

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 34.2 L 25.1	H 31.8 L 23.5	H 32.7 L 23.0	H 35.2 L 23.2	H 33.6 L 23.4	H 33.2 L 23.0	H 30.2 L 23.0	H 31.6 L 23.5

Day and night temperatures may fall slightly over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:13pm and rises tomorrow at 05:52am. Country's highest temperature 35.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rajshahi and lowest 20.6 in Sayedpur.



MARCH 10, 2015



MARCH 29, 2015

The above two before-and-after photos show the sheer lack of apathy on the government's part in excavating a 400-yard section, from Hathkhola bridge to the Kirtankhola's edge, of the six-kilometre Jail canal in Barisal city despite being pointed out by The Daily Star on March 10 that over 100 local watermelon traders, frustrated after months of only empty assurances from the administration, had taken up the task and appointed workers, left, to give access to vessels carrying their products targeting the business' prime season, February to April. The photo on the right, taken yesterday, reveals that efforts on such a small scale prove to be futile when it comes to working with the ways of nature and that the government, and only itself, is adept at bringing an end to the traders' sufferings.

PHOTO: ARIFUR RAHMAN

LANGALBANDH STAMPEDE
Protect ritual site, recover grabbed land
Civil society members urge govt; demand fair probe after visiting spot
OUR CORRESPONDENT, N' ganj

A group of civil society members has urged the government to protect the ritual site and recover the grabbed land as an endowed property along the Brahmaputra river at Langalbandh where 10 Hindu pilgrims were killed and 20 others injured in a stampede on Friday morning. They also demanded fair investigation into the stampede incident occurred when thousands of Hindu devotees gathered there for taking a ritual bath.

They made the demand while taking to journalists at Naranyanganj Press Club after visiting the ritual site in Bandar upazila yesterday. Expressing grave concern over the deaths, journalist and writer Syed Abul Maksud said 10-15 lakh Hindu devotees from home and abroad take a holy bath every year in Langalbandh but no arrangement of sufficient safe drinking water, toilets and resting rooms there.

Termed Langalbandh as one of the leading ritual places in the sub-continent, leader of Samillita Samajik Andolan Pankaj Bhattacharya said about 45 acres of land as endowed property have been grabbed by making fake documents. Now there are only 2.25 acres of such endowed property in the area, he said.

He urged the government to recover the Hindu religious land and demanded adequate compensation for the victims' families. Later, they met Naranyanganj City Corporation Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy at her office.

Obituary
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh
Freedom fighter Nazmul Haque Tara died of old-age complications at Mymensingh Medical College Hospital on Sunday night. He was 68. Tara who was a sub-sector commander of sector-11 left behind a son, two daughters and was buried with state honour at Gulkibari graveyard. Hailed from Uthura village, he was the founding secretary of BNP (south) Mymensingh district-unit, a former commander of Mymensingh Muktiyoddha Sangsad and elected ward commissioner for five times. BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia, district-unit BNP and Sammilita Peshajibi Parishad Mymensingh-unit Secretary Mohammad Ali mourned his death.

Session jams debilitate CU

MD ABBAS, CU
Around 35 departments out of the total 41 and almost all seven institutes at Chittagong University are chronically plagued by session jams due to political violence, with the current spell of blockade and hartals exacerbating the problem. In addition, at least 30 departments cannot conduct examinations in due time, as they do not have the "academic calendar", a detailed schedule of examinations, term paper submissions, holidays, and publication of results, said administration sources. Zakaria Khondokar Badhon, a second-year student of the English department, which sees one of the largest spell of session jams, said it had become a norm there. One of the sufferers said it took him nearly six years, instead of four, to graduate from the department. Kamal Uddin Ahmed, the department chairman, cited a shortage of teachers and classrooms as one of myriad reasons behind the crisis. Since January 6 when the BNP-led alliance enforced a blockade

