

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA
H 31.8 | L 22.7

CHITTAGONG
H 29.2 | L 20.2

SYLHET
H 32.0 | L 19.7

RAJSHAHI
H 33.0 | L 20.3

KHULNA
H 32.8 | L 22.0

BARISAL
H 32.7 | L 21.7

RANGPUR
H 30.5 | L 20.0

COX'S BAZAR
H 29.5 | L 20.0

Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:01 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:20 am. Country's highest temperature 33.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Patuakhali and lowest 18.0 in Teknaf and Dinajpur.

Book fair ends undaunted

Turnover larger than last year's

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The month-long book fair that was an oasis amid political chaos in the country came to an end yesterday night.

Continuous blockades and hartals, political violence on the streets, and not even the shutdown of a stall in the face of protest by religious extremists could mar the spirit of the Amar Ekushey Granthamela-2015.

In the eyes of Farid Ahmed, publisher of Somoy Prokashon, the fair was a success considering the circumstances during which it was held.

"Sale of some stalls may have been affected, but if you are able to publish good books and market those well then your books will sell," he said.

In fact, according to Bangla Academy's public relation office, the total sale this year was Tk 21.95 crore, while last year the total sale was Tk 16.5 crore.

Even on the last day, 125 new books arrived at the fair totalling the number of books to 3,700.

Most stalls on the Suhrawardy Udyan portion of the fair yesterday refrained from any kind of transaction for 10 minutes at 4:00pm in protest of the murder of Avijit Roy.

At the closing ceremony of the fair,

awards of Bangla Academy -- "Chittaranjan Saha Smriti Puroshkar", "Munier Chowdhury Smriti Puroshkar", "Rokonuzzaman Khan Dada Bhai Smriti Puroshkar" and "Qayyum Chowdhury Smriti Puroshkar" -- were given to seven publishing houses.

Mowla Brothers, Bengal Publications Limited, Pathak Samabesh and Somoy Prokashon, which received the first three awards, got Tk 25,000, certificate and a crest each.

The University Press Limited, Prothoma Prokashon and Journeyman Books got the fourth award. The University Press Limited received Tk 20,000, a certificate and a crest for the best pavilion, while Prothoma Prokashon and Journeyman Books received Tk 15,000, a crest and a certificate each for best decorated stall.

Meanwhile, poet and writer Iqbal Hossain and artist Syed Iqbal received Bangla Academy's "Syed Waliullah Puroshkar" for their contribution to Bangla literature abroad. The awardees were given a cheque of Tk 50,000, a crest, a certificate and a flower bouquet each.

Minister of Cultural Affairs Asaduzzaman Noor handed over the prizes to the awardees.



Visitors crowd the Amar Ekushey Granthamela-2015 on its last day yesterday. The photo was taken at the Suhrawardy Udyan portion.

PHOTO: STAR

BOOKS TO LOOK FOR



AAGEKAR MELA KOTHA
Author: Md Shajahan Miah
Publisher: Shirin Publication
Price: BDT 100



SHUNDOR EI PRITHIBI AMAR
Author: Afroza Bulbul
Publisher: Adorn Publications
Price: BDT 1,100



FOLKLORE NEW CHALLENGES
Edited by: Shamsuzzaman Khan, Firoz Mahmud, Shahida Khatun
Publisher: Bangla Academy
Price: BDT 1,000

Empowerment of women decelerates

Prothom Alo-UNFPA roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although Bangladesh has made an enviable progress in women's health and nutrition, and reduced maternal mortality in last two decades, their empowerment has been limited, women's rights activists said yesterday.

Women rarely get to make decisions in their homes and workplaces, they said at a roundtable on gender equality and women's empowerment organised by Prothom Alo and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) at the daily's office in the capital.

Women are in the top leadership of the country but it is still patriarchy that rules everything, said Ayesha Khanam, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad president.

Discriminatory laws allowing women little

control and ownership of properties have slowed down their empowerment, she stressed.

Frequent incidents of rape and violence prove that attitude towards women have not changed much, she concluded.

Prothom Alo Editor Matiuur Rahman said Bangladesh had made notable progress in reducing maternal mortality, improving health, nutrition and education since the Beijing Declaration in 1995.

In spite of that, 4,654 women suffered oppression while 939 rapes took place in 2014, he said, citing newspaper reports.

The resolution, adopted by the United Nations at the Fourth World Conference on Women, stipulated a set of principles concerning gender equality.

Narayanganj City Corporation Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy said political parties can play the most crucial role in empowering women.

DISABLED PEOPLE'S RIGHTS, PROTECTION ACT Orientation for judges recommended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Judges should be given an orientation about Disabled People's Rights and Protection Act, 2013 in their basic training, speakers at a national conference yesterday recommended.

The court buildings as well as police stations should be designed to be accessible for the people with disabilities, they added.

