

RAIN LIKELY

WEATHER TODAY
 11th, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at many places over Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, Rajshahi Rangpur and Sylhet divisions till 6:00pm today.
 Moderately heavy to heavy falls are also

likely at places over the country, Met Office said.
 Day and night temperature may fall by (1-3) degree Celsius over the country.
The sun sets in the capital today at 6:45pm and rises tomorrow at 5:10am.

Country's highest temperature 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 23.0 degrees at Hatiya.
 Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage		Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage		
	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening	Max:	Min:	Morning	Evening	
Dhaka	27.3	25.6	93	92	Khulna	30.2	28.0	87	87
Chittagong	30.5	25.9	92	78	Barisal	27.1	25.6	96	87
Rajshahi	34.2	25.6	83	95	Sylhet	30.4	26.0	83	92
Rangpur	31.0	25.0	88	95	Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.5	88	92

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



The group at Botanical Garden.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Musical Morning at Mirpur

Some weeks ago, while photographing at Mirpur Botanical Garden in early morning, I was caught in a sudden downpour. I took refuge under the thick cover of a jarul tree. While I waited, the strains of a familiar melody wafted in through the sound of the falling rain. I listened attentively: a clear, melodious voice was singing a Nazrul song. Looking around, I saw a group of men who had gathered in a nearby covered shelter and were taking turns singing.

They left as soon as the rain stopped; I returned to chasing my photographs. But the memory of the morning music lingered. When I returned to the garden recently, I found the group and spoke with them.

They are a group of friends who sing and exercise at the Garden. Organized in 2000 by Nazrul Islam Khan - who has also organized other groups in the Garden - this group has about two dozen members. They come to the Garden early morning, every day. After doing their exercise they sit together and take turns singing or reciting poetry.

There were three singers in the group when I talked to them: Yaqub, Mohammed Ilias and Anwar Hossain. Both Anwar and Ilias have received formal training in singing and Anwar sang for Radio Pakistan in the 1960s. Yaqub is self-taught.

When I visited, they were sitting in front of a lake belting out their songs. Yaqub rendered a soulful spiritual folk song. Ilias followed with a melodious Tagore favourite, after which Anwar performed a lively modern Bangla song. Delivered with polished verve, the songs brought new life to the garden.

In addition to singing, the group has other talents. Abdus Sobhan has written a book on the Holy Quran. Another member, Motiur Rahman, recites poetry and at one point - when we were discussing trees, flowers and birds - he punctuated our discussion by inserting seamless recitations of Tagore and Nazrul verses on... trees, flowers and birds.

Motiur is, indeed, a daring one. Age has not, it seems, stopped him from climbing trees and being Tarzan-ish. He retired in 1992, but to the group he is the "young one."

Several members write their own songs. Nazrul, I was told, has recently written a song called "I am a man of 73." Another ditty I heard praised the "new school" they all had to attend - the school at the Botanical Garden!

The more senior men are retired from executive positions in government and industry; others have their own businesses in the city. They had worked long careers and raised families and now they had found a wonderful way to energize their lives.

I paused to look around me. The garden was drenched in green and so I asked about their favourite plants. Ilias, with an interest in botany, mentioned spirogyra, an aquatic plant with animal-like reproductive behaviour. Anwar said he liked the Nagalingam and Magnolia flowers.

The group believes strongly in exercising and staying fit. "Exercise is the medicine to make old people young again," said Anwar. Of course, singing, poetry and humour also help.

So if you find yourself in Mirpur in early morning, check out the singing stars of the Botanical Garden.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

Road crashes kill 8

CITY DESK
 Eight people were killed and 47 others injured in road accidents in Munshiganj, Gazipur, Manikganj and Jhenidah yesterday.

Our Munshiganj correspondent reports, three unidentified men were killed and 40 others injured as a Mawa-bound BRTC bus collided head-on with an engine-run three-wheeler in Chaltipara area in Sirajdikhan upazila yesterday.

Locals and police recovered the bodies from both of the vehicles which fell into a roadside ditch.

Police suspected that there could be more bodies inside the vehicles which were yet to be salvaged.

