

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 30.0L 19.3

CHITTAGONG H 29.8L 20.4

SYLHET H 31.2L 19.0

RAJSHAHI H 30.8L 17.8

KHULNA H 31.4L 19.7

BARISAL H 30.3L 18.6

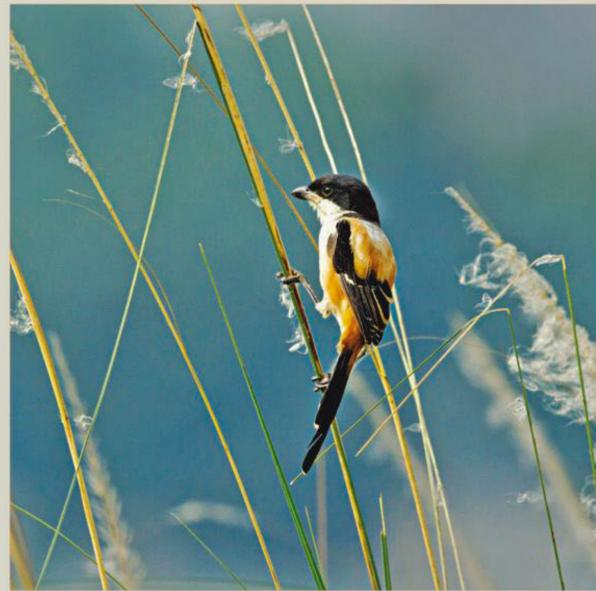
RANGPUR H 29.8L 18.2

COX'S BAZAR H 30.5L 21.0

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR

Our Shrikes



Long-tailed shrike in Purbachol. PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR.

The other day I was walking on a field in Purbachol when I noticed a bird perched on the stalk of a shrivelled *kash* flower. Coming closer, I noticed its distinctive black cap, hooked beak and somewhat aggressive stance. At only nine or ten inches it had the attitude of something much larger. It was definitely checking me out, but decided I was too big a prey. Presently it switched its attention to something more manageable near the ground and eventually went into a sharp dive before flying off. I couldn't see if it had caught anything.

It was the first time I had watched a long-tailed shrike for more than a few seconds. The shrike family of birds, called Laniidae, comprises of 31 species. "Laniidae" comes from the Latin meaning "butcher," and shrikes are called butcher birds or *koshai pakhi* in Bangla. That's because they impale their prey on thorns or anything sharp, much like a butcher hangs a carcass. They then cut up the prey and eat it at their convenience. Some shrikes hunt large preys - small birds or mammals for example - and cache the carcass for times of scarcity.

In Bangladesh seven species of shrikes have been sighted. Of these, three species are fairly common.

The long-tailed shrike, our most common shrike, is a sleek, handsome bird with a black cap, long black tail, and an orange-yellow body with a white underpart. At 25 centimetres long it weighs 45 grams. It feeds on small insects such as locusts, grasshoppers, crickets, lizards, small rodents and other insects, searching the ground for them while perched high on a stalk of grass or branch. It lives here all

year (instead of migrating.) Basically a solitary creature, it builds a cup-shaped nest and breeds from December to July. Its global range extends from Pakistan through the Philippines. You can often see it perched on electrical wires in the countryside.

Our other commonly seen shrike is the brown shrike which is a winter visitor from northern Asiatic lands such as Siberia and Mongolia. It can be found in open woodlands and scrubs, riverbanks, smaller trees and dried haors. It is a smaller bird at 19 centimetres and 28 grams. While not as striking in appearance as its long-tailed cousin, it has a bold black bar like a mask over its eyes. Its diet is similar to the long-tailed shrike. I have seen it in Savar and the Botanical Garden in Mirpur as

well as in rural areas.

The third shrike you can see in Bangladesh - though not quite as easily as the two above - is the grey-backed shrike. It is a winter visitor and can be found in environments similar to the other two. A fourth shrike, the bay-backed shrike, was thought to have been extirpated from Bangladesh. However, it was spotted last year in Chittagong.

