

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 27.7 L 17.6	H 27.7 L 16.1	H 29.0 L 16.0	H 29.5 L 17.0	H 28.5 L 16.2	H 27.8 L 16.5	H 27.4 L 15.8	H 29.2 L 14.5	H 28.2 L 16.6

Light rain or drizzle may occur at one or two places over Rangpur, Rajshahi, Mymensingh, Khulna, Barisal, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and Comilla, reports UNB. Night temperature may fall and day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, says Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:42pm and rises tomorrow at 6:41am. Country's highest temperature 31.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday in Rangamati and lowest 12.2 in Sitakunda.

Dhaka, Moscow place trust in relations

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka and Moscow have expressed confidence in building up supportive and comprehensive economic partnership between the two countries to realise the full potential of bilateral relations.

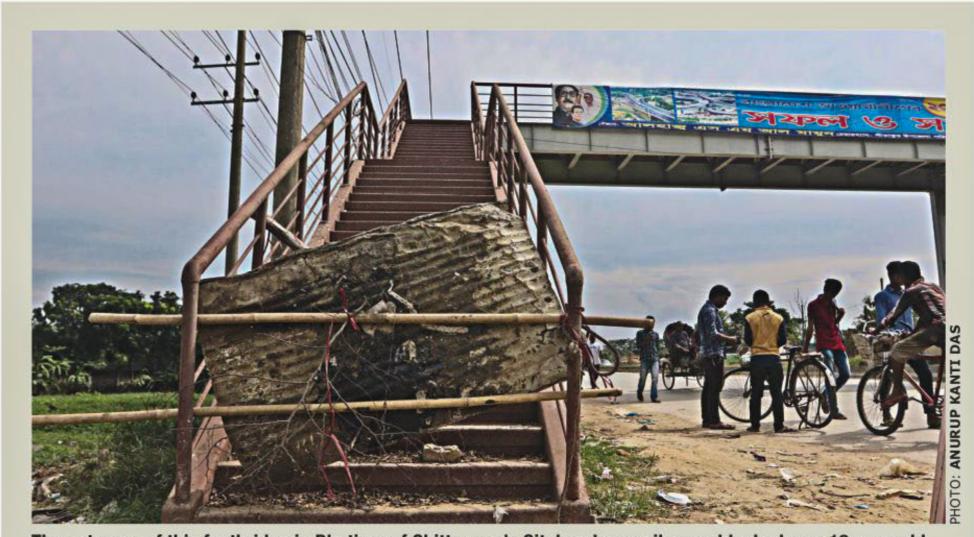
This has reflected in the messages of foreign ministers of Bangladesh and the Russian Federation, who exchanged messages of felicitations to mark the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, according to a foreign ministry press release yesterday.

Bangladesh and the Russian Federation (then USSR) established diplomatic ties on January 25, 1972.

In his message, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov mentioned that "Russia-Bangladesh ties exist for decades are characterized by equality and high level of mutual trust. "We highly appreciate the constructive interaction with Dhaka on international arena, first of all, in the UN and its specialised bodies. Trade and economic cooperation is growing at an ever-increasing rate. Its landmark - the large-scale project on construction of the first Nuclear Power Plant "Rooppur" in Bangladesh by Russian specialists," he said.

Termining bilateral relations with the Russian Federation "historic," Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mahmood Ali, replied to his Russian counterpart that two countries believe in "a shared vision for equality and dignity".

He further said, "Our two countries are bound by common interests on a wide range of bilateral, regional and multilateral issues."



The entrance of this footbridge in Bhatiyar of Chittagong's Sitakunda upazila was blocked as a 12-year-old schoolboy got electrocuted with the live electric wire hanging close to it. The photo was taken recently.

A boy's life in hell

MINHAJ UDDIN, Ctg

Bappy had felt something magnetic was tugging him when he got on a newly built footbridge to cross a busy highway. As soon as he had fathomed, the 12-year-old became unconscious and when he regained his consciousness, he found him lying on a hospital bed with his whole body in pains as he had sustained severe burns on various parts, especially on his two arms.

That was how he got electrocuted with an exposed high voltage wire in Bhatiyar area of Chittagong's Sitakunda upazila nearly four months ago.

But his torment did not end there. The right arm and the left one below the elbow and the big toe of the left leg of the minor had to be amputated as, what the doctors at Chittagong Medical College Hospital said, there was no option but to remove those. The electrocution caused damage to the blood vessel walls and tissues, they added.

The fifth-grader of Bhatiyar Government Primary School was describing his ordeal in a recent interview with The Daily Star at the hospital.

On the fateful October 5 last year, the day started and progressed just like every other day. He did not have the slightest inkling that in the middle of the day, he would face the tragic episode in his life.

Through the bridge, "I was returning to my school after taking food at a shop during a break," he said, the wire was hanging close to it.

"I didn't know there was a wire otherwise, I wouldn't

have gone close to the place," he said.

Devastated Bazlur Rahman, father of the boy, said he was worried how his son will continue with life. "He is my eldest son among three children. I don't know what is our future," said the man who works as a day labourer to make a living.

"Doctors say my son can continue living normally with artificial limbs which costs Tk 25 lakh but where is the money?" cried the father who has already spent Tk 1.5 lakh by taking loan from individuals, including his relatives.

Still, he has to take his son to the hospital on a regular basis for follow-up treatment. "How can I repay the money? What should I do amid the situation?" said Bazlur, the sole bread earner for his five-member family.

