

Table with weather forecast for Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Rangpur, and Cox's Bazar. Includes yesterday's temperatures and high/low forecasts.

No formalin found in apples, mangoes in Jatrabari

One vendor fined Tk 1 lakh for date-expired dates

A mobile court yesterday found no formalin in 24 samples of mango and apple raiding different shops in the capital's Jatrabari. However, the mobile court backed by Rab fined a shop-owner Tk 1 lakh for storing and selling expired dates.



The month of Ramadan is even less than a week away. And the hawkers in Gulistan are preparing in full swing. They have converted almost an entire footpath into a shopping centre, while pedestrians, risking lives, are forced to use the street for movements, even though Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner Asaduzzaman Mia on Wednesday said Gulistan area would be kept hawker free during the upcoming month of fasting for the Muslims.

NEWS IN brief

CCCI to sell foodstuffs at subsidised price during Ramadan

The Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) yesterday launched a campaign of selling foodstuffs at subsidised prices for the people of low-income group during the month of Ramadan. Mahbulul Alam, president of CCCI, inaugurated the campaign in front of the CCCI office in the port city.

Youth's body found in Uttara

Police recovered the body of a youth from an under construction building in the capital's Uttara Pachchim area last night. Identity of the deceased could not be known immediately. Ali Hossain Khan, officer-in-charge of Uttara Pachchim Police Station, told this correspondent that on information, they recovered the body, cladding a pant and shirt smeared with blood, from the third-floor of a seven-storied building at sector-10.

JU syndicate polls today

Elections to the teachers' representative in the syndicate, academic council and finance committee of Jahangirnagar University will be held today at JU Teachers Club. Teachers will vie for 13 posts, six for syndicate in six categories and one for finance committee and six for academic councils in three categories; and 28 teachers, among whom two are independent candidates, will contest from two panels. Pro-Awami League (AL) teachers will contest under the banner of 'Bangabandhu Adarsha o Muktiyuddher Chetona Bishwashy Progotisheel Shikho Somaj', and pro-BNP, left leaning and two factions of AL teachers will jointly contest under the banner of 'Sommito Shikho Somaj', teachers' sources said.

Yet again man held at Dhaka airport smuggling gold in rectum

Customs officials yesterday morning detained a person with eight gold bars weighing around 800 gram inside his body at the capital's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. Tipped-off, officials held Mohammad Kamal of Comilla after he arrived at the airport from Kuala Lumpur, said customs authorities. The gold bars, around Tk 40 lakh, were inside his rectum, they said adding, they suspect that Kamal might be linked to a gold smuggling racket.

Seminar on governance held at JU

A daylong seminar on "Governance in Bangladesh and Non-State Actors" was held at JU Senate Bhaban yesterday, organised by Government and Politics department of Jahangirnagar University. Held in five panels, 30 articles were presented in the seminar.

Nasir president, Ziad gen secy of Old Faujians Association

The annual general meeting of Old Faujians Association (OFA), Dhaka chapter, an alumni organisation of ex-cadets of Faujderhat Cadet College, re-elected Mohammed Nasir Uddin Chowdhury as president, and elected Ziad Hossain as general secretary for the 2016-18 EC committee on May 27.

CU Zoology Museum wasting away

Fund shortage, lack of space, manpower dearth among main reasons; samples of rare animal species getting perished, claim students and teachers

There is a room on the fourth floor of the faculty of science building, near the zoology department, on the Chittagong University campus, which is quite shabby and dusty, and at first glance looks like a storeroom with numerous jars and shelves crammed together. Upon a closer look, the room suddenly becomes filled with broken skeletons and remains of dead animals, birds, reptiles and fish, preserved through taxidermy or in solutions inside big jars.

"We could not stop bleaching of the species (samples of which were taxidermied) as we cannot control the temperature of the room," said Assistant Prof Mohammad Abdul Wahed Chowdhury of the zoology department. Museum section officer Abdus Salam, working in the museum since its opening in 1976, said the museum has about 5,000 preserved samples from 687 different animal species, of which at least 100 are rare. However, due to improper preservation, lack of space, staff shortage and inadequate fund allocations, the valuable samples of different rare animal species are getting perished, claimed students and teachers of the department.

Some 150 samples, including the taxidermy of a 15 feet python lay on top of the shelves in the museum, gathering dust and losing its original colour and texture. Another 14 feet taxidermied King Cobra wrapped around a wooden stump was found in a similar condition. Some skeletons and taxidermied samples of birds and reptiles were broken due to negligence. Also no stickers describing identity of the species were attached on the pots or jars. Showing a taxidermied pelican bird which was kept in the hallway, Salam said it is the only preserved sample found in museums in the country. "Only one room has been allocated for the museum, which is inadequate for preserving all the samples properly," said Salam explaining why some of the samples were kept on the hallway. "We have sent letters several times to CU authority seeking two more rooms and staff, but we have only received assurance," he added. The students also expressed their dissatisfaction over the space crisis. "Ninety percent of practical classes are held at the museum. But only 10 to 12 students can stand together while others have to remain outside," said Toukir Ahmed, a third year student of zoology. The department stopped collecting samples as it has no space for preservation, said Manzoorul Kibria, an associate professor. Fund crisis is another challenge the museum is facing.

