

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA H 35.5 L 26.5	CHITTAGONG H 31.5 L 25.5	SYLHET H 35.2 L 25.2	RAJSHAHI H 37.6 L 26.5	KHULNA H 35.2 L 26.3	BARISAL H 35.3 L 26.6	RANGPUR H 35.0 L 26.2	COX'S BAZAR H 30.0 L 25.0
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Rain is likely to occur at most places over Chittagong and Sylhet divisions, at a few places over Mymensingh, Barisal and Dhaka divisions and at one or two places over Khulna, Rangpur and Rajshahi division with moderately heavy falls at Chittagong division till 6:00pm today. Mild heat wave, sweeping over the regions of Faridpur, Rajshahi, Pabna, Bogra, Sayedpur and Khulna, may continue, said Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:46pm and rises tomorrow at 5:10am.

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Walking to school, Narinda, Dhaka. PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Walking to School

For me, there are few sights sweeter than that of children walking to school. They are usually clumped together in groups, backpack slung from the shoulder with perhaps a water bottle peeking out, chirping like little sparrows, all at the same time. They are never bored, whispering into a friend's ear one moment, singing aloud the next while acting out Bollywood dance moves, stopping to surround a vendor to buy some snacks, taking off swiftly riding a make-believe motorcycle while gripping an imaginary handlebar. Indeed, their imagination and joy knows no bound.

In rural areas, the bucolic aspect dominates: the kids jumping across a narrow stream one at a time, walking along narrow ails of rice paddies, or soaking merrily in a field during a sudden downpour on the way home. In Dhaka, though many children use private or public transportation to get to school, others walk to school, particularly in old Dhaka and outlying neighbourhoods such as Badda. They, too, enjoy their walk to school in an urban setting.

I once saw a father walking his daughter to school near Farm Gate. She was holding his hand as they chatted about something that obviously interested both, and for an instant her shining eyes were lost in a world that the conversation had evoked. I have seldom seen a happier duo, and the fact that they were both a little chubby somehow made this scene even more beautiful for it told me about the love for food they shared. The world went around them, oblivious to this unfolding magic.

Scenes like this remind us of our own childhood days - days of walking, riding a rickshaw, or driving to school. For many years my walk to school was minimal as we lived across the street from school. So I prolonged it by hanging around the school gate after arriving. Pretty soon a group would gather and our subsequent discussions left no topic on earth unturned. Some years before that when we lived in a different house, I have fond memories of my father driving me to school while talking with me along the way in his gentle, affectionate way - never lecturing, always friendly. Upon reaching school, he would reach into his pocket and fish out two rupees for tiffin, a princely sum at a time when a hamburger and a coke together cost one rupee. One day I was punished with a detention and had to stay for an hour after school. When I emerged, my father was waiting patiently in the deserted parking area, acting as if nothing had happened, no admonishment - or questions - about why I was punished.

In the United States (and other developed countries) the government takes responsibility for transporting children to school by bus. However, those parents who live within walking distance from school prefer to walk their children. American friends have told me this is their favourite part of the day. Having walked my daughter the short distance to her school for a year or two, I concur. Children grow quickly: the magical moments of walking to school are short indeed.

www.facebook.com/tangents.ikabir

ATTACK ON JOURNO AT JU 13 BCL men served show cause notices

JU CORRESPONDENT

The Jahangirnagar University authorities on Thursday night issued show-cause notices to 13 Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) men asking them to explain why they should not be suspended for attacking a journalist on Wednesday night.

They have been asked to reply within June 18 and after that formal actions will be taken, said Proctor Prof Tapan Kumar Saha.

However, leaders of JU Journalists' Association have expressed dissatisfaction terming administration's initiatives "slow and reluctant".

"We have demanded immediate suspension and arrest of the attackers. But the university administration is not paying heed to our demand," said Belal Hossain Rahat, president of JUJA.

On Wednesday night, JU unit activists of BCL allegedly beat up a campus reporter while he was trying to rescue a young woman from an alleged abductor in front of the main entrance of the campus.

PROTESTS CONTINUE TO POUR IN

Meanwhile, the incident sparked protests among teachers, students and journalists.

"We strongly protest the attack and demand punishment for those involved. We also urge the university authorities to ensure students' security and democratic student politics,"

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Bikes off-limits to children

Says Obaidul Quader UNB, Dhaka

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said no child will be allowed on motorbike as a co-rider.

"No child will be allowed on motorbike as a co-passenger. BRTA will have to control it strictly showing a zero tolerance," he said while speaking as the chief guest at a discussion on the progress of Bangladesh Road Transport Authority's (BRTA's) activities at the Biam Foundation auditorium in the capital.

The minister also said there is no instance in any other country in the world to carry children on a bike as a co-rider.

He asked BRTA to control juvenile drivers as 12-13-year-old boys are seen driving vehicles across the country, including the capital.

MURDER OF SP'S WIFE Knife bearer held near protest event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police yesterday afternoon arrested a youth with two knives from the Jamal Khan area of Chittagong city while a human chain was going on in the area protesting the murder of Superintendent of Police Babul Akter's wife Mahmuda Khanam Mitu who was hacked and shot dead on Sunday by motorbike riding assailants.

The arrestee Ibrahim, aged around 25, hailing from Tangail, was suspiciously pulling a rickshaw with a bag on his back on one side of the street, said Inspector (Investigation) Nur Ahmed of Kotwali Police Station.

Rubel Das Prince, Khelaghar Chittagong district unit secretary, who was present at the human chain, said the youth was repeatedly circling the press club where the human chain was going on.

