

**WEATHER FORECAST**

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 30.8 L 27.2

CHITTAGONG H 33.0 L 26.0

SYLHET H 30.8 L 25.5

RAJSHAHI H 33.0 L 27.2

KHULNA H 31.0 L 25.5

BARISAL H 31.4 L 25.2

RANGPUR H 32.3 L 26.5

COX'S BAZAR H 31.0 L 25.2

Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:46pm and rises tomorrow at 5:24am. Country's highest temperature 33.1 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Chuadanga and the lowest 24.8 Celsius in Bhola.

# TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Doel, our national bird.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

## National Birds

Many nations of the world have national birds. They are usually native birds that can be found easily, and in many ways become a symbol of the nation.

Our national bird is, of course, the *doel* (oriental magpie robin or *copsychus saularis*.) The male looks black from above, whereas the female is a greyish black. Juvenile *doels* are brownish. The species can be found across south and southeast Asia with slight variations in colour and size.

Of the seven hundred species of birds that can be seen in Bangladesh, *doel* is one of the most common. It often sings loudly and is an agile flyer. Hopping on the ground, it hunts insects and smaller reptiles for food. Its black and white pattern is most beautiful when it spreads its tail wings into a fan, while perching or just before flight.

The national bird of America is the bald eagle. It is the national emblem, seen in many official seals, including that of the president and the Great Seal of the United States. The magnificent bird is an appropriate symbol for the nation, but one of the founding fathers, Ben Franklin, was not fond of it. He wanted the turkey as the American national bird, favouring it because it was a "bird of courage" as opposed to the eagle which he thought was "immoral."

The Philippines originally had the black-headed munia as its national bird. But President Fidel Ramos changed this. He thought that the small munia represented low self-esteem and too much humility. The Philippine Eagle which succeeded the diminutive munia as the national bird is a large, powerful bird, capable of magnificent flight. It is supposed to represent the Philippino character and aspirations better.

Uganda's national bird is one of my favourites: the elegant crowned crane. Seeing a flock of them on an Ugandan hillside was one of the highlights of my birding career. Several African countries, including Zambia, Malawi, South Sudan and Zimbabwe, share the African fish eagle as their national bird. Granted, this eagle is an impressive bird. But couldn't they have picked separate birds, given there are ten thousand species of birds in the world?

Falcons are also popular as national birds. Iceland has the gyrfalcon, the largest member of the falcon family. Hungary and Mongolia go with the saker falcon while Belgium nationalises the common kestrel. The peregrine falcon shows up as the national bird of United Arab Emirates.

Closer to home, India takes pride in her peacocks for good reason. Sri Lanka has a type of *bon morog* (Sri Lankan junglefowl) as her national bird.

Other than the kestrel mentioned above, several other national birds are commonly seen in Bangladesh. These include the hoopoe (Israel), white wagtail (Latvia), white-breasted waterhen (Madives), and the black-tailed godwit (Netherlands). A domesticated version of our wild *bon morog* (*gallus gallus*) is the (unofficial) national bird of France.

The most ferocious looking national bird is the harpy eagle. Weighing up to ten kilograms, its grey head is surrounded with a double crest of feathers, lending it a frightening look. It is the national bird of Panama.

Which country has the most beautiful national bird? For me, it is undoubtedly Guatemala with the resplendent quetzal, a bird I hope to see one day!

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## Rural women training in mobile tech

Under govt-Oxfam initiative aimed to inspire them towards economic activities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Targeting to empower the rural women economically through their participation in farming, some 200 women, who were selected from Satkhira and Nilphamari, are being trained with mobile technology so that they can receive updated information on agriculture-related issues and developments and use them for their benefits.

These women have already got smart phones from Oxfam in Bangladesh, said MB Akhter, programme director of the organisation, at a seminar on "Participatory Research and Ownership with Technology, Information and Change (Protic): The role of PAR".

Research Indicatives Bangladesh (RIB) and Oxfam jointly organised the programme in the capital's The Daily Star Centre.

Akhter said there might have been some criticism regarding the initiative, but the Oxfam has decided this to bring out positive results, which will come out later.

Under the project, which has been jointly initiated by Oxfam and the government at Borokupot village in Satkhira's Shyamnagar and Tapa Kharibari village in Nilphamari's Dimla, these women are using the phones as tools to get information on different cultivation.

Two women from Shyamnagar shared their experiences and mentioned that they are getting benefits but facing problems with the English language.

"Most of these women are using these phones to talk, listen to music, using facebook, capturing and uploading photographs. As many of them lack the proper knowledge of English, they cannot write captions for their photographs," said Suraiya Begum, RIB project coordinator.