Among other shrikes worldwide, the northern shrike, known for hunting smaller birds and mammals, breeds in tundras and taigas of the far north and spends its winters in North America. However, most members of the shrike family live in Eurasia and Africa.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir.

Public embarrassed about PM's remarks against Khaleda: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday said the public was embarrassed about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's remarks against BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia on Thursday.

"We do not know if her party is embarrassed about the remarks. But the people do not like the comments and they are embarrassed," said BNP spokesperson Asaduzzaman Ripon at the party's Nayapalton headquarters.

"Staying abroad, she [Khaleda] wants to taint the country's image by killing foreigners in Bangladesh in a planned way. They want to turn Bangladesh into a terrorist country by unleashing terrorism and creating Bangla Bhai like they did in the past," Hasina was quoted saying in Bogra by the media. Ripon said they did not reply as it would spoil environment of the country's politics.

Man held with local, foreign currencies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Customs Intelligence officials arrested a man along with local and foreign currencies worth Tk 20 lakh in Chittagong city on Thursday night.

The arrestee is Zafar Ahmed, 45, of Chandanaish upazila in the district. The officials suspected that Zafar was involved in gold smuggling as they claimed to have recovered documents related to previous exchange of gold and materials used in wrapping gold bars from his possession.

Acting on a tip-off, officials of the Customs Intelligence and Investigation Directorate with the help of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) raided the flat of a six-storey building at Station Road under Kotwali Police Station around 9:00pm.

Director General of the directorate Moinul Khan said they held Zafar for keeping foreign currency with him, violating the foreign exchange regulation act.

He said they also seized documents on several suspicious financial transactions and exchange of gold from Zafar's possession.

Of the Tk 20 lakh, local currency is worth Tk 17.50 lakh, while foreign currency worth Tk 2.55 lakh.

The foreign countries whose currencies were seized are India, Qatar, Oman, Mauritius, Thailand and Malaysia.

A case was filed.

Objective news must to take country forward

JS Speaker tells BFUI biennial conference

UNB, Dhaka

Speaker Dr Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury yesterday urged the media persons to take the country forward by publishing objective news.

Dr Sharmin was addressing the biennial conference 2015 of a faction of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUI) at the Jatiya Press Club in the capital.

Prime Minister's Media Adviser Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury also spoke at the function with BFUI President Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul in the chair.

BFUI General Secretary Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Managing Director of BSS Abul Kalam Azad, Director General of Press Institute of Bangladesh Shah Md Alamgir and President of the press club Shafiqur Rahman were also present.

Banani Model High School organises Garo Oitjohbahi Wangala Udjapon-2015 on its playground yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Cousin killed 10-yr-old girl for 'refusal of romantic advance'

He confesses to the crime

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh



Nadira Akhtar

Hours after she was found dead with the throat slit in Mymensingh town. Shahjahan Habib Munna, 22, is the son of Saiful Islam of Trishal upazila, police said. Munna admitted that he killed her cousin sister Nadira, daughter of Yunus Ali, a van puller, in the car he used to drive and later

NEW DEADLINE SET AT 2020 FOR CTG-COX'S BAZAR-GUNDUM RAILWAY

Costs soar, project drags on as design changes

SHAHADAT HOSSAIN, Ctg

Two years past the initial deadline, the project period for construction of the rail tracks between Dohazari in Chittagong to Cox's Bazar via Ramu and Ramu to Gundum near Myanmar has been extended till 2020, with costs increasing over seven times.

The project has remained stalled since 2011 when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina laid the foundation stone. No progress was made later.

According to railway sources, the rail track will run 88km from Dohazari to Ramu where it will branch off and run 12km to Cox's Bazar and 28km to Gundum in Bandarban near Myanmar border. The track will be linked to the Trans Asian Railway (TAR).

