

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 24.4 L 17.5	CHITTAGONG H 28.0 L 18.0	SYLHET H 24.9 L 15.3	RAJSHAHI H 25.5 L 10.6	KHULNA H 26.5 L 16.6	BARISAL H 26.7 L 17.8	RANGPUR H 23.7 L 11.0	COX'S BAZAR H 27.8 L 17.8
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Mild cold wave may continue over Rangpur division, and Jessore, Kushtia and Sreemangal. Night temperature may fall by (1-3) degree Celsius and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:29pm and rises on Tuesday at 6:44am.



(Clockwise from left) Some of the 20,000 trees Chittagong Development Authority is gradually chopping down along a 15-kilometre embankment from Patenga to Sagorika for Chittagong City Outer Ring Road Project. The wood being taken away from the embankment, the trees on which, as per the locals, house hundreds of birds. Marks left beforehand on trees selected to be brought down. The photos were taken on Friday.

100 makeshift structures knocked down in Gulistan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) yesterday dismantled around 100 makeshift shops and structures illegally occupying the roads and footpaths from the Golapshah Mazar intersection to Sergeant Ahad Police Box Mor via the capital's Gulistan intersection.

A semi-concrete office of Jubo League at the Gulistan intersection was demolished, a rice warehouse set up illegally under the Babubazar bridge was taken down and goods of shops in the Gulistan underpass blocking pedestrian movement were also removed.

DSCC Executive Magistrate Khan Mohammad Nazmus Shoaib, who led the drive with assistance from police and Rapid Action Battalion, said some 20 persons were fined Tk 2,000-Tk 5,000.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS

MONEY LAUNDERING SC upholds Mosharraf's bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court order that granted bail to BNP senior leader Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain on some conditions in a money laundering case.

A four-member bench of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha, ordered the lower court concerned to finish the trial proceeding of the case in three months.

In an additional condition, the SC said the trial court would cancel the bail if the accused sought adjournment during the case proceeding, court sources said.

Mosharraf will get released from jail if he is not arrested in any other case, Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

Mosharraf was arrested from his Gulshan residence on March 12, 2014 in the case. He has been in jail since then as the trial court denied him bail.

The ACC filed the case with Ramna Police Station on February 6, 2014 accusing the former health minister of amassing over Tk 9.53 crore between 2001 and 2006 and depositing that into a bank account in the UK.

Tree felling fest in Ctg

CDA plans to build ring road on 15km embankment

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Ctg

Within a few days, the 15km embankment from Patenga to Sagorika would look like a long forest clearing as the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) keeps on cutting down trees to make way for building a ring road in Chittagong city.

Local residents and environmentalists are shocked at the way trees were felled in large numbers over the last couple of days. Thousands more are waiting to be chopped down. The destruction would leave an impact on the nature, they feared.

Tareque Uddin Khan, secretary of Chittagong Birds Club, said the forested area was home to native birds, and many rare species of migratory birds would arrive at the place every winter.

He said he was surprised and sad for the destruction. "Like me many people often visit the place for its scenic beauty and of course for different species of birds," he told The Daily Star. If the destruction goes on, the birds will not find their habitats anymore, said Tareque.

During a visit yesterday, this correspondent found hundreds of trees axed on both sides of the embankment from Kattali beach to Foilaytali area.

Md Lokman, who was instructing the labourers loading the logs onto trucks, said their supervisor, one Jahangir Sawdagor, got the contract from CDA to cut the trees.

He said they would fell trees on both sides from Kattali to Free Port area. The decision, however, left local fisherman Jagot Jaladas confounded.

He said earlier the government told them that the trees were planted to save the city and people.

Now the government is saying that to save them and to construct the road, they are cutting the trees, he added. "Many people came to see the birds. It will destroy the birds' shelter."

Bibi Kulsum, hailing from Bhola, has been living for 15 years on the embankment. She said she had never seen such a huge number of trees being chopped down before.

Kazi Hasan Bin Shams, the project director of Chittagong City Outer Ring Road project, said the ring road would be constructed on the 15km long embankment from Patenga to Fauzdarhat.

IN NUMBERS

- Ring road 15km
- 20,000 trees to be felled
- Compensation Tk 1.2cr
- Tk 1,700cr project cost

Cops 'torture' bank official for Tk 5 lakh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Cops allegedly tortured a Bangladesh Bank official for refusing to pay bribe of Tk 5 lakh in the capital's Mohammadpur on Saturday.

The law enforcers reportedly threatened him with implicating him in a false narcotics case.

Golam Rabbi, 28, an assistant director of Bangladesh Bank, alleged that he was returning to his Kalyanpur home from a relative's house on Taj Mahal Road around 11:00pm on Saturday.

