

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 34.5 L 27.4	CHITTAGONG H 32.8 L 26.2	SYLHET H 34.5 L 26.4	RAJSHAHI H 36.2 L 27.5	KHULNA H 32.5 L 28.1	BARISAL H 32.7 L 27.0	RANGPUR H 34.7 L 27.8	COX'S BAZAR H 29.6 L 26.0
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Day and night temperatures may fall slightly over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:49pm and rises tomorrow at 5:20am. Country's highest temperature 36.2 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rajshahi and the lowest 25.0 in Kumarkhali (Kushtia).



Various local and migratory birds are being sold at "Rath-er Mela", a traditional fair in Sylhet city's Lamabazar road area, unabated, even though as per the Wildlife (Conservation) Act-2012, it is a punishable offence.

PHOTOS: SHEIKH NASIR

NEWS IN brief

Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury reappointed as UAP VC

CITY DESK



Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury has been reappointed as vice-chancellor of the University of Asia Pacific (UAP) for the tenure of four years, said a press release.

A prominent educationist and former adviser to the caretaker government, Prof Choudhury has been serving the university as the VC since May, 2012. He is an engineer, researcher and scientist.

He graduated from Engineering University Dhaka in 1963 and joined there as a lecturer in the Civil Engineering department the same year.

He was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Engineering (Honoris Causa) by Manchester University in 2010.

Bangladesh, USA to jointly work to prevent cyber crime, terrorism

UNB, Dhaka

Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday said Bangladesh and the USA would work together on four major issues, including prevention of cyber crime and terrorism.

"We've agreed that Bangladesh and the USA will deeply work together on tackling cyber crime and terrorism, protecting democracy and ensuring sustainable development," he told reporters after a meeting with US Ambassador in Dhaka Marcia Bernicat at his office.

Bernicat said they also discussed the role of mass media and press freedom at the meeting.



A group of Bangladeshi expatriates living in Nagoya city of Japan on Tuesday brings out a procession to mourn the deaths of seven Japanese nationals in a terrorist attack in the capital's Gulshan early this month.

Selling birds rampant at Sylhet fair

MINTU DESHWARA, Sylhet

There is an old proverb "rath dekha o kola becha", which in English would translate to "killing two birds with one stone".

For Putai Miah, it was pretty much the case. During most of the day, Putai, a trader from Fenchujan near Hakaluki haor, sits around and enjoys the fair, but as night falls he gets extremely busy selling birds at the Rath-er Mela, a traditional fair in Sylhet city, organised every year to celebrate "Rathjatra", a festival of the Hindu community.

Usually a fair is an opportunity for vendors to sell variety of goods like spices, sweets and other domestic products to attract visitors. But the Rath-er Mela in Lamabazar road area takes a different turn at night, where many traders flock with local and migratory birds, kept in cages.

"I've been selling birds for many years. Some even buy birds from me to please others, and also sent those to the capital as gifts," he said, pointing at the cages full of birds kept in front of him.

These birds are caught at different water bodies including Hail, Tanguar and Hakaluki haor, he said.

"My son wanted a myna for a long time," said Turab Ali of the city, who bought one for Tk 1,600. When asked, why he was buying a bird caught and sold illegally by the traders, he did not answer.

According to Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods and International Union for Conservation of Nature, Bangladesh, more than 50 species of migratory birds flock in the haor areas. With their arrivals, the traders and poachers also become active.

While visiting the fair around 9:00pm on Monday, this correspondent found that birds were being sold unabated there. Some traders were even selling birds throughout the day.

A pair of kalem was being sold at Tk 500-2,000, pair of shalik at Tk 300-700, parrot at Tk 700-3,000, myna at Tk 3,000-7,000, pair of ghughu at Tk 300-1,500 and migratory birds at Tk 700-30,000 each.

"Most of us do not sell to unidentified customers, said Shahnur, 48, a bird trader. "I collect the birds from the poachers and sell at fairs or to influential people," he added. When asked, he refused to mention who were those influential people.

"I know selling birds is a crime. But I have to look after a family of six. This is a profitable business and not much capital is needed," He said. Shahnur said he had to pay Tk 700 to Tk 1,200 per day for selling these birds and those who were selling at stalls pay around Tk 2,000 per day to the fair authorities.

