

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	KHULNA	BARISAL	RANGPUR	COX'S BAZAR
	H 28.0 L 18.1	H 27.3 L 17.6	H 25.0 L 16.0	H 27.7 L 13.7	H 29.5 L 18.4	H 28.9 L 18.2	H 23.5 L 13.2	H 28.4 L 17.6

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country till 6:00pm today. Having chances of light rain or drizzle at one or two places over Barisal and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Comilla and Noakhali, Met Office said. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:45pm and rises tomorrow at 6:39am.

Hasina hands over cheques to slain cops' families

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday provided financial assistance of Tk 40 lakh to the family members of five policemen killed while on duty.

Briefing reporters after the event held at the Prime Minister's Office, PM's Press Secretary Ihsanul Karim told reporters that prime minister, while handing over the cheques, enquired about the wellbeing of the family members of the slain police members and consoled them.

The five policemen - Sub-inspector Md Ibrahim Mollah, Assistant Town Sub-inspector Md Sujaul Islam, and Constables Md Mukul Hossain, Parvez Hossain and Atiqul Islam - were killed by miscreants recently while they were on duty.

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, PM's Principal Secretary Md Abul Kalam Azad, Senior Secretary of the Home Ministry Dr Mozammel Haque Khan, Inspector General of Police AKM Shahidul Haque, and senior police officials were present on the occasion.



Once vibrant and tidal Surma, the heart of Sylhet, has lost its vigour and looks like a dried up canal, due to land grabbing, illegal and lack of proper dredging and erosions, causing a serious water crisis in the localities. The bank of the river has dried up severely for miles, inset, due to people's lack of awareness and authorities' indifference, which, even in the monsoon season does not fill up completely. The photos were taken near the south Kushighat Borhanuddin Mazar area yesterday.

PHOTOS: SHEIKH NASER

SSC exams begin with Bangla I

Questions based on 2014's syllabus served in two centres by mistake, say authorities

STAR REPORT

Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and equivalent examinations began yesterday with 14,99,957 students taking part and 6,826 remaining absent.

Meanwhile, the Bangla I tests will not be cancelled at three centres, two of which saw questions based on 2014's syllabus being served while another experienced faulty timekeeping, as per the authorities concerned.

Ten persons were taken off exam duties. Eight failed to detect the wrong questions before passing those out and to address examinees' complaints, said Gopalganj District Education Officer Rafiqul Islam.

The remaining two were charged with the faulty timekeeping as per Jamalapur's Sharishabari Upazila Nirbahi Officer Flora Bilkis Jahani.

A press release of the education ministry's Central Control Board said seven students were expelled and two invigilators were taken off duties. The reason was not stated.

The absentees are from the boards of madrasa (2,597), technical (941), Dhaka (847), Rajshahi (421), Comilla (510), Jessore (423), Chittagong (279), Sylhet (252), Barisal (250) and Dinajpur (306), it added.

Meanwhile, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid once again ruled out any possibility of question papers leak, reasoning that government measures were in place, and asked students not to pay heed to rumours.

Talking to journalists after visiting an exam centre in Tejgaon Government Girls' High School in the capital, he said results would be published within

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

This year's book fair much larger

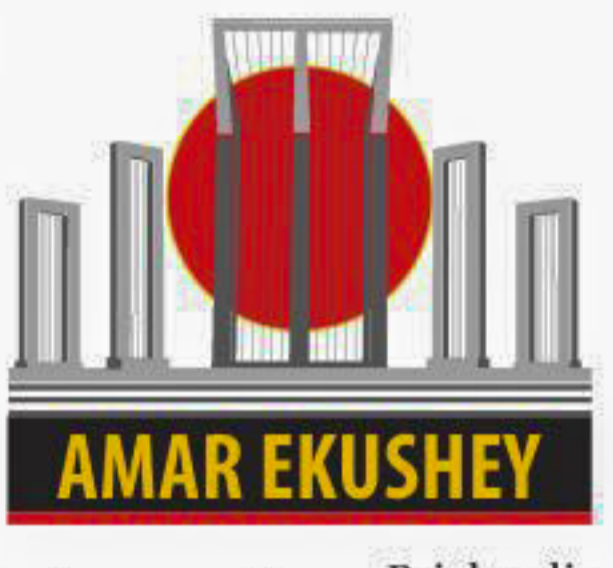
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Book sellers are hopeful of seeing bigger crowds and better sales as the month long book fair Amar Ekushey Granthamela opened on larger premises this year, facilitating public movement.