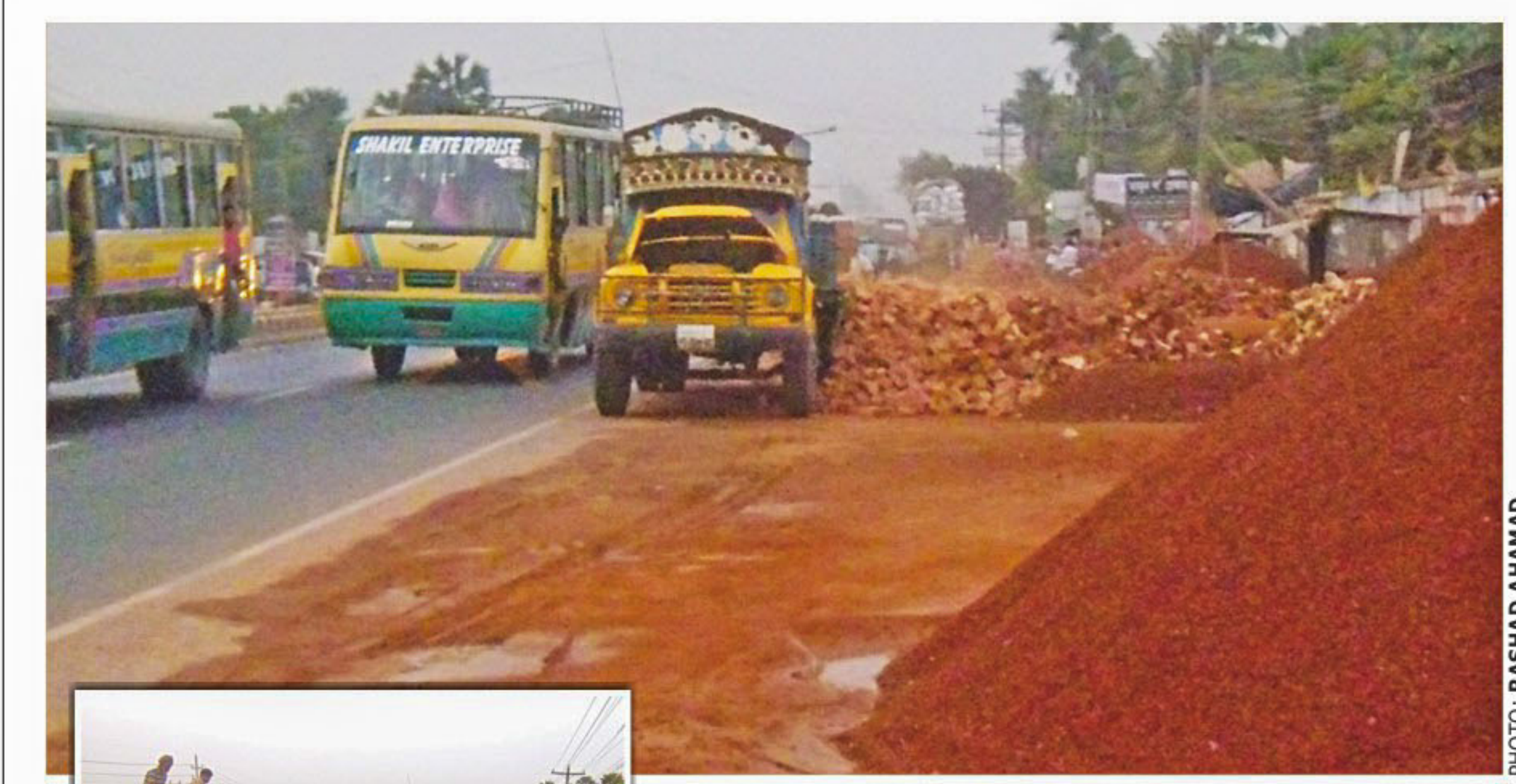
indefinitely, 180 scheduled examinations of more than 30 departments and six institutes have been deferred, said sources at the registrar's office. Some 15,000 students out of the total 22,000 are the worst victims of session jams, the sources added. However, a few departments like law, public administration, philosophy, history and Islamic history are free from session jams because they conduct classes and exams defying hartals and blockade, said Proctor Siraj-Ud-Doula. According to teachers, most departments are now facing about a one and a half years' session jam, meaning that students are graduating after a delay of this period, which eventually affects their career. Students say they do not dare attend classes and exams fearing violence because there is not an adequate number of law enforcers deployed across the 1,753-acre campus. Mehedi Hasan Nobel, a third-year student of accounting and information system, said their repeated appeals to the department