Salam said last year the museum received an allocation of Tk 45,000, which was inadequate. "We need at least Tk 1 lakh every year," he added. Prof Wahed, however, said more money is required to change the alcohol in the jars every three to four years for long term preservation. Talking to The Daily Star, the department's Chairman Prof Gazi Azmat admitted that the museum is riddled with problems. "It (the museum) has the prospect to be a natural history museum as it is located in the Indo-Myanmar biodiversity zone," he said. "We are preparing a list of our needs and recommendations for the museum and will contact the VC soon in this regard...all depends on the authority's good will," he said, adding, ranking of a university in foreign countries depends on these kinds of natural museums. Contacted, CU Vice Chancellor Prof Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury denied getting any letter with regards to increasing the allocation. He said he has already visited the museum and will take steps immediately after talking with museum authorities.



Left, this might look like a storeroom; but it's actually a museum, where preserved animals and samples are kept in a shabby and dusty condition due to a lack of space and inadequate fund allocation. So the CU zoology museum has to keep a number of glass showcases in the hallway exposed to all the natural elements.

Obituary

Chemon Ara Begum, wife of late Idris, former chairman of BSCIC, and mother of Eng AFM Nazmul Hossain Chowdhury and Lt Gen ASM Nasim died on Thursday. She was buried at the Banani military graveyard. Her qulqhawni will be held today after the Asr prayers at New DOHS Zamee Masjid in the capital's Mohakhali.

President

Referring to newspaper reports that many people are languishing in jail without committing any crime or after expiry of jail terms due to lack of proper steps, Hamid said these types of incident affected the victims or their families and also created obstacles in establishing rule of law. He called for the support of all for a remedy.

Govt downsizes afforestation

FROM PAGE 3 25 percent of its total land area covered with forests to maintain the ecological balance. A joint report of the Forest Department and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) says 78 percent of forest areas in Bangladesh are "disturbed". Talking to the news agency ahead of World Environment Day today, Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) Md Yunus Ali said they could not achieve the target for lack of proper plans, initiatives, effective programmes and some other reasons. He hoped that they would be able to increase the forest coverage to 15 percent by 2021, as their afforestation programmes were "progressing well". The CCF, however, said the forest coverage would be 21 percent by 2021 if they could bring the vast forest areas in the Chittagong Hill Tracts under afforestation programmes. He said 80 percent areas of the around 7 lakh hectares of forest land in the CHT, which is now under Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, had turned barren due to shifting (jhum) cultivation and indiscriminate tree felling. Yunus said they had already submitted 12 proposals to the government to reinforce their afforestation programmes. "If

half of our proposals are accepted, we'll get a huge success in our afforestation drive." Replying to a question, the CCF said there was 17.4 percent forest coverage in 1947 in Bangladesh part. Due to various reasons, including setting up establishments of army, navy, Border Guard Bangladesh, and Coast Guard as well as construction of national highways, inter-upazila roads, around 4 lakh acres of forest land have vanished since independence of the country, he said. Bangladesh Paribesh Andolan (Bapa) general secretary MA Matin said the Forest Department could not play any effective role in checking deforestation activities like illegal logging, indiscriminate tree felling and forest land enforcement. "There're still big sawmills near every forest of the country those are mainly used by illegal loggers." Environmentalist and director of Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD) Philip Gain said the country's forest coverage had shrunk to nearly 6 to 7 percent now from 20 percent in 1927. He said a massive expansion of commercial shrimp culture had taken a heavy toll on forest land. "Around 2 lakh hectares of forest land in coastal areas were destroyed by making shrimp enclosures."

Death anniversary

Today is the 16th death anniversary of Begum Lutfunnessa Ibrahim, wife of late justice Mohammed Ibrahim. On this occasion, a milad mahfil will be held in the morning at her residence. Food will be distributed among the destitute, and floral wreaths will be placed at her grave in the Banani graveyard.

Atiqur Rahman

Today is the 28th death anniversary of Atiqur Rahman, a freedom fighter and the founding president of Dhaka city unit of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal. On this occasion, a dua mahfil will be held at the Banani graveyard today.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Investment and Promotional Corporation (BIPC) regarding a seminar on 'Minibass and Bida Bas Baidar Darpapr Bijgranti'. Includes a table with details of the seminar, such as date, time, and location.