

Did you know? Tropical Islands Resort is an artificial tropical resort in Krausnick, Germany, set inside a disused zeppelin hangar 360m long, 210m wide and 107m high. At 5.5 million cubic meters, it stands as one of the largest buildings on Earth by volume, and is the world's largest single hall without supporting pillars inside.

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Amazingly Attractive Offer During February

UTTARA THIRD PHASE Plot handover to start next month

HELEMUL ALAM

After missing three deadlines for handing over plots of Uttara Model Town third phase, Rajuk now sets next month the earliest for handing over plots.

Rajuk Chairman Nurul Huda said they would start distributing a portion of Uttara third phase plots from March or April.

"We will distribute at least some of the plots to the owners. Those will be completed by this time," he said adding that the project is scheduled to be completed by 2012.

The Rajuk website however reads that the handing over of residential plots of Uttara third phase will be started from January 2010 and will be completed at the earliest possible time.

The Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (Rajuk) after missing its two deadlines, last year set the deadline of January 2010. But it would take the authorities up to March to start the process of handover.

Rajuk, on the other hand, has taken an initiative to construct 22,525 flats in third phase at sector-18 and the proposal is now awaiting the approval of housing and public works ministry.

Md Nurul Islam, project director of Uttara third phase, said 92 percent land development work at sector 15 and 16 and 85 percent work at sector-17 have been done. The project acquires about 2,008 acres of land.

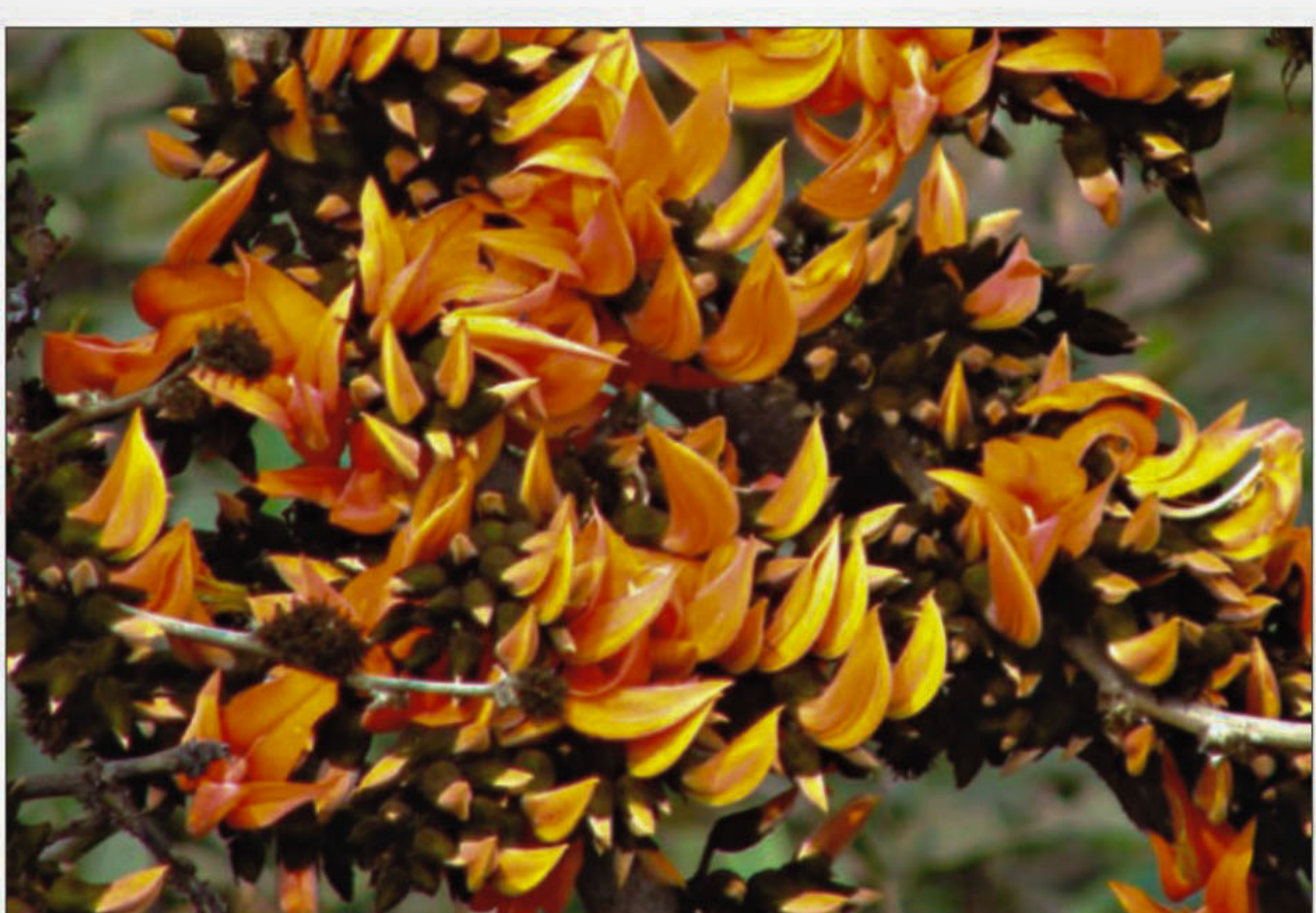
"It will be possible to start distributing a major portion of the plots under sector-15 and -16 from December and plots under sector-17 will be distributed next year," he said. The construction of bridges on the lake might take 16 months, which would delay the plot handover of sector-17.