"These birds are being sold in front of the law enforcement personnel. Even though the district police lines is next to the fair," alleged Abdul Karim Kim, general secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, Sylhet chapter.

As per the Wildlife (Conservation) Act-2012, killing, poaching, selling and possess-

ing of any wildlife is a punishable offence, he added.

Seeking anonymity, a police constable at the fair, said, "We are assigned to maintain law and order, not what people are selling."

RFM Monirul Islam, divisional forest officer of the Sylhet Forest Division, told The Daily Star that they have requested the fair authorities to inform them about unscrupulous traders.

Abdul Khalik, an owner of Joy Enterprise who got the tender for this year's Rath Mela from the city corporation, said, "Different types of traders sell their products here. The law enforcers should look into the issue and take action."

Catching and selling birds are illegal but it happens due to corruption; lack of awareness and enforcement of legal frameworks, said Sharif Jamil, joint secretary of Bapa.

Contacted, Sylhet Metropolitan Police Commissioner Kamrul Ahsan said, "Actions will be taken against the traders. We have also set up a camp to watch over any untoward incident."

SCC Chief Executive Officer Enamul Habib said, "No one has ever complained to me regarding this. I will definitely look into the issue."

These birds are being sold in front of the law enforcement personnel. Even though the district police lines is next to the fair



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina being accorded a red carpet reception at Chinggis Khaan International Airport in Ulaanbaatar of Mongolia yesterday after she reached there to attend the 11th Asia-Europe Summit (Asem).

PHOTO: PID

PM on Mongolia visit for Asem

UNB, Ulaanbaatar

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday left for Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia, on a three-day official visit to the country to attend the 11th Asia-Europe Summit (Asem).

The two-day summit will begin today at Shangri-La Hotel in Ulaanbaatar.

During the summit, Hasina and her Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe will co-chair a special discussion to be presented by other global leaders.

Hasina will attend the first and second plenary sessions of the summit and deliver her speech on "20 years of ASEM: Partnership for the Future through connectivity."

In the meeting, the premier is likely to highlight Bangladesh's security situation and her government's firm commitment to tackle terrorism and extremism in the aftermath of two recent terror attacks in the country.

She will also hold meetings with Swiss President Johan Schneider, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, Japanese Premier Shinzo Abe and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, among others.

Hasina greets Theresa May

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday congratulated Theresa May for her appointment as the prime minister of the UK and the Northern Ireland and her most deserving election as the leader of the Conservative Party.

"As a woman prime minister, it is more heartening for me to see you leading the United Kingdom," she said in her congratulatory message to the new UK leader.

In her letter to Theresa May, Hasina said relations between Bangladesh and the United Kingdom have been mature, strong and enduring.

STAR WEEKEND
in other news...

The *Star Weekend* has an array of interesting articles for you. We have dedicated this week's issue to the victims and their families of the recent 1/7 attacks in Holey Artisan Bakery. We have included opinions of experts, and the voices of the youth, along with remembrance pieces and floating questions. This Friday, with your copy of *The Star Weekend*, let us mourn together the unfortunate deaths of the victims of the massacre.

ROAD 79

ELITA KARIM

The once quiet, residential area of Gulshan 2, particularly road 79 - sporting plush houses, a restaurant or two and private security officials, has now become a silent, isolated and a frightening road, filled with gunmen and barricades. The junction that meets the lane towards Holey Artisan on road 79 is now a memorial. Tens of people visit the area with flowers, candles and prayers. To read more, turn to pages 7, 8 and 9.

ইদ পরবর্তী বিশেষ আফার!!!

১৬ জুলাই হতে ২০ জুলাই, ২০১৬ পর্যন্ত

ঢাকা - বরিশাল	২০০০/=
ঢাকা - ঝৈয়দপুর	২০০০/=
ঢাকা - রাজশাহী	২০০০/=
ঢাকা - মশোর	২০০০/=
ঢাকা - চট্টগ্রাম	২৬০০/=
ঢাকা - সিলেট	২৩০০/=

(প্রদেয় অবলম্বন করণীয়)

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