A correspondent from Gazipur reports, three people were killed and seven others injured in a head-on collision between a bus and a covered van in Hotapara area of sadar upazila yesterday.

Of the deceased, two were Raju, 22, son of Nurul Islam of the upazila; and Liton, 28, son of Gias Uddin of Bhaluka upazila in Mymensingh.

Naozor highway police said the accident occurred around 10:00am when the Dhaka-bound bus from Bhaluka hit the covered van from the opposite direction.

The injured were rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital and other hospitals and clinics.

Our Manikganj correspondent reports, a passer-by died when a bus ran him over while he was crossing the road at Bhatbaur of Manikganj Sadar upazila yesterday afternoon.

The victim was Abdur Razzak, 40, son of Soimuddin Mia of Bhatbaur village.

Our Jhenidah correspondent reports, a boy died on the spot as a Kushtia-bound bus from Khulna ran him over while he was going to a mosque over Dhaka-Khulna highway at Khayertala bus stand in Kaliganj upazila of the district yesterday evening.

The victim Jihad Hossain, 9, son of Sohrab Hossain of Khayertala village, was a student of class III of Paikpara Government Primary School. Aggrieved locals blocked the highway and torched a passenger bus demanding a speed breaker on the accident spot.

Rain brings relief to Dhaka city dwellers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Dwellers of Dhaka city got relief from the scorching heat yesterday as rain pelted the capital.

Though the rainfall only measured 20mm in the 12-hour span from 6:00am to 6:00pm, according to the Met office, it provided relief to city dwellers.

"It is really very refreshing to see the rain as I could not sleep properly in the last few days due to the scorching heat," said Arifa, a resident of Gendaria.

She said load-shedding during nighttimes and frequent mosquito bites added to the misery.

An official of Met office said apart from the heat, high moisture content of 70 to 90 percent worsened the weather condition.

He said the highest temperature recorded in Dhaka city was 33 degree Celsius, which was on Thursday while the temperature was 26 degree Celsius yesterday.

NAT'L TRIPARTITE COMMITTEE Sub-body to oversee safety in RMG sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Stakeholders of National Tripartite Committee yesterday agreed to form a tripartite technical sub-committee to oversee the fire and building safety standard in the RMG sector.

The sub-committee will focus on the structural integrity of buildings and fire safety, including practical details of how inspections will be carried out, the parameters of such inspections, and co-ordination with other assessments such as those planned by European and US buyers and brands, said an International Labour Organization statement.

The sub-committee will be chaired by the labour ministry and will be directly monitored by the tripartite committee. The ILO will offer technical assistance as requested, the statement said. The decision for formation of the technical sub-committee was taken at the first meeting of the National Tripartite Committee at the labour ministry. Labour Secretary Mikail Shipar chaired the meeting.

The tripartite committee was formed to implement the National Tripartite Plan of Action on Building and Fire Safety in the RMG sector in Bangladesh. The committee brings together government representatives, workers' and employers' organisations with the ILO playing an advisory role.

The action plan was formally agreed on March 24, 2013. The aim of the action plan is to take comprehensive action to prevent any further loss of life, limb and property through workplace fires and related incidents, the statement said. The action plan aims to identify activities in three categories - legislative and policy, administrative, and practical.

The practical activities under consideration include assessing the structural integrity of all active ready-made garment (RMG) factories, developing and distributing educational tools on rights and occupational safety and health to workers and middle managers, and redeploying and rehabilitating workers affected by the recent accidents, the statement said.



Although the rain was welcome, boat passengers use umbrellas to cover their heads in Sadarghat area in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

TURAG'S DEMARCATION PILLARS 98pc placed inaccurately

Bapa tells seminar
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Around 98 percent of the pillars demarcating the Turag river have been placed inaccurately, said Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) General Secretary Dr Mohammad Abdul Matin at a seminar yesterday.

"According to a 2009 HC directive, the pillars should have been erected after keeping at least 50 feet for the river embankment," Matin told The Daily Star over the phone.

Instead, most of the pillars were set up 200 feet into the river, he added.

