

**WEATHER FORECAST**

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

**DHAKA** H 32.2 | L 21.0

**CHITTAGONG** H 35.7 | L 23.0

**SYLHET** H 32.2 | L 17.9

**RAJSHAHI** H 34.7 | L 18.0

**KHULNA** H 32.6 | L 20.2

**BARISAL** H 33.5 | L 18.7

**RANGPUR** H 31.7 | L 16.7

**COX'S BAZAR** H 36.0 | L 23.0

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged and night temperature may rise slightly over the country, said Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:09pm and rises tomorrow at 6:04am. Country's highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Cox's Bazar and lowest 15.4 degrees in Srimangal.

**\$50m Belarus loan to buy heavy vehicles, parts for cities, municipalities**

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh is likely to get different types of motor vehicles and equipment worth \$ 50 million from Belarus under Export Commodity Credit (ECC) for different city corporations and municipalities. According to official sources, the Development Bank of Belarus will provide the money as loan at a 1 percent interest rate with 11 years' repayment schedule having first three years' grace.

Belarus will provide the vehicles under a deal signed between Minsk and Dhaka during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to the Eastern Europe country in 2012.

The vehicles and equipment include 11 wheel loaders, 330 excavator equipment, 11 combination asphalt rollers, 10 long grapples with kickouts, 11 long grapples 208-46, 11 hydraulic hammers, 329 twin drum vibratory rollers, 11 bulldozer blades, 330 drill machines, 11 backhoe loaders and 330 skid steer loaders.

Seeking an approval to import the vehicles and equipment without any tender, the Local Government Division (LGD) of the LGRD ministry recently sent a proposal to the Cabinet Economic Affairs Committee.

"As per public procurement law and rules, such direct import under state-to-state deal needs prior approval of the Cabinet Economic Affairs Committee," a top official at the Cabinet Division told the news agency.

Once the cabinet body approves, the LGD will move for the final approval from Cabinet Purchase Committee to import the vehicles and equipment, he added.

About the proposal, SEE PAGE 5 COL 3



President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina stand in silence after laying wreaths at the mausoleum of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Tungipara, Gopalganj yesterday, the 95th birthday of the Father of the Nation.



**Abul Mansur Ahmad's 36th anniversary of death today**

CITY DESK

Today is the 36th death anniversary of Abul Mansur Ahmad, a renowned litterateur, journalist and politician of the sub-continent, says a press release.

Literary magazine Kaler Dhoni will host a discussion today at the capital's Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy to mark the occasion.

A 581 page special issue consisting of 73 new articles by Kaler Dhoni, featuring Abul Mansur Ahmad, and published in the 2015 Amar Ekushey book fair, will be unveiled at the programme beginning at 5:00pm in Jatiya Chitrasahala Auditorium.

Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman will preside over the discussion, while Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury, Dr Rafiqul Islam, Ahmad Rafique, Asad Chowdhury, Syed Abdul Maksud, Dr Mizanur Rahman, Golam Kuddus and Mahfuz Anam will take part.

Later, a drama, "Gulliverer Safar", based on Abul Mansur Ahmad's story "Gulliverer Safarnama", will be staged by Vision Theatre.

One of the greatest satirists of Bangla literature, Abul Mansur Ahmad was a renowned politician, lawyer and a very powerful journalist. He worked for Krishak, Nabajug and was editor of the daily Ittehad published from Kolkata in 1946 in undivided Bengal. He was a pioneer in modern and progressive journalism.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

**Fond remembrance marks Father of Nation's birthday**

CITY DESK

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday paid homage to Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, placing wreaths at his grave in Tungipara on the occasion of his 95th birth anniversary, reports UNB.

First the president and then the prime minister placed wreaths at the grave at Bangabandhu Mausoleum Complex around 10:12am.

Both stood in solemn silence for some time as the last post was played on the bugle.

A contingent of Bangladesh Armed Forces presented the guard of honour on the occasion. The cabinet secretary and the chiefs of the three services were

present.

The president and the prime minister offered foteha and munajat seeking salvation of the departed soul of Bangabandhu.

The president also signed the visitors' book at Bangabandhu Mausoleum Complex.

Later, Hasina who is also the president of Awami League, placed a wreath at the grave of Bangabandhu on behalf of the party.

Cabinet members, Awami League central leaders, leaders of different associate bodies of the party followed the prime minister to pay their tributes to the Father of the Nation.

The birthday of Bangabandhu was celebrated across the country as the National Children's Day. The day was a

public holiday.

Earlier, the prime minister placed wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in front of Bangabandhu Memorial Museum in the capital's Dhanmondi.

