

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 31.7 L 17.2	H 32.6 L 18.8	H 34.0 L 16.1	H 31.6 L 15.0	H 32.2 L 16.0	H 32.2 L 14.6	H 31.2 L 16.6	H 33.2 L 20.7

Day and night temperature may rise slightly over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:06pm and rises tomorrow at 6:12am. Country's highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Sitakunda and lowest 12.1 in Sreemangal.

2 lakh acres of arable land uncultivated in CHT

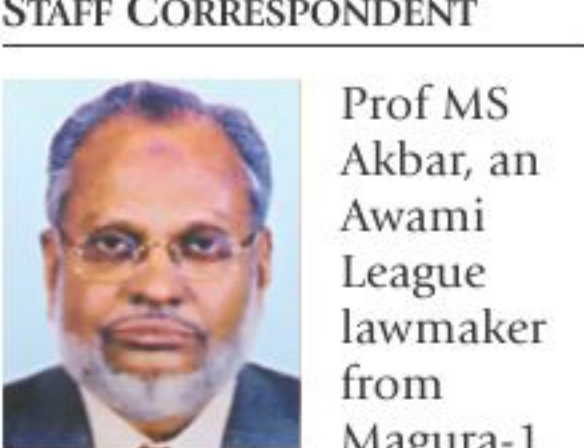
BSS, Rangamati

About 2 lakh acres of arable land remain uncultivated in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTs) every year due to various reasons, said DAE sources.

Altabor Rahman, deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), said about 3.5 lakh tonnes of food grains worth over Tk 4 crore can be produced annually if those lands are brought under cultivation.

He said the lands remain fallow due to lack of agricultural inputs, irrigation and credit facilities and absence of agricultural and technical knowledge.

Obituary



Prof MS Akbar, an Awami League lawmaker from Magura-1 constituency and chairman of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, died from a cardiac arrest in Dhaka yesterday, aged 71.

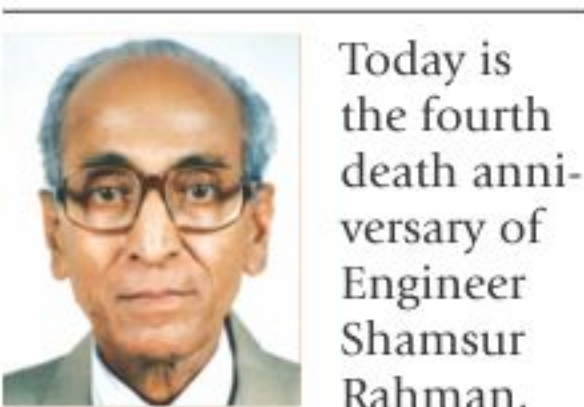
Akbar was re-elected president of Magura district AL the day before his death. He was elected MP for four terms -- in 1996, 2001, 2008 and 2014.

His first namaz-e-janaza will be held at Dhaka Shishu Hospital at 11:00am, the second at the Red Crescent office after the Zohr prayers, and the third one at the South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad at 4:30pm.

He will be buried in Magura following the fourth janaza at his residence there at 11:00am tomorrow, said APS to the Prime Minister Saifuzzaman Shekhor.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and Deputy Speaker Fazle Rabbi Mian condoled the death.

Death anniversary



Today is the fourth death anniversary of Engineer Shamsur Rahman, former chairman of Bangladesh Water Development Board.

On this occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his ancestor's home in Narayanpur village of Nabinagar upazila in Brahmanbaria.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of BNP leader Borhanuzzaman Omar was held in his Paltan residence of the capital on Sunday.

Omar, a member of BNP's Dhaka city convening committee and president of the party's Paltan Thana unit, died from a cardiac arrest in his residence on Wednesday, says a party press release.



WHEN AUTHORITIES DON'T CARE

The Jail canal in Barisal city being excavated, not by the government but by over 100 local watermelon traders who urgently require access of vessels along a 400-yard section from the Hatkhola bridge to the Kirtankhola river's edge of the six-kilometre canal for the prime season of the business, February to April. The traders' association says they had requested Mayor Ahsan Habib Kamal two months ago to carry out the job and the latter said he had passed the request on to Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority. What happened in between is anybody's guess. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

Democracy through blockade too costly for day labourers

HELEMUL ALAM

Nowadays day labourer Mosharraf Hossain does not care if he is paid half of what he usually gets as long as he can earn money.

He is just one of the countless people suffering from the non-stop hartal and blockade enforced by the BNP-led alliance.

The only breadwinner of his family, Mosharraf dropped out of class VIII last year to support his seven-member family.

Mosharraf came to the capital in search of work after they lost their 62 decimals of land to river erosion in Bhola.

"Every week, I have to send Tk 2,000 to my family and for that I am willing to work for even Tk 200 per day," he said, adding that usually he gets Tk 400 to Tk 500 per

day.

Mosharraf said he is even willing to work throughout the night if he cannot get jobs during the day.

"I have cut down my own expenses to save money," said Mosharraf who lives in a mess at Bou Bazar near Alam Market.

Another day labourer, Kabir Hossain, had to borrow Tk 1,100 from relatives as he only managed work on three days in the whole month of February.

"My income was better in January as I worked on 17 days in that month," he said.

The picture is the same for Yunus Khan, a painter, who was found waiting for work near Setu Market in Jurain.