Though the fair has been organised at both Bangla Academy and Suhrawardy Udyan since 2014, this year a larger portion of the Udyan is being used for setting up stalls.

A visitor, Shamima Chowdhury, who came along with her sister and brother, said, "I thank the authority for giving a larger space for the fair." It will help them deal with crowds, she added.

Around 402 organisations are taking part



in the fair. Of those, 80 have their stalls on the Bangla Academy premises and the rest at Suhrawardy Udyan.

Last year 351 organisations participated.

Soon after the inauguration, a good number of visitors thronged the fair grounds yesterday.

Brick soling was done on the fair grounds to facilitate public movement, while reasonable distances have been kept between the stalls.

Mithun Devnath, manager of Shikha Prokashoni, said they were expecting a huge number of visitors because of the larger venue.

Publishers and sellers are hopeful that

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Miracle boy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A one-day-old boy miraculously survived a fourth-floor fall after he was allegedly dropped from a flat by his teenage mother on the capital's Bailey Road yesterday.

The 15-year-old mother, who works for an elderly couple, delivered the out-of-wedlock child in her employer's house in the morning with the help of a woman who also works for the couple, Moshire Rahman, officer-in-charge of Ramna Police Station, told The Daily Star.

The official said the girl dropped the baby through the window of the flat, wrapping him in a plastic shopping bag. She did so in fear of social stigma, he said, quoting the mother.

The baby fell on the roof of a



PHOTO: COLLECTED

nearby tin-roof shop.

Hearing his screams, local shopkeepers rescued and took him to Addin Women's Medical College Hospital in Moghbazar with the assistance of law enforcers, the OC said.

The boy is doing fine, and did not suffer any major injury, he said.

A video showing the rescue of the child went viral on social media.

Police visited the spot and took the mother to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH) for treatment.

The unmarried teenage girl allegedly got pregnant by her brother-in-law when she was visiting his house in Comilla, OC Moshire quoted the girl as saying.

"We are investigating the matter," he added.

Arrested cousin confesses to crime

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Milton Miah, who was arrested in connection with the murder of two Dhamrai schoolboys after abduction and cousin of the one of the victims, Imran, confessed to the killings before a Tangail court yesterday.

In the confessional statement, he admitted that he along with few of his accomplices abducted the boys for ransom, said police sources.

Milton in his statement, however, said that he and his accomplices had killed the two boys before they received the ransom as the two boys had known them, the sources added.

Detectives on Sunday arrested four persons, including Milton, in the capital's Dhamrai.

They were being quizzed at Tangail DB office, said Mahfeej Rehman Ghulam, officer-in-charge of Tangail DB Police.

Earlier on January 29, the slit-throat bodies of Shakil Miah and Imran Hossain of Dhamrai Upazila were found at Moyur Bhanga village in Mirzapur upazila of Tangail, two days after their abduction.

The two boys went missing after they had gone to nearby Haria High School in Tangail to watch annual sports competition there.

The next day, the abductors demanded Tk 1 lakh to each of their families over the phone as ransom.



The 30th Jatiya Kabita Utshab (National Poetry Festival), under the theme "Kabita Moitir, Kabita Shantir" (Poetry for Friendship, Poetry for Peace), begins amid festivity and enthusiasm on the Central Library premises of Dhaka University yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Nat'l Poetry Festival begins at DU

DU CORRESPONDENT

With festivity and enthusiasm, the 30th Jatiya Kabita Utshab (National Poetry Festival) has begun at Dhaka University's Central Library premises yesterday, under the theme "Kabita Moitir, Kabita Shantir" (Poetry for friendship, poetry for peace).

