

YESTERDAY'S
TEMPERATURESDHAKA
H 33.8°C L 27.0CHITTAGONG
H 31.0°C L 25.5SYLHET
H 35.2°C L 26.9RAJSHAHI
H 35.6°C L 26.1KHULNA
H 32.9°C L 26.9BARISAL
H 30.2°C L 24.8RANGPUR
H 33.0°C L 26.4COX'S BAZAR
H 31.0°C L 25.5

Day temperature may rise slightly over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:34pm and rises tomorrow at 5:33am. Country's highest temperature 35.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rajshahi and the lowest 24.5 in Rangamati.

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Autumn clouds over Hair Haor, Moulvi Bazar.

PHOTO:
IHTISHAM KABIR

Autumn Calling

Within a short time, nature around us has changed subtly but undeniably.

The most visible change is in the sky. The blue has become clearer and deeper. Set against it, autumn clouds take on infinite variations of white: puffy white, sombre white, playful white or just an unexpected, surprising white. The dark clouds, if present, are no longer ominous without the requisite thunder and lightning. The sky is the most telling symptom of imminent autumn.

The heat has become bearable. The endless, burning heat of summer days that scorched the earth and seeped through my skin into every cell of my being has mellowed into mere discomfort. Early morning - before sunrise - it is surprisingly cool, and unlike summer, when the heat started radiating before the sun rose, the heat now follows the sun. At sunset, a gentle breeze starts blowing, like a soothing balm on the face. Sometimes it carries the sweet scent of *hasnahena*. The air has less humidity. During my runs, I find myself sweating less profusely as I breathe deeper enjoy the scents.

Out in the paddy-fields, I watch as shade and sunlight play hide and seek, chasing each other, just as the great poet observed. The fields are carpeted in variations of green and yellow. The threat of being drenched or scorched seems a distant memory.

I see the lush trees and imagine them settling into a post-reproductive languor. They relax after a hectic few months. The frenzy of flowering and pollination of spring, followed by fruit-bearing and seeding of summer and spreading and germination of the seeds in monsoon is over for another

year. They can step back and watch their children grow - another generation of seedlings successfully created. But this means that flowers are few and far between, usually growing on non-native trees. Of them the rain-tree has the prettiest, with shimmering silky threadlike petals.

Birds have lowered their profile and keep to themselves. The migrant birds are gone and we are left with the local species, many of which changed colour to prepare for breeding. They found their mates, bred and now attend to full broods, little chicks running or swimming. There is no need to show off and sing to attract a mate - until next spring, that is. Instead their effort goes into caring for their young, feeding them, protecting them from predators and above all teaching them to fly. Busy with these duties, birds are - to me, anyways - less visible than in spring and winter.

Among this subdued tone of nature, aqueous plants are an exception. Monsoon's waters have brought new life for them, filling our ponds and lakes. And so our variety of water lilies, lotuses and other water plants bloom in splendour. In particular the fields of lotus in our *haors* are a sight to behold. If you wait long enough you might spot a pheasant-tailed jacana flying low with its long tail trailing through the pink flowers swaying in the breeze. It is a sight you are unlikely to forget soon.

Through this I eagerly await winter because that's when the birds return in force. It is a pleasant wait however: autumn gives me much to be grateful for.

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Dhaka urges Beirut, Amman to hire more Bangladeshis

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Nurul Islam called on the Lebanon government to hire more Bangladeshi workers while meeting Lebanese Interior and Municipalities Minister Nouhad Machnouk yesterday, said a ministry press release.

The two ministers agreed to ensure safe migration for outbound workers so that they do not fall prey to exploitations by middlemen.

Earlier, while meeting Lebanese Labour Minister Sejaan Azzi, Nurul Islam requested him to hire workers from Bangladesh for construction and service sectors, and to increase salaries of the Bangladeshis working there. Sejaan assured Nurul Islam emphasised reducing migration costs, expediting recruitment processes and cutting the middlemen.

Earlier on Monday, Nurul Islam visited Jordan where he met the country's Labour Minister Ali Al Gezawi and called on him to hire the Bangladeshis for agriculture and construction sectors, apart from recruiting in apparel sector.

Labour migration from Bangladesh to Jordan is increasing following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries in 2012.

Currently, around 1.5 lakh Bangladeshis are working in Lebanon and 1.25 lakh in Jordan, the press release added.

The minister accompanied by other high-ups reached Jordan on August 5 and Lebanon on August 10.

Ankara sends envoy back to Dhaka

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Devrim Ozturk, who left Dhaka on May 12 for "consultations" following execution of war criminal Motiur Rahman Nizami, has returned to his assignment yesterday morning.

He was called back to Ankara by the Turkey's foreign ministry after Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan angrily reacted and had taken no time to condemn Nizami's execution on May 11. He even believes Nizami had done "no earthly sins".

Before leaving Dhaka, he had told the foreign ministry that he would be back in a few days, but he returned after three months.

Bangladesh Ambassador in Ankara Allama Siddiki, who came to Dhaka on June 2, also joined back on Wednesday.

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Fakhrul slams AL for not responding to Khaleda's call for unity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League has not responded to Khaleda Zia's call for unity against militancy like they had done in the past, BNP alleged yesterday.

"Awami League never responds to any call for saving the country and the same thing has happened to the Khaleda Zia's call," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, while addressing a discussion at Dhaka Reporters' Unity.

The National Democratic Party, a component of the BNP-led 20-party alliance, organised the discussion marking the eighth death anniversary of its founder chairman Anwar Zahid.

Urging everyone to be united to get back the voting rights, he said only a credible polls under a neutral government can solve the ongoing problem.

JU suspends two students, while BCL two activists

A CORRESPONDENT, JU

The Jahangirnagar University authorities on Thursday night suspended two students on the charge of doing drugs on the campus.

The decision came from an emergency syndicate meeting following an emergency disciplinary board meeting, confirmed Registrar Abu Bakr Siddique.

They also sued Mainuddin Joni, a master's student of Bangla; and Sazzad Hossain Sayem, a fourth year student of computer

science and engineering, and handed them over to Ashulia police, he said.

A four-member JU committee formed to probe into the incident was asked to submit a report in two weeks.

Meanwhile, JU unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League yesterday suspended one of its leaders and activists for their alleged unethical activities, said a press release.

Khan Mohammad Rois, deputy relief secretary of the unit; and Md Rasel, activist, however, denied the allegation.

Now 'Tree Boy' in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon



A young boy in Thakurgaon has been suffering from the tree man illness, a rare skin disorder caused by a virus named human papillomaviruses.

Ripon Roy, 7, son of Mohendra Roy of Ketgaon village and a class II student of Ketgaon Government Primary School, was affected when he was only three-month-old, said Mohendra Roy, his father.

Warts began to develop on his palm and foot, which are getting larger, he said, while seeking help for his son's better treatment.

Golapi Rani, Ripon's mother, said during winter Ripon's sufferings increase as his skin becomes drier. The doctors advised to take him to the capital or India, she said, adding, "But we were unable to do that due to financial crisis."

"I mostly rely on others," said Ripon, adding, "I cannot even play with my classmates."

Humayun Kabir, resident medical officer of Pirganj health complex, told The Daily Star over the phone that it might be a neuron related disease.

Contacted, Mukesh Chandra Bishwas, deputy commissioner of Thakurgaon, said, "We will take necessary steps to send Ripon to DMCH for his treatment."

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