He kept on asking whether the area was press club and this was a human chain, said Prince, adding, locals caught and handed him over to police patrolling the area.

Police found two small knives, a pen drive (without memory) and a mobile phone from under the rickshaw-seat, said Inspector Nur, adding, "We are interrogating him."

Meanwhile, youths in port city demanded that

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As asphalt around this underground utility cable pocket pulled out in the middle of Bir Uttam Ziaur Rahman Road, it has been left unprotected for quite a long time, which could cause a deadly traffic accident anytime. The photo was taken yesterday in Chairman Bari area of the capital.

Govt paddy procurement directly from farmers facing setback

Complexities in opening bank accounts among other reasons

BARISAL DIVISION **KHULNA DISTRICT**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The procurement policy of the government adopted to buy paddy directly from farmers may fail in Barisal division as more than 50 percent of them do not have any bank account.

Bangladesh Bank has taken the initiative in April to help farmers easily get the subsidies provided by the government. Through the policy the food department will purchase paddy directly from farmers and send the money to their bank account.

Following the initiative, the food department has started buying paddy in Barisal region in the middle of May and targeted to procure 16,214 tonnes of paddy from 44 Local Supply Depot (LSD) in the division.

However, the procurement policy is being hindered as only 5,65,407 farmers among 13,15,411 have bank accounts with state-run banks, said sources at the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Barisal.

"Most of the farmers are not aware of this policy that is why they are not opening any bank account," said Tushar Kanti Samadder, deputy director of DAE.

"It will take time as the policy has been launched newly," he added.

Biswajit Baroi, secretary of Krishak Samiti Barisal, said many farmers failed to open a bank account as they did not know how to apply for it and where to go.

Many of them failed for not having the necessary documents -- like national ID card, birth registration certificate and card issued by the DAE -- to open an account, he said.

Ishahak Mia, a farmer of Batajore village of the district, said, "We have heard about the policy but could not open an account as many of us do not have necessary documents."

Gazi Md Saifujaman, deputy commissioner of Barisal, said, "When the farmers will understand the benefit of the policy they will open their bank accounts quickly."

UNB, Khulna

The public procurement of the recently-harvested Boro paddy in Khulna district is facing a serious setback for various reasons, including complexities the growers are facing in opening bank accounts.

So far, only 163 tonnes of paddy have been procured by eight food warehouses of the district over the last one month against the government target of procuring 9,044 tonnes from the district.

Local farmers said they have harvested the Boro paddy barely a month ago and sold the harvest at Tk 550-600 per maund at that time.

Some middlemen bought paddy from the local bazaars of Chandkhali, Garuikhali, Kapilmuni in Paikgachha upazila, Dumuria upazila, Chuknagar, Batiakhata upazila, Sadar upazila, Koiya, Rupsa Natunhat, Phultala upazila at a lower price and stocked it in their silos. As a result, traders are showing disinterest in buying paddy from these markets.

Meanwhile, the paddy growers in the district preferred selling paddy to the local market instead of the government food warehouses as they get cash as payment from the traders at local markets.

According to the Khulna food department, a farmer has to open an account for getting the payment for any public procurement. Farmers have to show their identity and agriculture cards to open an account, and once the account is functional, one can sell minimum 40kg of paddy containing normal colour, test and smell.

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Amid sweltering heat, ceaseless traffic, and numerous turmoil life throw us into, these water lilies in full bloom are a much needed respite for the soul and a reminder of peace, purity, pleasure and spiritual enlightenment. The photo was taken in Malgram area of Bogra town yesterday morning. PHOTO: STAR

5 Ctg superstores fined for selling stale, rotten items

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Mobile courts of Chittagong District Administration yesterday fined 30 businesses, including five superstores, about Tk 6.46 lakh in the port city on different charges including hiking of prices of essential commodities.

The court, led by Executive Magistrate Tahmilur Rahman, fined five chain shops -- Agora in Prabartok, The Grocer, and Khulshi Mart in Khulshi, Meena Bazar in Sholoshahar and Shwapno in Gol Pahar Tk 1 lakh each.

The five were fined for selling products at

hiked up prices and also selling rotten and stale items, said the magistrate.

At Agora, per kilogramme of green chili was being sold at Tk 80, brinjal at Tk 55, tomato at Tk 65 and sugar at Tk 63 whereas their wholesale prices are Tk 15, Tk 25, Tk 35 and Tk 50 respectively, he said.

Rotten meat and fishes in a stale condition were found at The Grocer, he said, adding that green chili, tomato, gram and sugar were also being sold at higher prices.

Khulshi Mart was fined for hiking the prices of gram, brinjal, sugar, garlic and tomato, the

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2 held with fake Indian rupees at airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs intelligence officials yesterday arrested two persons along with 1.30 crore counterfeit Indian rupees at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

On information, the officials arrested Abul Bashar, 40, a passenger of Air Arabian from Pakistan that landed at the airport at 9:00am and recovered the currencies from his carton, said Moinul Khan, director general of Customs Intelligence.

Based on his information, the officials arrested one Abdus Sobhan, 56, waiting outside to receive Bashar.

Moinul Khan said the counterfeit currencies might have been smuggled into the country to use in criminal activities.

Healthy RAMADAN

FASTING AND HEARTBURN

"Those who are regularly taking medicine for indigestion, such as antacids or proton pump inhibitors, should continue taking them in Ramadan, with the seher. Heartburn or belching can be controlled by eating in moderation and avoiding oily, deep-fried or very spicy food. Reducing caffeine intake, stopping smoking and sleeping with head raised on a few pillows can also help."

Dr. Mohammed Mahbub Alam
Consultant, Gastroenterology & Hepatology

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