The festival, set off with the rendition of the national and festival anthem, was inaugurated by eminent poet Shamsul Haq after paying tribute at the mausoleum of poet Kazi Nazrul Islam and the Central Shaheed Minar.

Poet Habibullah Siraji read out the festival declaration and poet Aminur Rahman Sultan read out a condolence motion commemorating those who died in 2015 and contributed to the cultural and political arena.

"Poetry is the purest voice of humanity, it has inspired us to win over evil," said Syed Shamsul Haque and urged poets to fight

against autocracy, militancy and fundamentalism through verses.

More than 200 poets of eight countries are participating at the festival. A poetry recitation session was held in the evening and a photo exhibition of previous festivals and the then political state was also open for spectators.

A declaration of National Poetry Award-2016 and a musical performance will be held today.

Apart from local poets including Burhanuddin Khan Jagangir, Sheikh Hafizur Rahman, Pias Mojid, Asad Chowdhury and Dilara Hafiz, poets from India, Sweden, Norway, Slovakia, Morocco, Taiwan and Nepal also participated.

With Jatiya Kabita Parishad president poet Mohammad Samad in the chair, the inauguration ceremony was also addressed, among others, by poet Rabiul Hossain, festival convener, poet Kazi Rozi, joint convener and Tarik Sujat, general secretary.

Govt limiting cars per family: Obaidul Quader

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is setting a limit to the number of cars a family can own through a proposal in the draft road transport and traffic bill 2015 in an attempt to curb the capital's traffic congestion.

Informing this while replying to lawmakers' queries in parliament yesterday, Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader said enactment of the bill and Bangladesh road transport authority bill 2015, an alternative to Motor Vehicle Ordinance, 1983, is at the final stage.

Construction of the 192-kilometre Dhaka-Chittagong four lane highway is nearly complete and it will be inaugurated in May by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, said the minister.

"Last Sunday, I cancelled my air ticket and returned to Dhaka by road from

Chittagong...I have instructed engineers at different points to complete the works of the finishing layer quickly," he added.

Obaidul said the government plans to construct, if foreign donations were available, a second Padma bridge at the Paturia-Goalanda point.

Moreover, 68 of some 227 accident black spots and places experiencing traffic congestion, identified through a survey in different highways, have been revamped, he said.

The rectification in 15 spots is going to start soon under the Joydevpur-Chandra-Tangail-Elenga four-lane highway project, said Obaidul.

For the remaining 144, implementation of the Improvement of Road Safety at Black Spots of National Highways project, involving Tk 165 crore, has begun, the minister said delivering his scripted answers.

AUG 21 GRENADE ATTACK Babar ordered destruction of evidence

Court order was not sought, claims cop who recovered two live grenades from spot after attack

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A police official yesterday told a Dhaka court that without following any court order two live grenades, recovered in front of Awami League office soon after the grenade attack on an AL rally on August 21, 2004, were destroyed with an order from the then state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar.

"I had recovered the two live grenades from the place of occurrence but those were destroyed following an order from the then state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar"

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

"কুলখানি ও দোয়া মাহফিল"



মরহুম এম শামসুর রহমান এর আত্মার মাগফেরাত কামনায় আগামী ০৩-০২-২০১৬ ইং রোজ বুধবার বাদ আছর গুলশান আজাদ মসজিদে দোয়া মাহফিলের আয়োজন করা হইয়াছে।

উক্ত দোয়া মাহফিলে আপনারা স্বাবদ্ধ উপস্থিত হয়ে মরহুমের বিদেহী আত্মার মাগফেরাত কামনা করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হইল।

অনুরোধক্রমে

ডাঃ আলমাস বেগম
শরীফ আলমাস রহমান
শামস আলমাস রহমান
এবং পরিবার বর্গ