Initially the project was supposed to start on July 1, 2010 and end on

December 31, 2013, but the deadline was extended till June 30, 2016 later.

Again, for some changes in the design at the direction of the prime minister, a revised development project proposal (RDPP) was prepared in early October, said sources.

The RDPP will be sent to the Planning Commission this month for endorsement by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnc), said Director General of Bangladesh Railway Md Amzad Hossain.

Railway officials said it was supposed to be a metre gauge railway, but it would be a dual gauge one (metre and broad gauges).

The project cost was increased because of the change in the design which requires acquisition of more land, said Additional Project Director

Chowdhury Md Isha-E-Khalil.

Initially the cost stood at Tk 1,852 crore, which increased seven-fold to Tk 13,029 crore, with the new deadline being set at June 30, 2020.

According to the original project, there was a plan to acquire about 1,411.51 acres of land, but now 1,706 acres of land will be needed.

Along the total 128km railway track under the project, nine stations were supposed to be set up; now there will be 10 stations - Satkania, Lohagara, Harbang, Chakoria, Dulhazara, Islamabad, Ramu, Cox's Bazar, Ukhia, and Gundum, according to the railway sources.

The railway DG said there was a little uncertainty about funding, but it was settled now, adding that the government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) would jointly finance the project.

15-day drawing exhibition starts at Galleri Kaya

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A drawing exhibition of nine renowned artists of Bangladesh started yesterday at Galleri Kaya in the capital, said a press release.

The nine artists are Murtaja Baseer, Chandra Shekhar Dey, Ratan Mojumder, Jamal Ahmed, Kazi Rakib, Ranjit Das, Shishir Bhattacharjee, Goutam Chakraborty and Mohammad Iqbal.

The exhibition titled "Drawings" is showcasing a selection of total 49 works done in charcoal, pastel, ink, pen, pencil and mixed medium.

State Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Nasrul Hamid inaugurated the exhibition which will remain open from 11:00am to 8:00pm till November 27.

NEWS IN brief

Two Jamaat men among 32 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

Police arrested 32 people including two Jamaat activists in separate drives in six upazilas of Jhenidah in last two days.

They all hail from different upazilas of Jhenidah.

Police sources said the two Jamaat activists were held for planning subversive activities and the others were arrested in different cases like theft, robbery, snatching and rape.

Two killed in Sirajganj road crash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Two people were killed on the spot when a speeding truck rammed a private car at Jhaoil in Sirajganj yesterday.

The dead were Billal Hossain, 30, son of Lutfor Rahman and also the driver of the private car and its passenger Golam Rabbi Nil, 28, son of Saiful Islam Khondoker. Police seized the truck and arrested its driver.

Ruet admission tests today

RU CORRESPONDENT

The admission test for BSc Engineering programme at the Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology for 2011-2012 session will be held today.

The test for 'Ka' unit will continue from 10:00am to 12:00pm and for 'Kha' unit from 3:00pm to 4:00pm, admission sources said yesterday. A total of 6,150 candidates vie for 815 seats in the tests.

For details, admission seekers can visit www.ruet.ac.bd.

Sust admission tests today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The admission tests for the honours courses at the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet, for 2011-16 session will be held today.

The test for 'Ka' unit will begin at 9:30am and for 'Kha' unit will start at 2:30pm.