administration to make an academic calendar went in vain. "Eighteen months have passed but our third-year final examinations are yet to be held," he said. The same situation prevails at the Institute of Environmental Science where the third semester final exams were scheduled six months ago but have not been held yet. "I was supposed to be in the fourth year now," said Mithun Biswas, a third-year zoology student. The results are yet to come out. The proctor said the teachers' buses could not operate during hartal days, hampering classes and exams. However, President of CU Teachers Association (Cuta) Benu Kumar Dey said the teachers who wanted to attend classes during shutdowns travelled by the shuttle train from the city, 22km from the campus. Asked, Vice Chancellor Prof Anwarul Azim Arif said currently some departments were conducting classes and exams on weekends to avoid session jams. "To operate the teachers' buses,

we will talk to police for escort," he said. **INCIDENTS THAT CAUSED SESSION JAMS** Academic activities were suspended for six days following a series of clashes between Bangladesh Chhatra League and Islami Chhatra Shibir on May 15, 2009 that injured 30. The next year, no classes and exams were held for 82 days after a student, AAM Mohiuddin Masum, was murdered by unknown miscreants on February 10. In 2011, the period of suspension was 11 days following BCL factional clashes in April. No class or exam had been held for 37 days since February 8, 2012 when a clash between BCL and Shibir killed two students. In August 2014, an indefinite strike by Shibir caused a suspension of academic activities for 45 days. On December 14 last year, the university was closed for a week after Sanskrit student Taposh Sarkar was shot dead during a BCL factional fight.

NEWS IN brief
Kolkata actress Rituparna speaks at DU seminar on acting
DU CORRESPONDENT
Acclaimed silver screen actress Rituparna Sengupta of Kolkata yesterday called for making more films with female protagonists in Bangladesh. Commending director Nargis Akhter for getting into film direction, Rituparna, at a seminar titled "Acting in the Eyes of Director" organised in Dhaka University's Social Science building by its television and film studies department, also urged that more women should get involved in this industry. DU Vice Chancellor AAMS Arefin Siddique and the department's chairperson Prof AJM Shafiul Alam spoke among others.

Annual Migration Report-2014 unveiled in capital
STAFF CORRESPONDENT
WARBE Development Foundation, which works with migration, organised a programme to reveal the Annual Migration Report-2014 at Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday. Syed Saiful Haque, WARBE chairman, chaired the programme where the speakers discussed migration and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Former government officials and lawmakers were also present at the event and laid emphasis on the incorporating of migration issue as a separate goal to SDGs.



The busy Nabinagar-Chandra road connecting Savar and Gazipur was widened into four lanes more than one year ago considering the volume of traffic it handles daily, but the initiative has been effectively botched by local businessmen who have grabbed the roadside areas to sell bricks along a one and a half kilometres stretch. One trader said they were using the land, which belongs to the Roads and Highways Department, by 'winning' the backing of local ruling party thugs. He, however, did not name anyone. The photos were taken at Palashbari on Sunday.

Cabinet okays proposal on two deals with UAE

STAFF CORRESPONDENT
The cabinet yesterday approved two proposals to ratify two agreements with the United Arab Emirates. The proposals are "Agreement on Security Cooperation between Bangladesh and the UAE" and "Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons between Bangladesh and the UAE." Briefing reporters after the meeting, Cabinet Secretary M Musharrif Hossain Bhuiyan said there are some 1,000 convicted Bangladeshis in prisons of the UAE. Under the agreement, the two countries would be able to extradite convicted persons, he added. The cabinet adopted a condolence motion at the death of first prime minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew who died on March 23. At the meeting, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam handed over the "Women in Parliaments Global Forum Award" to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. Bangladesh got the award on March 25 for reducing gender gap in politics.

