

Rare orchid found in Sundarbans

BSS, Dhaka

After a span of about a century, IUCN-Bangladesh has found a rare orchid, Roxburgh's Cirrhopetalum, that generally grows on Sundri trees, in Sundarbans.

A team of the IUCN, The World Conservation Union, working under the Sundarbans Biodiversity Conservation Project (SBCP) spotted the orchid in April in Ramani Khal area near Sharankhola Forest Range, said a press release of the IUCN yesterday.

The scientific name of the orchid is Bulbophyllum Roxburghii.

This is a medium-sized tropical orchid, clinging on to the host tree in pendant condition with linear-lanceolate leaves.

The flower is slight yellowish-pink and about two cm long. The habitat of this uncommon orchid is fresh and brackish water zone of the Sundarbans, having very old and dense growth of mangrove vegetation. It grows in a cool and shady place with luxuriant epiphytic vegetation.

Purple sunbirds is the main pollinating agency of the orchid, while the nectar-eating birds collect honey from the flowers of this very pretty orchids.

Orchids are most attractive group of plants (epiphytes) in the floral world.

Out of 11 species of orchids recorded from Sundarbans by the IUCN team, the Roxburgh's orchid is one of the meager ones.

The IUCN release said it needs special attention of the wildlife biologists, foresters and conservationists.

Democracy Festival in Khulna today

A daylong 'Democracy Festival' will be held at Zia Hall in Khulna today.

Discussion, seminar, exhibition and cultural show are the main features of the festival organised by the Rupantar.

Elected representatives in the Union Parishads, civil society members, development workers, media personnel, local government experts, researchers, politicians and cultural activists from Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira and Narail districts will take part in the festival.

Charge d'Affaires, US Embassy, and Director of USAID Mission, Bangladesh, Gene V George will be present as chief guest while Khulna Mayor Tayebur Rahman as guest of honour.

Carol Horning and Dr. Rezaul Haque of USAID and Abu Mohammad Ferdous, president of Khulna Development Coordination Committee, will attend the festival as special guests.

At a press conference on Saturday, the organisers said the

Rupantar has laid emphasis on strengthening the local government as it can play a pioneering role in ensuring development at the grass-roots level with the participation of people.

Member Secretary of the festival convening committee Rafiqul Islam Khokan read out a written speech at the press conference.

Convenor Begum Ferdousi Ali and Joint Convener Abdul Qayyum also spoke.



City Awami League President Mohammad Hanif speaks at a meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue yesterday protesting recent attack on the convoy of AL leader Tofail Ahmed in Bhola.

Law to be enacted to ensure women's seats in JS

Moudud tells international seminar

DU CORRESPONDENT

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed yesterday said a law would be enacted in the 8th Jatiya Sangsad to ensure women's representation in parliament.

"We have to ensure women's participation in mainstream politics for political empowerment of women," said the minister at a seminar at British Council auditorium as chief guest.

The British Council and Democracywatch jointly organised the two-day international seminar on 'Political empowerment of women: Present perspective and ways forward'.

Women's representation, environment and some other important issues were not included in our constitution, said Moudud adding that the constitution has to be amended to include those issues in it.

He said as women do not have any specific role and power from local government to parliament, we are thinking to give them definite role by enacting necessary laws.

Awami League Presidium member Begum Motia Chowdhury said the alliance government could enact a law on women's representation in parliament as they have two-thirds majority. But they don't have the will, she added.

GM Kader, Jatiya Party MP, said women must be given definite power and role to empower them.

"Empowerment of women cannot be ensured if they are elected from the reserved seats," he added.

Other speakers at the seminar said participation of women should be increased to bring democracy within the political parties.

They alleged that the former Awami League government as well

as the present BNP government in their election manifestos made commitment for women's empowerment.

But neither the ruling party nor the main opposition took any serious move for continuation of reserved seats for women in parliament.