Nurul Islam said construction of 165km road with an estimated cost of Tk 146 crore is going on.

"We have set the target to accomplish the construction of roads of sector-15 and -16 by December and roads of sector-17 will be completed by December next year," he said adding eight to 10 construction groups have already started the work.

He said construction of 13 bridges on 9.50km long and 200-500 feet wide lake in the project area is going on with an estimated cost of Tk 170 crore.

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"Flowers bloom or not, today it is spring", wrote poet Subhash Mukhopadhyay. *Falgun* begins today, announcing the arrival of spring according to Bangla calendar.

অমর একুশে

Huge crowd at book fair

DU CORRESPONDENT

Thousands of visitors yesterday thronged the book fair at Bangla Academy on the first day of two-day weekend.

People from all walks of life began to line up soon after the fair gates were opened at 11:00am. People had to wait for a long time in the queue to enter Amar Ekushey Boi Mela.

The queues went beyond the Teacher-Student Centre intersection in the north and the Doyel Chattar in the south.

As the evening approached the book fair got crowded with booklovers who had to jostle through the narrow lanes of the premises. The entire venue was covered in a thick layer of dust adding to the misery of visitors.

The stalls witnessed a very good sale as people were buying books especially love stories of popular writers for their beloved ahead of tomorrow's Valentine's Day.

The corner dedicated to writers and poets assumed a festive mood as people, especially children and teenagers, scrambled for autographs of their favourite writers.

Among others, former adviser to a caretaker government Dr Akbar Ali Khan and freedom fighter Maj (retd) Kamrul Hasan Bhuiyan visited the fair yesterday.

In the morning, some 268 children took part in a recitation competition at the main gate of the Bangla Academy premises.

A total of 214 new titles covering novels, poems, essays, research texts, biographies, and accounts of the Liberation War were brought

HC, APPELLATE DIVISION Recruitment of 15 judges this week

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government is going to appoint around 15 new judges to the High Court division of the Supreme Court within this week.

Sources said these judges would be appointed as part of the government's plan to appoint a total of 50 more judges to the HC to deal with a huge backlog of pending cases.

The government has already completed the process of appointment of the new judges, and arranged logistics for them, Law Minister Shafiqe Ahmed said.

While talking to The Daily Star on February 8, the minister said the government will appoint judges to the Appellate Division of the SC in order to fill up the four vacant posts of the apex court judge.

After the retirement of Chief Justice Md Tafazzul Islam on February 7, four posts of the Appellate Division judge have been lying vacant.

On February 4 this year, the government appointed Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim as chief justice, and he took oath for the Office on February 8.

Sources said over three lakh cases are now

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2 die while cleaning sewer line

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two persons died of asphyxia while cleaning up a clogged sewer line at Azimpur in the capital yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Babu, 27, and Bhasani, 28. They were working under a contractor appointed by Wasa to clean sewer lines in the old part of the city.

Babu entered the deep drain near Chhapra Mosque to clean it up around 9:45am, witnesses said.

As Babu did not return long

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

JUTE MILL FIRE 50,000 maunds of jute burned down

STAR REPORT

Huge amounts of raw jute and jute goods have been gutted in a fire that broke out at the bailing press of Noapara Jute Mill in Abhoynagar upazila here yesterday around 2:00pm.

Manager (jute) Siddiqur Rahman of the privately owned export oriented mill said the fire had originated from a short circuit. The blaze soon flared up and burned down the sacking section and bales of jute ready for export.

About 50,000 maunds of jute and a press machine were totally burnt in the fire, Rahman said. He added the financial loss has unofficially been estimated at over Tk 5 crore.

Fire fighters of Noapara, Jessore sadar, Keshabpur and Monirampur upazilas were trying to douse the fire as of 7:00pm,

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Amartya Sen arrives today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nobel laureate Professor Amartya Sen arrives today on a flight of Thai Airways on a two-day visit to attend Indo-Bangladesh Dialogue on Education and Health: Learning from Neighbours.

He will attend the event jointly organised by Brac, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and Pratichi Trust in association with Unicef Bangladesh at the city's Brac Centre Inn Auditorium.

