

**WEATHER FORECAST**

**YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES**

<b>DHAKA</b> H 31.0 L 20.3	<b>CHITTAGONG</b> H 32.2 L 22.6	<b>SYLHET</b> H 32.3 L 19.9	<b>RAJSHAHI</b> H 35.3 L 21.5	<b>KHULNA</b> H 31.5 L 24.4	<b>BARISAL</b> H 31.0 L 23.6	<b>RANGPUR</b> H 31.6 L 17.7	<b>COX'S BAZAR</b> H 32.4 L 23.5
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Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:10pm and rises tomorrow at 6:02am. Country's highest temperature 35.3 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rajshahi and lowest 14.4 in Rajshahi.

# Demand equality at nat'l level, fight internal prejudices

## Indigenous Women Confce told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ethnic minority women of the country need to raise their voice for equal rights at the national level while fighting against discriminatory customs at their individual community levels, speakers told the third National Indigenous Women Conference 2016 yesterday.

"Among the 54 indigenous communities of the country, many have their separate discriminatory practices and customs against women," said Ayesha Khanom, president, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP), at the two-day conference's inaugural.

The women rights activist noted that BMP at times faced difficulties in providing legal aid to some victims of domestic violence, including ethnic minority women, because of such customary practices.

"While both men and women face discrimination by the state, the structure of our societies often further discriminates against women," said Rani Yan Yan, the Chakma circle queen.

She said besides ensuring justice for female survivors of violence, their rehabilitation and reintegration into society should also be brought to focus.

The conference is being organised by Bangladesh Indigenous Women Network (BIWN) and Kapaeng Foundation with support from Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) at CBCB in the capital's Asad Avenue.

The programmes include sessions on human rights condition of ethnic minority women of the country, sustainable development goals, climate change and ethnic minority women, gender sensitivity, barriers to growth and a solution for the development of ethnic minority women's organisations at the grassroots and strategic planning workshops for BIWN.

Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, popularly known as Santu Larma, was the chief guest of the inaugural event.



Ayesha Khanom, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, lights candles while Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, popularly known as Santu Larma, looks on from her left at the inauguration of the third National Indigenous Women Conference 2016 at Catholic Bishops' Conference of Bangladesh on the capital's Asad Avenue. The two-day conference is organised by Bangladesh Indigenous Women Network and Kapaeng Foundation with support from Manusher Jonno Foundation. PHOTO: STAR

# Zoha still missing

Family passing days in uncertainty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of IT expert Tanveer Hassan Zoha have been passing their days in uncertainty since he went missing in the early hours on Thursday from the capital's Dhaka Cantonment area.

Tanveer's uncle Mahbul Alam said the home minister was aware of Tanveer going missing and commented about it before the media while the family also went to police stations and sought help.

"Yet none could tell anything specific," he told The Daily Star over the phone.

Mahbul, a former deputy director general of state-run Bangladesh Television, said they could not plan anything concrete to find Tanveer. Frustration led them to avoid going to the police station later on, he said.

Tanveer's ailing mother Maksudah Hassan's health has deteriorated as she was fainting every now and then, he said. His wife, Kamrunnahar, a physician, sought the prime minister's intervention in rescuing him.

# TREE MAN BAJANDAR



## Second surgery removes warts from left hand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A team of six surgeons removed warts from the left hand of "tree man" Abul Bajandar in a two-hour long surgery yesterday.

The team led by Prof Abul Kalam, head of the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery of Dhaka Medical College Hospital, conducted the second surgery, a month after the first one on his right hand.

"His fingers of both hands are now distinguishable. But small procedures for further refinement would continue for about a year," he told The Daily Star.

Physicians are, however, hoping that Abul will be able to partially use the fingers of his right hand in about three months, he added.

Bajandar, 26, has been suffering from epidermodysplasia verruciformis, a rare skin disorder commonly known as the tree man illness, which covers limbs with warts, making it look like a tree branch.

After the surgery was conducted around 1:00pm, Samanta Lal Sen, a noted physician and coordinator of the institute, who was in the team, said the surgery yielded positive outcomes.