Dr Salahuddin M Aminuzzaman, a teacher of Dhaka University, presented a paper on 'Women representation at the Jatiya Sangsad: An opinion survey' at the first session of the seminar while Mary-Ann Stephenson of the UK and Chulani Tania Kodikara of Sri Lanka presented papers on 'Participation and role of women in parliaments: International experiences' at the second session.

British Council Director Carl Reuter, in his welcome address, said women's participation in parliament will have to be increased for the development of Bangladesh.

Moderated by Mohammad Jahangir, the seminar was participated by Maleka Begum, Dr Ershadul Bari, Khaleda Khanam, Munira Khan, Jahanara Haque, Niaz Zaman, Shirin Akther and other academics, researchers and NGO leaders.

AL protests remarks of state minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League has protested the remarks of State Minister for Housing and Public Works Alamgir Kabir on the press.

In a statement yesterday, AL Publicity Secretary Asaduzzaman Noor MP also condemned the incident of journalists being driven out of a meeting of the Rangpur district law and order committee recently.

In the meeting, the state minister said 'the newspapers carry false news and the journalists are engaged in yellow journalism', Noor said.

Expressing concern over growing repression on journalists and writers, Noor urged the government to refrain from such activities and respect press freedom.

Justice Debesh donates personal library

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Justice Debesh Chandra Bhattacharya donated his personal library collection to the Supreme Court Bar Association yesterday.

At the book handing over ceremony, the speakers said Justice Bhattacharya is a man of moral integrity and generosity who served the cause of humanity as a legal practitioner.

They glorified his unique contribution to the judicial history and democratic and human rights movements.

Citing the judgements of two cases, SC Bar Association President Rokonuddin Mahmud said that Justice Bhattacharya's landmark works would make him immortal.

Organised by the Association, the function was held at the Bar Council auditorium where Justice Bhattacharya handed over 351 books and law reports.

Senior lawyer Mahbub Alam said that Justice Bhattacharya worked with dedication to promote non-sectarian spirit in our society.

"Justice Bhattacharya has a rare and noble personality and is second to none in his single-mindedness," Sudhansu Shekhar Halder said.

"He passed many landmark judgements in the history of country's judiciary."

"Justice Bhattacharya is unparalleled in his generosity as a senior legal practitioner to his juniors," Khondkar Mahbub Uddin Ahmed said.

Eminent economist Debapriya Bhattacharya, son of 88-year-old Justice Bhattacharya, said that he takes pride in the fact that his father served such an institution upon which the state system largely rested and "I am fortunate that I have got him as a role model of my life."



PHOTO: STAR

Justice Debesh Chandra Bhattacharya donated his personal library collection to Supreme Court Bar Association. He hands over the books to the Association President Barrister Rokonuddin Mahmud at a ceremony at the Bar Council auditorium yesterday.



Prof M Ataur Rahman

Prof Ataur, Prof Aftab made BPSA president, secy

Prof M Ataur Rahman of political science department of Dhaka University and Prof Aftab Ahmad, vice-chancellor of National University were elected president and secretary general of Bangladesh Political Science Association (BPSA) for 2003-06, says a press release.

The vice presidents are Prof M Shamsuddin, Prof Md Shamsur Rahman, Prof Dilara Chowdhury, Prof AKM Shaidullah, Prof Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan, Prof Khalilur Rahman, and Prof Shariful Islam.

The joint secretaries are Prof Nurul Amin Bepari, and Dr M Hasan Sarowardy. Prof Harunur Rashid Pathan is the treasurer.

The executive members are Prof Najmunnesa Mahtab, Prof AHM Aminur Rahman, Prof Ferdous Hossein, Prof Dil Rawshan Jinnat Ara Nazneen, Prof Dalem Chandra Barman, Prof Hasan Mohammad, Prof Abdun Nur, Prof Munir Ahmed Chawdhury, Prof Feroza Begum, Prof Makhluur Rahman, Prof Moksudur Rahman, Prof Sadequul Islam, Prof Abdul Quddus, Prof Azizur Rahman Manik, Prof Nazrul Islam, Prof Rawshan Jahan, Prof Kamrun Nahar Ahmed, Prof Abdul Ali Chowdhury, Sajeda Wahid, Asma Begum, Tawfiqul Islam and Syed AL Atahar.