"They didn't have any perception on how to sort out important information to use for their needs when they face any problem," she said, adding that it cannot be said that they are utilising their devices

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## Dhaka, New Delhi may take joint steps to tackle militancy

Says Shahriar Alam

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam said the July 1 terror attack in Dhaka has brought a "different kind of crisis" and Dhaka and New Delhi may think of joint measures to tackle the menace at the next week's meeting of the home ministers of the two countries.

Wrapping up his two-day visit to India, Alam told the Bangla daily Prothom Alo on Thursday night here that countering terrorism will be the key agenda of the July 28 meeting in Delhi.

He said "misinterpretation of religion" was behind the July 1 terror attack, which was also aimed at thwarting not only Bangladesh's growth but also to put the country into an uncertainty. "But we will not allow this to happen," he added.

Alam thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for expressing India's solidarity with Bangladesh in the fight against terrorism and said, "We are overwhelmed by the manner in which India has extended its helping hand."

"It is regrettable that neither BNP nor pro-BNP student organisations are yet to give a call for unity among the people at grassroot level against terrorism," he claimed.

## NHRC wants to become a constitutional organisation

UNB, Dhaka

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in its Annual Report-2015 sought to be transformed into a constitutional body so that it can play a stronger role in improving the country's human rights situation.

The national rights body also urged the government to form a tribunal to dispose of allegations related to violation of human rights.

The NHRC says in many countries of the world the human rights commission is a constitutional one. If it becomes a constitutional one, it will be able to exercise power independently, said the report.

Citing Bangladesh's position in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index in 2015, the annual report says the country's poor position in the corruption perception index indicates human rights are being violated through corruption.

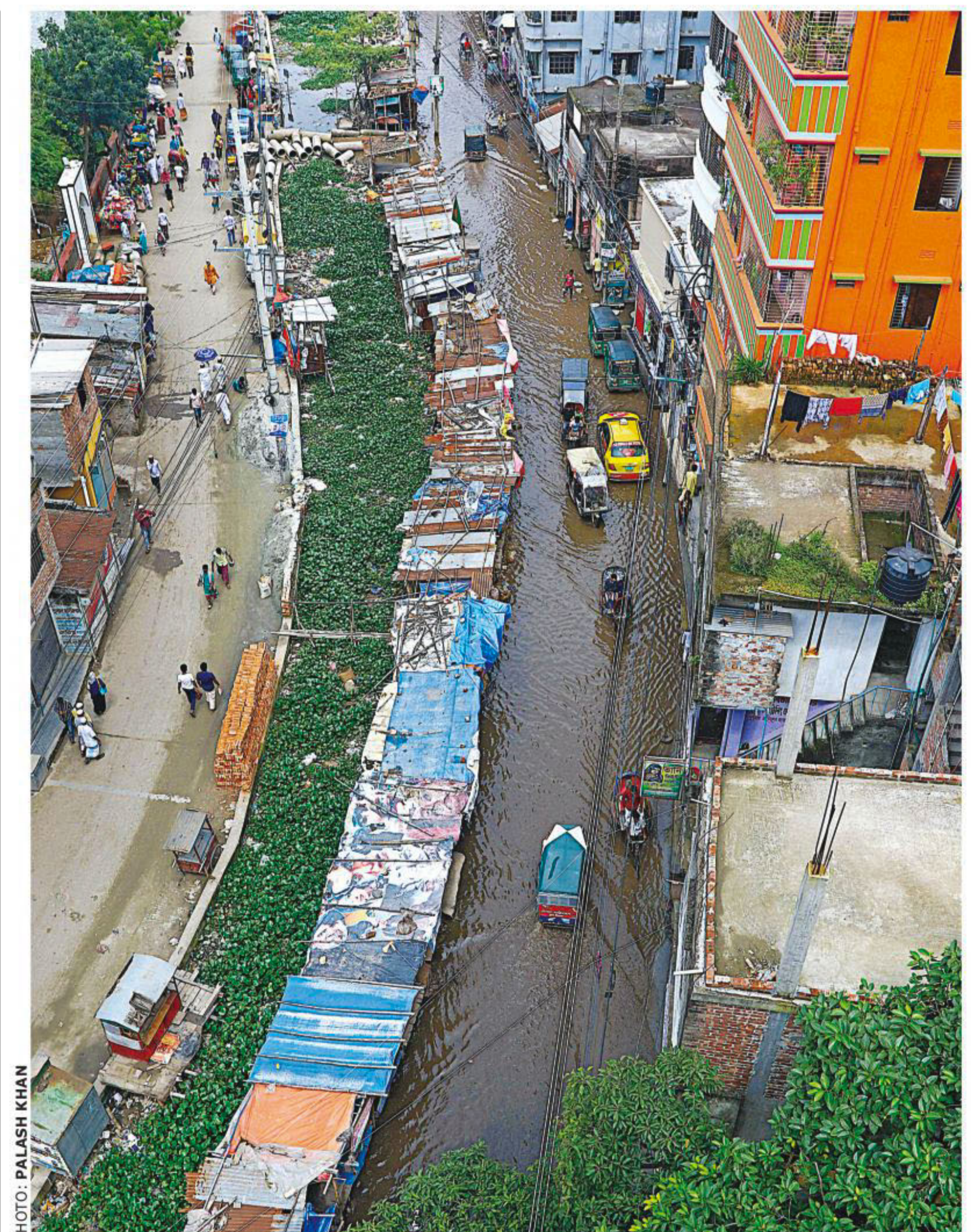
On border killings, the report notes that it is a clear violation of international law to shoot someone at sight or attack within the border or shoot to death anyone while attempting to enter a country crossing any border.