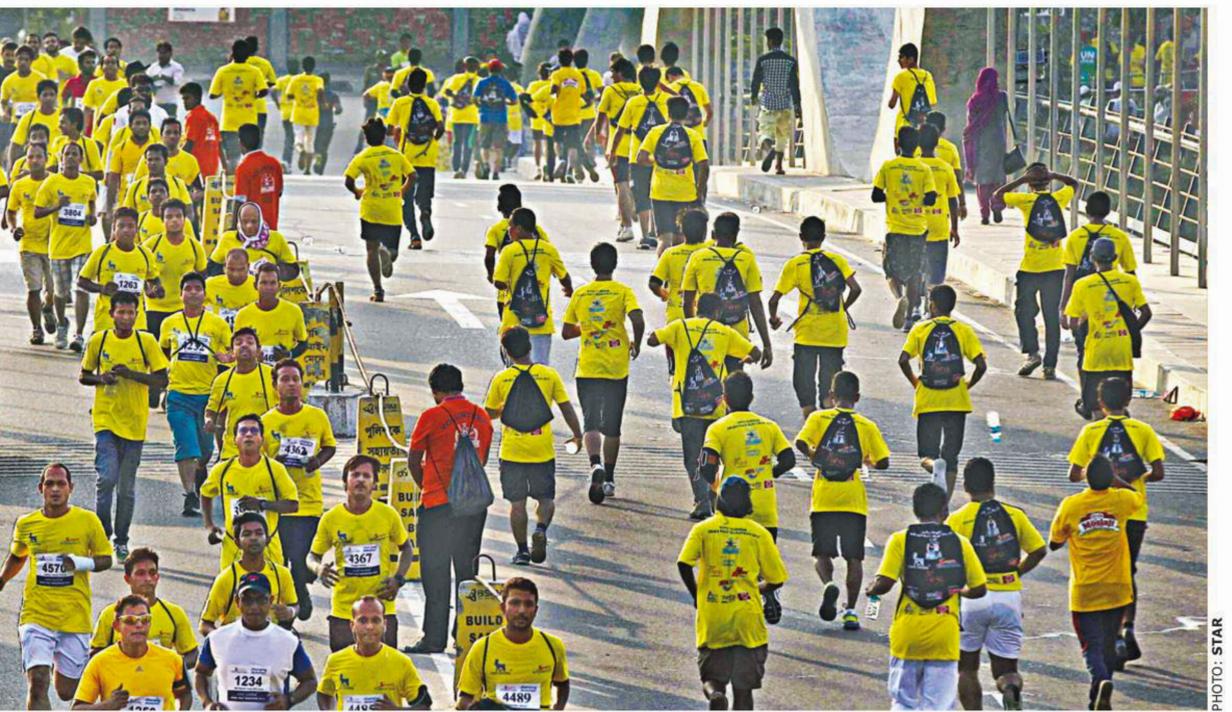
The tests will take place at different centers in the city including the university campus. Information are available at www.sust.edu/admission. Admission seekers can also get information at 01555555001-5.

Rail link halted on Shantahar-Lalmonirhat route for five hours

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

Rail communications on Shantahar-Lalmonirhat route were halted for five hours as the last compartment of the inter-city Lalmonirhat Express slightly derailed near Nashrattup Railway Station in Bogra's Adamdighi upazila yesterday morning.

The communications resumed at 12 noon after the rail department removed the compartment from the rail tracks. No casualty was reported, said Government Railway Police.



Participants running in a half-marathon organised by insulin manufacturer Novo Nordisk in association with Sports International on the eve of World Diabetes Day yesterday. Around 5,000 runners participated in the 21.1km marathon starting at Gulshan Park and finishing on Manik Mia Avenue.

Change mindset

FROM PAGE 3

peri-urban areas were very urgent to make Dhaka a livable city. He said city dwellers were facing different socio-economic problems, thanks to rapid urbanisation. He also opined that the city corporations require more income and authority over the service providers. Prof Hamida Khatun of Dhaka University also spoke.

Gonojagoron

FROM PAGE 3

Shahbagh. Earlier, Gonotantik Jubo Forum, Pahari Chhatra Parishad and Hill Women's Federation organised programmes with the same demand.

In twin attacks on October 31, Jagriti publishing house owner Faisal Arefin Dipan was hacked to death, while Shuddhwashaw owner Ahmedur Rashid Tutul and bloggers Tareque Rahim and Ranadipam Basu were injured.