With no use of his limbs, Bajandar, believed to be the fourth man in the world with tree man illness, got admitted to the institute at DMCH on January 30.

Sen added that bandages on his left hand would be removed on Tuesday for assessing the progress and dressing. As the illness was "an inherited skin disease", there was a high risk of relapse, Sen earlier said.

# BNP's election turns into selection

Khaleda Zia to appoint leaders; decision made in just minutes; many grassroots activists blast section of current high-ups calling them betrayers

RASHIDUL HASAN and PRABIR BARUA CHOWDHURY

It just took seven or eight minutes yesterday for BNP to decide who the secretary general and members of the standing and national executive committees would be, as councillors unanimously allowed Chairperson Khaleda Zia to appoint those instead of voting and electing the bodies themselves.

Conducting the "election" during the 6th council at the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh, Khandker Mosharrar Hossain, a standing committee member, urged all in favour of authorising Khaleda to raise both hands.

Urging to keep full faith and confidence in her, he reasoned that electing the bodies would take too long, which would not be "logical" and "realistic". Around half of the 3,100 councillors able to enter the venue voiced their support saying yes.

With the doors open wide at the "closed door session", at least 15 grassroots leaders delivered speeches, some of them urging to appoint Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir as the secretary general, a post which fell vacant after Khandker Delwar Hossain passed away

in 2011.

Several came down heavily on some of the high-ups and called them "betrayers", alleging they were inactive during the party's anti-government movement in the last two years and urging not to provide them any posts.

Ruhul Quddus Talukder Dulu, president of Natore district BNP, said, following Khaleda's call to launch an anti-government movement before the January 5, 2014 national polls, some senior leaders had announced they would see that the government fell in 15 days.

But most of their cellphones were found switched off afterwards, he said, urging to identify the "betrayers" and prevent any form of "business" centring the formation of the committees.

Later in her speech, Khaleda said, "You have given me a serious and huge task...After verifying the leaders' backgrounds I will announce the names."

She acknowledged that there were some "betrayers" for which the anti-government movement did not attain success and assured that dedicated leaders would be awarded posts.



# It's a two person party now

AL leaders claim about their pariah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ruling Awami League leaders yesterday described their counterparts in archival BNP as failures and doubted whether the nation would get anything from them.

BNP is a two-person party now, said AL presidium member Matia Chowdhury, alluding to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and Senior Vice Chairman Tarique Rahman.

"Politics is for the people. What will BNP gain by killing people and destroying civilisation? It is proved that their leader has failed, and so has her bad son," she said.

"What could they give to the people?" she asked at a seminar on "Bangladesh Awami League in the fight against communalism, terrorism, and militancy under the leadership of Sheikh Hasina".

The party organised it at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Presiding over the seminar, prime minister's adviser HT Imam said Tarique had visited Pakistan from London many times only to conspire to govern Bangladesh along the lines of Pakistani ideals. He urged BNP to return to "healthy politics" and assured that it would be given space then.

Ripping into Saudi Arabia, AL General Secretary Syed Ashrafur Islam said the country was the "main patron of communalism" and created unrest in the Middle East.

Responding to the query on why AL did not join BNP's sixth national council at the Institution of Engineers Bangladesh yesterday, he said AL was not invited.

However, BNP's social welfare secretary Abul Khayer had

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# Wife, son detained over man's death in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Police yesterday detained the wife, son and sister-in-law of a bank officer over his death in Baruda of Gazipur city on Friday night.

The deceased Gias Uddin, 60, was a principal officer of Sonali Bank's chief regional office in Gazipur, said his brother Mohiuddin Khan.

The detainees are wife Jahanara Begum, 50, son Shahriar Manik, 30, and sister-in-law Parveen Akhter, 40. Gias, who was on LPR, used to be beaten by his family members for money, Mohiuddin alleged.

On Friday, he came to know that his brother got sick and taken to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Medical College Hospital where doctors declared him dead, Mohiuddin added.

Abdus Salam, residential medical officer of the hospital, said the victim was brought dead. Joydebpur police said the deceased had a needle mark on his neck. The family members were detained for interrogation.

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