On March 17 in 1920, the architect of the nation was born at Tungipara in Gopalganj. Through his dynamic leadership, Bangabandhu organised the Bangalee nation to fight against exploitation and repression by Pakistani rulers, which culminated in independence of Bangladesh after a nine-month war in 1971.

All public health centres and hospitals in the country yesterday provided free treatment to patients marking the

SEE PAGE 5 COL 7

**Children get first graphic novel on Bangabandhu**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Centre for Research and Information (CRI) yesterday launched the first episode of a biographical graphic novel on Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, with the aim to create interest among kids and teenagers in learning his life and history of the nation.

Radwan Mujib Siddiq, grandson of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, unveiled the cover of the first episode titled "Mujib" at Bangabandhu Memorial Trust in the capital yesterday, the 95th birthday of the Father of the Nation and National Children's Day.

"We want to make our children and youths aware about the historic activities of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. We want to portray his lifestyle -- how he became father of the nation despite coming from an ordinary family," said Radwan, trustee of CRI, a research organisation.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Radwan Mujib Siddiq, left, a grandson of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, unveils the cover of the first episode of a biographical graphic novel on the Father of the Nation titled "Mujib" at Bangabandhu Memorial Trust in the capital yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

**Forest conservation, resource exploitation mutually exclusive**

Prothom Alo roundtable told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It will be impossible to save forests from destruction as long as they are regarded as resources waiting to be exploited, speakers told a roundtable yesterday.

Conservation of forests and generating revenue from them cannot happen at the same time, they observed.

Stating that the country's forests are rapidly disappearing, they demanded political parties' commitment to save forests.

The roundtable on forest management was organised by Prothom Alo with support of the Forest Department

and GIZ at the daily's office in the capital.

"Destruction of forests continues unabated because the culprits are never awarded the maximum punishment," said Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad, country representative for the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

People destroying natural resources are often harboured by influential quarters, he said.

He observed that depletion of forests had become so widespread that it was almost impossible for the Forest Department to save them alone.

"Administration, law enforcers, policymakers, politicians and local gov-

ernment representatives should work together for conservation," he added.

Chief Conservator of Forests Yunus Ali said leasing out forests, rivers, and wetlands only encouraged land grabbers.

"Moreover, the process creates a conflict of interest among government agencies."

Managing Director of Palli Sanchay Bank Mihir Kanti Majumder said, "Nothing is more suicidal than leasing out forests and rivers."

Stating that public resources get destroyed when leased out, he urged the government to enact a law to

SEE PAGE 5 COL 3

**Agriculture bears brunt of disaster impacts: FAO**

UNB, Dhaka

About a quarter of the damages caused by natural disasters in developing countries, including Bangladesh, is borne by the agricultural sector, according to the primary report of a FAO study.

The primary findings were disclosed yesterday at the UN World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Japan, said a FAO release.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations also announced the launch of a special facility to help countries better equip their food production sectors to reduce risk exposure, limit impacts, and be better prepared to cope with disasters.

Twenty-two percent of all damages inflicted by natural hazards such as drought, flood storms or tsunamis are registered within the agriculture sector, according to FAO's analysis of 78 post-disaster needs assessments in 48 developing countries spanning the 2003-2013 period.

These damages and losses are often incurred by poor rural and semi-rural communities without insurance and lacking the financial resources needed to regain lost livelihoods.

Yet only 4.5 percent of post-disaster humanitarian aid in the 2003-2013 period targeted agriculture, the study reveals.

FAO's 22 percent figure represents only damages reported via post-disaster risk assessments so the actual impact is likely even higher.

To arrive at a closer estimate of the true financial cost of disasters to developing world agriculture, FAO compared decreases in yields during and after disasters with yield trends in 67 countries affected by (at least one) medium- to larger-scale events between 2003 and 2013.

The final tally was US\$70 billion in damages to crops and livestock over that 10 year period.

Asia was the most affected region with estimated losses adding up to US\$28 billion followed by Africa with US\$26 billion.

**Facebook 'friend' sends youth to death**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A youth died in a fall in the capital's Madhya Badda last night after a four-member gang, one of whom became the victim's friend on Facebook recently, tried to rob him.

The youth, aged around 28, fell through the stairwell of an under-construction seven-storey building where the gang met him and asked for his belongings. His identity could not be found immediately.

Police arrested Babu, one of the four, and said all of them were cleaners of a private company. The so-called Facebook friend and two others fled.

The victim fell into the stair-well on the fourth floor while trying to run away, said Badda police.



A firefighter tries to put out a fire in Chittagong Export Processing Zone that gutted offices of five courier service companies -- DHL, FedEx, TNT, Aramex and UPS -- and two tin-shed rooms in South Halishahar yesterday. The flames were doused around 12:45pm after an hour-long effort.

PHOTO: STAR