Death anniversary

The second death anniversary of Dr Shafaque Shahriar Ahmed (Ruben) will be observed today, says a press release.



Ruben, who had been serving in the Brookdale Medical University Hospital, died in New York.

A milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at his father's residence at 345, South Paikpara, Mirpur.

Relatives, friends and well-wishers have seen requested to attend the milad.

DHAKA
T O D A Y

Film show

Eleven film societies will jointly screen five films made by Tareque Shahriar, an alternative filmmaker who died of cardiac arrest on June 5. The films to be screened are 'Great lady Sufia Kamal', 'The chain-breaking songs', 'The wings of the butterfly', 'The black house' and 'Water and wheel'. Venue: Iranian Cultural Centre, Dhanmondi. Time: 5.00pm.

Movie show

Academy Film Society will screen a film titled 'Gentleman Agreement'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Drama

Shabdabali, a theatre group of Barisal, will stage a drama titled 'Shilari', directed by Aminur Rahman Mukul. Venue: Mohila Samity Mancha, Baily Road.

Memorial discussion

Bangla Academy organises a discussion on 'Poet Kaikobad and his contemporary society' on the occasion of his death anniversary. Venue: Seminar room of the academy. Time: 11.00am.

Stamp exhibition

The inaugural ceremony of a weeklong stamp exhibition will be held with Post and Telecommunications Minister Aminul Haque as chief guest. Venue: GPO auditorium. Time: 3.00pm. The exhibition will remain open from 3.00pm to 7.00pm daily.

BCS meeting

A meeting of the central executive committee of Bangladesh Civil Service Coordination Committee will be held. Venue: Meherba Plaza, Tophkhana road. Time: 4.30pm.

Conference

A conference of Dhaka University unit of Bangladesh Awami Sangskritik Forum will be held. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity, Tophkhana road. Time: 3.30pm.

Launching ceremony

The launching ceremony of newly formed Spain Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be held. Venue: Dhaka Reporters Unity, Tophkhana road. Time: 11.30am.

DHAKA
T O M O R R O W

Premiere show

Aqua Paints organises the premiere show of a film titled 'The shadow gap', directed by Architect Enamul Karim Nirjhar. Venue: Gulshan Club auditorium. Time: 7.30pm.

Movie show

Academy Film Society will screen a French film titled 'Taxi'. Venue: 21/C, Jigatola. Time: 6.30pm.

Workshop

A workshop on 'Micro impacts of macroeconomic and adjustment policies in Bangladesh', organised by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, will be held with noted economist Prof Wahiduddin Mahmud as chief guest. Venue: LGED conference room, Agargaon. Time: 10.00am.

Cultural evening

The annual cultural evening of Bhuiyan Academy, School of Law will be held with Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Moudud Ahmed as chief guest. Venue: Hotel Sundarban. Time: 5.30pm.



Light to moderate rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong, Sylhet, Barisal and Khulna divisions till 6pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Offices said.

Highest temperature 35.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishurdi and Chuadanga and lowest 25.0 degree at Srirangol.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:47pm today and rises at 5:23am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature		Humidity in	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.5	28.0	73	71
Chittagong	32.6	25.4	79	68
Rajshahi	34.5	27.5	75	77
Khulna	33.0	26.6	80	92
Barisal	31.2	26.6	98	88
Sylhet	33.0	26.3	83	92
Cox's Bazar	31.0	25.4	88	92



PHOTO: PID

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman launches CD and cassette titled 'Madhur Dhvani Bajey' -- Tagore songs by Sharful Alam -- at a ceremony at the National Press Club yesterday.