Some constables, who were in a police pickup truck parked nearby, came forward and asked him to meet their senior officer in the vehicle, Rabbi said. As he went there, Sub-Inspector Masud Shikder of Mohammadpur Police Station pushed and shoved him into the pickup, he alleged.

"The SI first asked me 'how much my job was worth'. He then calculated it himself to be Tk 25 to 30 lakh," said Rabbi. "You are in a good position. So, pay us Tk 5 to 6 lakh and go away. Otherwise, a case will be filed against you for carrying Yaba pills," Rabbi quoted the SI as saying.

The cops took Tk 10,000 and a debit card from him and

Defaulting teachers owe DU Tk 4.38cr

MAHDI AL MUHTASIM

Dhaka University will take a series of initiatives to get more than Tk 4.38 crore back from 60 former teachers who owe the amount to the university. The teachers had taken loans from the university to get higher education abroad but neither returned the money nor joined their jobs afterwards.

"We have already started the process of getting the money back. If we don't get their response soon, we would file financial suits," Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique told The Daily Star.

The loans, salaries and other allowances that the 60 teachers received before and during study leave added up to Tk 438,66,947, according to a DU statement.

All of the 60 either resigned or were sacked by the university.

The statement said the university authorities asked the teachers to pay the money back on several occasions but did not get any response. The authorities noted that the rate of interest would increase continuously until the teachers repaid the money.

DU also published advertisements in several national newspapers in this regard earlier.

Acting Registrar Rezaur Rahman said the syndicate took a set of decisions including sending warning letters and reminders to



One of the two frigates received from China for Bangladesh Navy reaches Chittagong naval jetty yesterday. According to an ISPR press release, each of the ships named "Swadhinata" and "Prottoy" measures 90 metres long and 11.4 metres wide. They run at 25 nautical miles per hour equipped with two anti-aircraft guns, an anti-ship missile and are capable of destroying submarines. Their construction started in China on January 7, 2013. The ships will be used in ensuring security during exploration of gas and oil from the deep sea and patrolling the maritime boundary.

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-Ian Martin

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Development, disparity dividing country

Noted economists tell Banglar Pathshala discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Since achieving independence 45 years ago, Bangladesh has become an unequal society with development and disparity reaching such a level that it seems there are two different countries in one, noted economists told a discussion yesterday.

Presiding over the discussion, "Bangabandhu's dream and Bangladesh's village", Prof Rehman Sobhan said the mindset for work should not be of the past but rather in light of the new era while society should be recreated.

Banglar Pathshala, a social organisation, organised the discussion at RC Majumdar Auditorium of Dhaka University (DU).

Prof Nazrul Islam, a senior economist at the United Nations, in his keynote speech, said Bangabandhu had many dreams on strengthening the village economy, including ones to set up village funds and joint farming.

"But the country's villages are now being left (behind) like they do not have parents (anyone to look after those). Rivers and canals are being grabbed at different parts of the country. But there is no institution in villages so that village people in unison can raise their problems," he said.

He also said there were huge discrepancies between villages and towns in terms of development and education.

"People in towns think in the Western pattern, the way they were educated, while village people think differently. Our society is now divided in English and Bangla," he said, adding that Bangabandhu did not dream of such a Bangladesh.

Prof Nazrul said villages in West Bengal got over the devastation of cyclone Sidr in 2007 faster than Bangladesh due to the presence of local village councils or panchayats which gave necessary instructions and financial assistance.

"Many people might question that village administrations might create a new opportunity for some quarters to engage in corruption as most people of villages are illiterate," he said.

"If corruption becomes the factor, then it is also happening in Jatiya Sangsad," he added.

Prof Nazrul said there could be an understanding between the Awami League and BNP as both Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and late president Ziaur Rahman advocated for village governments.

He concluded his speech suggesting forming village councils as a primary step to work on water, land and people as well as on land reform.

Prof MM Akash of DU suggested forming "land banks" and distributing cultivable land among the landless.

Tribute to The Renowned Agricultural and Development Economist

Dr Mahabub Hossain (1945-2016)

One of the Bangladesh's great minds and development practitioners is with us no more. As a HarvestPlus, IFPRI and IRRRI scientist and the leader of BRAC he has impacted millions globally and here in Bangladesh. He will be sorely missed, especially by his many friends and colleagues who make up the community of scientists and researchers of the CGIAR. Dr Hossain will continue to live on through the work he has done.

Condolences from the CGIAR centres in Bangladesh (CIMMYT, CIP, HarvestPlus, IFPRI, IRRRI and WorldFish)