Obituary
STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Sheikh Ali Haider, Chittagong bureau chief and special correspondent of Bonik Barta, died of a cardiac arrest at BirDEM Hospital in Dhaka yesterday. He was 56. He left behind his wife and two daughters.

Painting exhibition begins at IUB
CITY DESK
A week-long installation, sculpture and painting exhibition organised by Independent University, Bangladesh Art Club began on the IUB Bashundhara campus in the capital yesterday. The exhibition themed "The Flag" was inaugurated by IUB Vice Chancellor Prof M Omar Rahman, which will end on April 6, says a press release.

Int'l CHTC slams
FROM PAGE 4
"The nature of these attacks has been very similar...It has become vital for the government to make amendments to the CHT Land Commission Act to ensure that the Land Commission chairperson can settle the land disputes in the hills," it read. CHTC also demanded full implementation of the 1997 CHT peace accord without delay to prevent further clashes and violence in the CHT, saying it is a pledge that the government has been repeatedly making in its election manifesto but failing to uphold. CHTC said it has come to learn that it was local politicians belonging to both the ruling party Awami League and BNP who attacked a convoy of CHT Regional Council Chairman Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma in Bandarban town on March 11. It says the attackers might be those under the banner "Jago Parbattyabasi", which called a 72-hour strike in Bandarban in anticipation of Larma's visit. Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti reports that at least 12 of its members and Pahari Chhatra Parishad have been wounded when a car and two motorcycles of the convoy were attacked in Balaghata. CHTC also condemned attacks on CHTC in Rangamati in July 2014 and CHTC officials in Bandarban in August 2014. CHTC also condemns the violence in Babuchara, Dighinala centring eviction of 21 indigenous families for the setting up of a Border Guard Bangladesh battalion headquarters which allegedly left six indigenous persons and four army personnel injured on March 15.

Pro-BNP professionals
FROM PAGE 4
That law enforcers picked him up and demanding that he be returned unhurt. Family members allege men flashing IDs of Detective Branch of police picked up Salahuddin from a house in Uttara on March 10. Following a High Court order based on his wife's petition, five law enforcement agencies submitted reports to the attorney general's office on March 15 saying they had not arrested him. On March 19, Hasina Ahmed through a memorandum sought the prime minister's intervention in tracing Salahuddin and seeking an audience with her.

Formal charges to be brought on April 13

FROM PAGE 4
Police arrested Shamsul Haque alias Badr Bhai, 75, and SM Yousuf Ali, 83 on March 2. The investigators believe Ashraf Hossain, 64, fled to India while Prof Sharif Ahmed, 71, Abdul Mannan, 66, Abdul Bari, 62, Mohammad Harun, 58, and Abdul Hashem, 65, are hiding in Bangladesh. The investigation agency provided the prosecution on March 25 the probe report and other documents, stating the eight were "involved" in 10 incidents including abduction, tor-

ture, confinement and killings between April 22 and December 11. **FORKAN MALLIK** The 13th witness, Abdul Hamid Mallik, during cross-examination, said his national ID card stated his birth date to be July 10, 1967. However, testifying on Sunday, he stated to have failed in the SSC exam in 1974, meaning he must have taken at age seven a test usually meant for persons at least 15 years old, after registering from Subidkhali Rahman Ishaq Pilot High School. He said to have succeeded in 1985 taking it in private.

The court adjourned proceedings until April 6. Forkan, an alleged Razakar member of Mirzaganj, Patuakhali, denies the five charges. **SYED HASAN ALI** Hari Debnath, also the case's investigation officer, moreover testified and exhibited documents showing Hasan being accused in a 1972 case under the collaborators act. Interviewing 52 persons, he had selected 38 to testify. Finally, 26, including himself, accused fugitive Hasan over six charges of crimes against humanity and genocide, committed in 1971.

Two Barisal fires kill one

FROM PAGE 4
The fire originated from an electric short circuit at an electronics store, said fire officials. Fire fighters extinguished

the blaze after three hours' effort at 6:30am. The business establishments include warehouses of Nikhil and

Brothers, Marico Bangladesh Ltd, GSK Distributor, and a restaurant. The victims claimed that the loss they incurred is about Tk 5 crore.