Leading scholars from India will join the dialogue. A press conference will be

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Police charge batons to disperse a Shibir procession staged ignoring the law enforcers' bar at Jamal Khan area in the port city yesterday. The organisation was demanding punishment to the killer of CU student Mohiuddin after claiming him to be a Shibir activist.

UN forms advisory panel on climate change funding

AFP, United Nations

UN chief Ban Ki-moon launched a high-level advisory panel yesterday to mobilise funding to help developing nations battle climate change.

The panel, to be led by Britain's Prime Minister Gordon Brown and his Ethiopian counterpart Meles Zenawi, aimed "to mobilize the resources for climate change pledged at the recent climate change conference in Copenhagen," Ban told reporters.

The group, evenly balanced between developed and developing nations, "will develop practical proposals to significantly scale up long-term (public and private) financing for mitigation and adaptation strategies in developing countries," he added.

The panel was set to include heads of state and government, top officials from ministries and central banks as well as experts on public finance, development and related issues.

Ban said the group would specifically seek to marshal new and innovative resources to reach a 100-billion-dollar target by 2020 to fund "adaptation, mitigation, technology development and transfer, and capacity building in developing countries, with priority for the most vulnerable."

The secretary-general, who was linked by videoconference with Brown and Zenawi, said he expected the panel to deliver a preliminary report at the May-June meeting of the UN

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PREGNANT HOUSEWIFE Accused killer husband still absconding

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

The prime accused of Lipi Akter murder at Dhulondi village of Ghior upazila in Manikganj is still at large.

Lipi Akter, 22, a five-month pregnant woman, fell victim to her husband's savagery on Monday when husband Babul Hossain severely tortured her for dowry. The following day, she succumbed to her injuries at a clinic in Savar.

Officer-in-Charge of Ghior Police Station Azizur Rahman said police had arrested Babul's two brothers, Bozlu and Fazal, his sister Nasirun and mother Solebanu.

"But we could not arrest

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Iran accused of jamming BBC, VOA broadcasts

AFP, London

Three international broadcasters yesterday accused Iran of deliberately jamming their output.

Britain's BBC, German broadcaster Deutsche Welle and the Voice of America said the interference began on Thursday as Iran celebrated the anniversary of the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

They accused Iran of broadcasting freely around the world while denying the Iranian people programmes coming from outside the country.

BBCWorld News was the latest TV channel to be jammed this week.

"We condemn any jamming of these channels," said a joint statement by Peter Horrocks, Director of BBCWorld Service, Erik Bettermann, Director of Deutsche Welle and Dan Austin, Director of Voice of America.

"It contravenes international agreements and is interfering with the free and open flow of international transmissions that are protected by international treaties.

"The jamming violates article 45 of the constitution of the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

US govt back to business after record snowfall

AFP, Washington

The eastern US seaboard was spluttering back to life yesterday after a record snowfall paralysed the region for most of the week, as a rare winter chill swept across the normally balmy South.

In Washington, over 250,000 federal workers were struggling back to work after the government shut its doors for four days because of the two storms.

Wednesday's blizzard, on top of heavy weekend snowfall, affected tens of millions of people and turned the 2009-2010 winter into the snowiest ever on record for Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia.

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Indo-Pak talks set for February 25

First official dialogue to ease tension after Mumbai attacks

AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan and India will hold their first official talks since the Mumbai attacks on February 25, Islamabad said yesterday, in a move seen as a significant bid to ease regional tensions.

"It was decided that foreign secretary level talks between the two countries would be held on February 25 in New Delhi," a Pakistani government statement said.

There was not yet any confirmation of the talks from New Delhi.

The Pakistani statement said its side "should raise all the core issues and impress upon India the need for the expeditious resolution through resumption of Composite Dialogue" -- a reference to Pakistan's desire for fully fledged peace talks.

New Delhi last week proposed talks between the countries' top foreign ministry civil servants, a move welcomed as indicative of a major breakthrough in relations frozen since the 2008 attacks in Mumbai.

Pakistan announced the date for the talks following discussions between its Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi.

"The prime minister directed the foreign secretary, who was also present in the meeting, that his talks with his Indian counterpart should be result oriented and meaningful," the prime minister's office said.

Tensions between the nuclear rivals, which have fought three wars since British partition of the sub-continent in 1947, have fanned

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OnlinePoll ✓

Do you agree with Home Minister Sahara Khatun that the country's law and order situation is now better than any other time in the past?

No (50.4%)
 Yes (48.6%)
 No Comments (1.0%)

Total votes: 1769

TODAY'S POLL

Do you support opposition boycott of JS once again?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

February 13

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-25	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	5-57	6-01
Esha	7-15	7-45

Source: Islamic Foundation