The conference on "Access to Justice for People with Disabilities in Bangladesh" was organised by Handicap International (HI), and Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) in the capital's Six Seasons Hotel, said a press release.

They also urged lawyers to provide at least 10 percent of their services to the poor people with disabilities for free.

Justice Naima Haider, special guest of the event, said the people with special needs, particularly women, were vulnerable to violence and discrimination.

A lack of knowledge on the legal procedures, lengthy trials and its expenses are major barriers to access justice for the people with special needs, she said.

Justice Md Abdul Wahhab Miah committed to proposing judicial administration training institute to include the act in its curricula. The event was chaired by Barrister Sara Hossain, executive director (honorary) of BLAST.

Impunity breeding such savagery

FROM PAGE 3

awarded Avijit's Mukto-Mona (free thinker) blog site for its contributions to the anti-communalism movement in 2012, said the savagery of the fundamentalists had crossed all limits.

In a statement, the anti-war criminal platform demanded punishment over all other such attacks and killings in the past.

Cultural organisation Sammilita Sangskritik Jote will stage a mass hunger strike and sit-in at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka on March 6 protesting the murder of Avijit and all killings during the ongoing political violence.

The hunger strike that aims to build mass resistance against killing, destruction and sabotage will begin at 11:00am and continue till 4:00pm, announced Golam Qudus, president

of the Jote, while addressing a rally at TSC.

Around a dozen cultural personalities and academicians, who spoke there, called upon all the pro-liberation and progressive forces to stand united and fight fundamentalism and militancy. They demanded the government's necessary steps to secure the lives of the people.

Progotishil Chhatra Jote, an alliance of leftist student organisations, will enforce a strike on the DU campus tomorrow for the immediate arrest of the killers of Avijit Roy.

Its three-point demand, announced at a press conference at a press briefing at Madhur Canteen, also includes trial of those who attacked Prof Humayun Azad and a stop to "state interference" in the right to freedom of expression.

In addition, the alliance will hold a solidarity rally with teachers, student and mass people at Shahbagh Tuesday and submit a memorandum to the home minister the following day.

Gonotantrik Bam Morcha, a platform of left-leaning parties, will hold a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club today demanding immediate arrest of the killers.

In its condemnatory statement, Bangladesh Economic Association urged the government to take effective action against the individuals and institutions giving funds and arms to the militant forces.

The faction of Gonojagoron Mancha, led by Imran H Sarker, will hold a mass rally at 4:00pm at Shahbagh.



Stéphane Nordé, managing director of Nestlé Bangladesh Ltd; and Dr Md Nazrul Islam Khan, professor of the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science of Dhaka University, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on a programme "Nestlé Healthy Kids" on Thursday. Naquib Khan, corporate affairs adviser of the company; and Mirza Golam Hossain, one of its senior managers, were also present on the occasion.

PHOTO: COLLECTED



The 15th convocation of American International University-Bangladesh was held on the Bangladesh military museum field in the capital yesterday. Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid presided over the ceremony where Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Pankaj Saran was the convocation speaker. AIUB Trustee Board Chairman Ishtiaque Abedin and Vice Chancellor Dr Carmen Z Lamagna also spoke on the occasion. A total of 2,755 graduates were conferred degrees at the event.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Provide cellphones

FROM PAGE 4

should engage more with hopeful migrants and form a special committee to oversee the migration process, suggested media personality Mohammad Jahangir.

If there are skilled females, the salary can be increased from the Saudi Riyal 800, equivalent to around Tk 16,000, set in the agreement, said Baira Secretary General Monsur Ahmed Kalam.

The discussants added that the government should take up a public-private initiative to develop the training quality and that both it and Baira should engage more with one another to ensure safe migration for the females.

Family visits war crimes

FROM PAGE 3

February 19.

The convict has to file a review petition, if any, within March 5.

During the meeting, Kamaruzzaman expressed concern over the arrest of his brother-in-law, Monowar Hossen Babul, and nephew, Abdul Alim, over an arson case filed with Tejgaon Police Station in the capital, said the lawyer Manir.

They were picked up by plainclothes police from Kamaruzzaman's Mirpur residence on February 24, he added.

RU BCL men 'beat staff

FROM PAGE 4

Meanwhile, Swapan Sarker, a guard who runs a laundry in Sher-e-Bangla Hall, said he was beaten with a stick around 8:00pm after "asking" Mamun to get his clothes ironed the next day, citing that he was ill and closing business for the day.

RU BCL President Mizanur Rahman Rana and Proctor Prof Tarikul Hasan assured of punitive measures if their respective investigations proved the allegations to be true.

Man dies from electrocution

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A person died after being electrocuted at his house at Nagarchor of Rajfulbaria in Savar, outside Dhaka yesterday.

The deceased Shantosh Ray, 30, hailed from Nilphamari, was a RMG worker.

Locals said Shantosh came in contact with a leaked electric wire while he was crossing the boundary wall of his house as the main gate was closed in the early morning when he came from work.

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