaid village and Farhad Hossain, 25, of Mawna Uttar Para area.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Sreepur Police Station Abul Kalam Bhuiyan said Rajon was injured below the left knee and Farhad in the left elbow. They were first taken to a local hospital and then to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

The OC said three persons including the manager of the factory, Abul Kalam, were detained for interrogation. He said who fired the bullets could not be known immediately.

Before detention, manager Abul Kalam told The Daily

Star that the two injured youths had rivalry with one Ashrafur over renting trucks to the factory.

Ashrafur used to transport goods of the factory, but Rajon and Farhad wanted to take over the transportation business, he said. Yesterday morning, when the two were having a scuffle with Ashrafur, a gunshot was heard, he added.

Kidnapped boy rescued in N'ganj

UNB, N'ganj

Police rescued a schoolboy and detained four suspected kidnappers in front of Handur Bridge in Bandar upazila early yesterday.

The detainees are Hridoy, 23; Abul Hossain, 22; Rana, 22; and Abdul Hossen, 30. They abducted Mehedi Hasan Siam, 15, on Friday evening, said OC Ajharul Islam of Bandar Police Station.

They demanded Tk 50,000 from the victim's mother, he said.

She sent Tk 15,000 through mobile banking service, but they demanded more. The victim's parents then informed police.

Police spotted the kidnappers through mobile tracking, said the OC.

Samson H Chowdhury practiced ethical business

Speakers say at memorial meeting in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Unlike many, Square Group founder Samson H Chowdhury always maintained ethical standards in his profession, speakers said at a commemorative meeting in Pabna yesterday.

He was also a patriotic and visionary entrepreneur, they said.

Family members organised the meeting at ASTRAS firm house in the district town yesterday morning, marking the seventh death anniversary of Samson H Chowdhury.

A special prayer was also offered for his departed soul.

Speaking as chief guest, former adviser to Baptist Church Bangladesh Dr Denis Dilip Dutta said, "Samson H Chowdhury always emphasised humanity in business, alongside profit-making. Thus, he set an example of ethical business."

He also showed how to build a better life

through hard work, the speakers said.

Father of Pabna Baptist Church Samuel Bishwas and Bangladesh Baptist Church Fellowship Secretary Riva Leur P Sarker also spoke on the occasion.

Samson H Chowdhury died on January 5, 2012 at Raffles Hospital in Singapore. He was 86. Born on February 25, 1926 in Pabna, he left behind an unmatched legacy of entrepreneurship. He built from scratch Square Group, one of the largest conglomerates in the country.

Meanwhile, Pabna Press Club organised another memorial meeting in the evening where civil society members spoke on the life and work of the businessman. Prof Shibojit Nag presided over the discussion, where Pabna Deputy Commissioner Jasim Uddin, Superintendent of Police Rafiqul Islam and Samson's son Anjan Chowdhury Pintu were present.



PEEKING INTO GYPSY LIFE: A gypsy boy paddles a boat in the Kirtankhola river while his mother attends to his sister. This is actually a house on the move. The sight gives a glimpse of the apparently care-free lifestyle of a gypsy (bede) family. The photo was taken in Purba Rasulpur area yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS



Survival is not easy. Sometimes it means stretching one's limits. A man doing a flip in the air at Karwan Bazar in Dhaka yesterday has chosen to earn a living, along with his brother, by displaying acrobatics on the streets. They live off of whatever spectators give them.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

2,000 people rescued after launches get stuck in shoal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Two launches of Patuakhali-Dhaka route were rescued on Friday night, five hours after they got stuck on a shoal in the Karkhana river under Bakerganj upazila in Barishal, causing immense sufferings to around 2,000 passengers on board.

The four-storey Dhaka-bound MV Sundarban-9 and MV Jamal Khan-5 started from Patuakhali Launch Ghat at 6:00pm on Friday, and were stuck after one hour, in a shoal in the Karkhana in Bakerganj upazila of Barishal up to 11:45pm, said Younus Hossain, launch supervisor of Sundarban-9.

MV Jamal Khan-5 had some 900 passengers and MV Sundarban-9 took over

Syed Ashraf's body reaches

FROM PAGE 3

Son of Syed Nazrul Islam, acting president of Mujibnagar government, Ashraf had been suffering from lung cancer for a long time. He was flown to Thailand for treatment in July last year.

His death came just four days after he was elected MP in Kishoreganj-1. He had been a parliamentarian in the constituency since 1996.

He, however, could not take oath on Thursday when all the Awami League

MPs were sworn in. The AL leader submitted a letter to the Speaker on the day, seeking time for his oath-taking.

Tributes and condolences have been pouring in from all quarters for the AL leader. His death came as shock to the countrymen, irrespective of their political affiliation.

Syed Ashrafur Islam left behind his only daughter and a host of relatives and well-wishers to mourn his death. His wife Shila Islam died of cancer at a London hospital in October last year.

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