The width of the river on an average is 79,200 feet (15 miles), suggests a joint study of Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University and National Agricultural University.

Setting up demarcation pillars inaccurately also legitimises the acts of people who have already occupied land of the Turag river, added experts present at the seminar organised by Bapa in the capital's Dhaka Reporters Unity.

They expressed doubt over whether National River Protection Commission, the formation of which is currently under review in the ongoing parliament sessions, can prevent such illegal activities, fearing that their lack of statutory power of implementation will be a deterrent.

"It is also crucial to ensure that two-thirds of the personnel employed with the authority to prevent such acts are professionals specialised in water resource management," they said. Bapa Co-Chairperson Prof M Firoz Ahmed, Joint Secretary Zakir Hossain and executive members columnist Syed Abdul Maksud and Prof Asif Nazrul were present at the seminar.

DESPITE GPA-5 IN SSC SCIENCE 61pc won't get access to 5 govt colleges

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg
 Around 61 percent of SSC GPA-5 achievers from science group under Chittagong Education Board have no scope of enrolling at the city's five reputed government colleges due to a limited number of seats.

These colleges, among the board's 15 best institutions based on HSC results, this year fixed to take 1,930 science students, who must secure GPA-5 to be eligible to sit for admission tests.

However, with 5,047 students of the board's science group getting GPA-5 this year and qualified competitors from other boards eyeing the five, the admission exams would surely test the students' limits.

Of the colleges, Chittagong College would take 500 students, Government Hazi Mohammad Mohsin College 525, Government City College 525, Chittagong Government Women's College 300, and Chittagong Collegiate School and College 80.

This year, considering the crisis, Chittagong College's capacity was increased by 50 while the mohsin college and the city college each by 75, said Chittagong Education Board sources.

"Chittagong College is my first preference. But now I am in fear of whether I would get a chance to get admitted to any of the good colleges here," apprehended one student, Issatun Nessa.

Every year the number of students achieving good results is increasing but the government is still not taking initiatives to establish new colleges in the city or to increase capacity of the existing ones, she added. Last year, 3,818 students of the board's science group got GPA-5.

Chittagong College Principal Shekhar Dastidar recently told The Daily Star that the capacity was still inadequate.

"The science students bettered in this year's SSC exams and the top result achievers are enthusiastic about getting enrolled in the city's reputed colleges, thus making the crisis severe," he said. The government must establish three to four more colleges of intermediate level here, he added.

Setting up of burn institute urged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
 Rights activists have urged the government to establish a full-fledged burn institute equipped with modern facilities in the country.

They also called for setting up burn units at every government medical college, said a press release.

The country's only burn unit at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) fails to meet the pressure of burn patients, they said.

They were speaking at a sit-in staged by Citizens Solidarity near the DMCH outdoor in the capital yesterday.

According to the speakers, about 350 patients are admitted to the burn unit of DMCH during winter season, while during summer season 250 patients are admitted to the 50-seat unit.

Due to its small capacity, patients are often kept on the floors and corridors, they said.

Eminent columnist Syed Abul Maksud and Citizens Solidarity General Secretary Sharifuzzaman Sharif also spoke.

5th Death Anniversary



Today is the 5th death anniversary of our Maa, **Rezia Begum**. She was a freedom fighter, a writer & above all a loving mother.

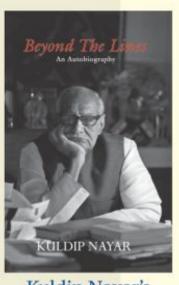
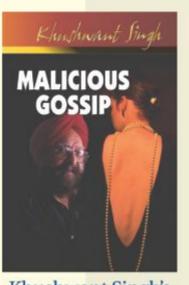
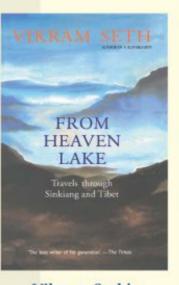
The family members of late Rezia Begum have requested all her relatives, friends & well wishers to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

Rumea, Jamea, Sadee Shopna, Mitu, Neetu

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