The report claims that the commission always plays an important role in protesting the killings of innocent people along the border and said the commission maintains regular contact with the Human Rights Commission of India in this regard.

In its report, the commission has identified eight problems, including lack of manpower, financial freedom and management, absence of special tribunal and lack of modern technology to connect people it faced in 2015.

As per the commission's organogram, the commission mentions, the approved manpower is 139, but it has only 48 staff now. But it needs more manpower than the approved one.

The commission also wants the parliament to allocate exclusive budget for it.



All it needs is a little rain to create severe waterlogging on the capital's North Dolairpar road due to incessant dumping of waste into the canal next to it and encroachment on one of its sides, which had blocked the flow of water. This condition has been prevailing for the last two and a half months, and needs immediate intervention of the authorities concerned. The photo was taken yesterday.



As elsewhere in the country, visitors queuing for an extended period of time for security checks at the entrance of National Museum at the capital's Shahbagh yesterday as a result of the beefed-up security measures there following the two terrorist attacks in Gulshan and Sholakia early this month.

PHOTO: STAR

## Under trial prisoner dies in hospital

Wife claims complainant, cops tortured him before he was sent to jail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

An under trial prisoner of Munshiganj jail has died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday.

The family of the deceased Abdul Karim alleged that he was tortured by the complainant before being handed over to the police, who also beat him in jail afterwards.

Karim, 35, of Adhariatola village under Munshiganj Sadra upazila, was sent to DMCH for treatment from Munshiganj jail on Thursday due to a severe chest pain, said Farid Uddin Rubel, jailer of Munshiganj jail.

He claimed that when Karim was sent to the jail from the police station on July 11, he was already physically sick.

Karim was first admitted to Munshiganj General Hospital for treatment and later sent to DMCH, the jailer added.

Karim's wife Moyna Begum said a house was being built by their neighbour Md Shamim; Karim along with others wanted some money from him for arranging a picnic earlier this month.

Later, Shamim and his relative Khorshed Alam took Karim to Shamim's office at Adhariatola and

beat him mercilessly and handed him to the cops on July 10, she alleged.

She also alleged that a sub-inspector of Munshiganj Sadar Police Station tortured Karim at the station and damaged a part of his ear.

Shamim also filed an extortion case against Karim the same day and police sent him to Munshiganj jail on July 11, she said.

Moyna alleged that Karim's younger brother Abdus Salam Khan, who was also detained in Munshiganj jail in another case, told her Karim was groaning due to stomach pain yesterday, but when they called a doctor from the local hospital he said that Karim had no problem.

Sonjoy Kumar Poddar, a doctor of Munshiganj General Hospital, said as Karim was seriously sick, he was sent to DMCH for better treatment.

When asked about the reason behind his sickness, the doctor said that they did not perform any test on Karim before sending him to DMCH.

Yunus Ali, officer-in-charge of Munshiganj Sadar Police Station, refuted the allegation, saying that police did not torture him.

## Hindu leaders threatened to leave country

Imam gets death threat for anti-terrorism sermons

STAR REPORT

Unidentified miscreants pasted hand written posters on the gates of three Hindu community leaders' houses at Bhuapur upazila in Tangail on Thursday night, threatening six people of the community to leave the country.

Meanwhile, an imam of a mosque in Pirojpur has received a death threat yesterday.

In Tangail, posters were pasted on the gates of houses of Soron Datta, president of Bhuapur upazila Puja Ujjapan Parishad, Santosh Datta, secretary of Falda Kali Mandir Parishad and Sushil Chandra Basak, a retired school teacher, reports our Tangail correspondent.

They were directed to leave the country and go back to their own one; and were also given 15 days time for this, said police, quoting from the posters.

Name of six persons was mentioned, including Soron

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