Yunus only worked for seven days in January and six days in February.

Over 200 crash-prone spots on highways

Road transport sector loses Tk 70cr due to blockade, hartals, Obaidul Quader tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There are over 200 accident-prone spots on highways across the country, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader told parliament yesterday.

Quoting first information reports of police, he said 2,067 people were killed and 1,535 others injured in 2,027 road accidents in 2014.

Some 209 accident-prone locations of highways were identified as "black spots" by the Accident Research Institute of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) while another 18 spots by the Roads and Highways Department, he said replying to a lawmaker's question.

The RHD has taken measures on 27 accident-prone spots of the highways and 56 more spots have been brought under various projects to reduce road accidents, he said.

Ecne has approved a project titled "Improvement of Road Safety at Black Spots in National Highways" involving Tk 165 crore to reduce accidents on the remaining 144 black spots, the minister added.

BSS adds: the country's road transport sector has counted a financial loss of about Tk 70 crore till February 3 due to blockade and hartals enforced by the BNP-led 20-party alliance, resulting in torching of 325 and vandalising of 505 vehicles, Quader told parliament yesterday.

He said state-run BRTC incurred a loss of Tk 16.45 crore.

Road crashes kill eight, injure 13

CITY DESK

Eight people were killed and 13 others injured in road accidents in the country yesterday and on Sunday.

Our Benapole correspondent reports, three persons died as a bus of Shohag Paribahan hit a motorbike carrying them on Jessore-Satkhira road at Jamtala in Jessore's Sharsha upazila yesterday.

The dead were Abdullah, 35, the motorcyclist, and his passengers Abu Syeed, 45, and Rikta Akhter, 24, all of Satkhira.

On Sunday night, a driver of a battery-run three-wheeler, Shafikul Islam, of Barandipara area, died when a bus hit his vehicle at Rajarhat in the district town.

Our Barisal correspondent adds, two persons were killed and eight others injured when a microbus carrying them collided head-on with a bus of Sakura Paribahan on Barisal-Dhaka Highway at Kashemabad in Gournadi upazila yesterday.

One of the dead has been identified as Salauddin, 30, of Patuakhali.

Two of the injured were admitted to Gournadi hospital while the others to Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital.

Our Moulvibazar correspondent reports, a girl was killed and five other persons were injured when a truck hit a CNG-ran auto-rickshaw carrying them on Habiganj-Shayestaganj road in Sutang of Sadar upazila in Habiganj on Sunday.

The deceased was Laiju Akter Anjona, 19, of Purasunda village. Injured auto-rickshaw driver was rushed to Habiganj Sadar Hospital while the others to a local hospital.

Our Tangail correspondent adds, a class-VIII student of Dr FR Khan High School, Monirul Islam, 14, son of Motaleb Miah at Kandapara village, died after a sand-laden truck hit his bicycle and ran him over at Delduar upazila yesterday.



Day labourers wait forlornly for jobs at Alam Market near Bou Bazar in the capital. However, most of their wait is in vain as out of around 500 labourers that wait every day only about 60 manage to get work. The photo was taken recently.

Tax official murder in capital was done by chauffeur: Police

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The former tax official murdered in his Rampura residence of the capital on March 1 was a victim of revenge by none other than his own driver, detectives revealed yesterday.

A group seven hired robbers looted gold ornaments of four tolas, three cellphones and Tk 45,000 from the house, and killed septuagenarian Abu Taher on that day, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police Deputy Commissioner Masudur Rahman.

The driver Mohammad Nasir and a robber Russell Talukder were arrested in connection with the killing, he disclosed while briefing journalists in the media centre of the Detective Branch of police headquarters.

Over a quarrel between Nasir and Taher a few days before the murder, the former left his job, he said.

Nasir confessed to plotting the murder and actively participating in it, he added.

Detectives are trying to recover the robbed materials and arrest the rest six robbers hired by Nasir.

Another relative

FROM PAGE 4

Later she and her sons and nephews found the bodies in Kamini's residence and Kamini's daughter-in-law Rekha Rani and one of their family members Sanju Sarker narrated the rest.

On Sunday, Jibon's son Narayan Chandra Chakrabarti, the 19th witness, narrated the incident, saying he had heard it from Gouri.

State-appointed defence counsel Abdus Shukur Khan cross-examined Gouri before International Crimes Tribunal 1 adjourned proceedings until today.

Now absconding, Hasan, the alleged Tarail upazila unit Razakar commander, faces six charges including genocide committed in Kishoreganj in 1971.

Ctg Jamaat chief

FROM PAGE 4

cases over creating violence in the city and attacking police during hartals and blockades, said police.

BSS from Chittagong reports, police on Sunday night detained four activists of BNP, six of Jamaat-e-Islami and three of Jamaat-backed Islami Chhatra Shibir in Sitakunda, Hathazari, Lohagara and Satkania upazilas of Chittagong to prevent "possible acts of sabotage" during the ongoing country-wide blockade and hartals enforced by BNP-led 20-party alliance.

Returning from

FROM PAGE 4

The residence has been under watch for the last couple of days, she added.

Israt threatened to go on hunger strike with her two daughters in front of Jatiya Press Club for Khokon's immediate return.

"If we had arrested him, we would have definitely handed him over to the local police," Rab Legal and Media Wing Director Mufti Mahmud Khan told The Daily Star.

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