"May no father feel like I do, may no child feel like my child does," said Bazlur.

Gazi Humayun Kabir, headmaster of the primary school, said, "It is so sad that a bright child is maimed at the beginning of his life."

Meanwhile, visiting the accident spot, this correspondent came to know from the residents that the electrocution took place before inauguration of the footbridge and there was no cautionary approach.

Zulfiqar Ahmed, executive engineer of Roads and Highways Department in Chittagong and also the project manager, however, claimed that they had set bamboo at its entrance so that nobody could get on it.

When asked, Bappy said he had not found such obstruction at that time.



Bappy at CMCH after the incident.

Dhaka mission in Kolkata starts machine readable visa service

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kolkata

Bangladesh Deputy High Commission in Kolkata, India, yesterday launched machine readable visa (MRV) application service to ease visa procedures for the neighbouring country's people.

In the experimental phase, it received around 100 MRV applications through online, confirmed officials at the mission. The mission will start issuing MRVs by the next two weeks, they added.

Usually, the mission can issue 300 to 450 visas manually every day. The officials hoped that the figure would be almost double through MRV process.

Now, Bangladesh High Commission in Delhi and Assistant High Commission in Agartala are issuing MRVs. Bangladesh government is also issuing visas from its Deputy High Commission in Mumbai.

All necessary machines and devices were earlier sent to Kolkata for the MRVs, but the task couldn't be launched. On Thursday, foreign ministry asked the officials to launch it immediately.

So, the Bangladesh mission had to launch the system without any prior announcement. Therefore, many applicants failed to submit their applications. Mofakkarul Islam, first secretary (press) at Deputy High Commission in Kolkata, told The Daily Star that the total process of receiving applications and issuing visas would be conducted digitally.

"No manual visa application will be received. No manual visa will also be issued. Thus, there will not be any scope of allegation of issuing fake visa," he added.

SNAPS & snippets

Textbook blunders worry Duta

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) yesterday expressed deep concern over the textbook blunders terming it a conspiracy to taint the government's success.

A vested quarter has carried out the blunders to make the government deviate from its non-communal spirit, read a Duta statement issued by its President Prof ASM Maksud Kamal and General Secretary Prof Dr Md Rahmat Ullah.

"We have already formed a committee to scrutinise the textbooks intensely and will submit recommendations to the education ministry soon," Prof Maksud told The Daily Star.

BD envoy presents credentials

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has sought more Singaporean investment in the country, particularly in infrastructure development, industrialisation, tourism and energy sector.

Newly appointed Bangladesh High Commissioner to Singapore Mustafizur Rahman made the call during presenting credentials to President of Singapore Dr Tony Tan Keng Yam in his official residence on Thursday. The president assured the new envoy of his full cooperation in carrying out responsibilities and hoped that the bilateral relations will be further improved.

Quack doctor found dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

Police recovered the throat-slit body of a quack from his house at Baniacho Bazar in Shahrasti upazila of Chandpur yesterday.

Locals found Anwarul Miazi, 60, son of Abdul Majid of Baniacho village, dead in the morning as the door was open, said Member of Baniacho Union Parishad Delowar Hossain, adding that he used live alone in the house.

Police sent the body to Chandpur Sadar Hospital Morgue for autopsy.



Demanding immediate release and withdrawal of 'false' cases against the arrested RMG leaders, people under the banner of Solidarity & Legal Aid Committee for Victim Garment Workers & Leaders form a human chain in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday.



Guests hold copies of the book "Sudhui Smrity Noy" (Not just a memory), written by Asma Kibra, wife of slain finance minister SAMS Kibria, during a launching ceremony at Poet Shamsur Rahman Seminar Hall of Bangla Academy yesterday. The book reflects on the family life of the Kibrias.

Kibria justice stalled for 12yrs

Speedy trial demanded at launch of book 'Sudhui Smrity Noy', written by Asma Kibria

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a book launching ceremony yesterday demanded a speedy trial for the murder of former finance minister SAMS Kibria who was assassinated 12 years ago.

Kibria was a patriot and man full of knowledge, they told the programme at Poet Shamsur Rahman Seminar Hall in Bangla Academy, jointly organised by Parijat Prakashani and the Bangladesh Foundation for Development Research.

The book, "Sudhui Srimti Noy" (Not just a memory), was written by his wife Asma Kibria, reflecting on the life they had together.

A former Awami League leader, Kibria was killed on January 27, 2005 in a grenade attack in his constituency of Habiganj.

Addressing the ceremony, Prof Emeritus Dr Rafiqul Islam said the Kibrias had not got justice in more than a decade.

He also cited the grenade attack of 2004 on Ivy Rahman, former women's affairs secretary of the Awami League, and expressed disappointment for prolonging

LEGAL AID FOR POOR

SCLAC's views exchange meeting today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court Legal Aid Committee (SCLAC) will exchange views with its panel lawyers, rights activists, academicians and journalists today to establish the legal rights of insolvent, poor and helpless people at the government's cost.

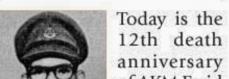
Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha will address as chief guest the programme to be held in the SC auditorium at 10:00am with SCLAC Chairman Justice M Enayetur Rahim in the chair.

A poster published by Manusher Jonno Foundation, a rights organisation, containing different issues regarding the legal aid service of SCLAC, will be launched on the occasion.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam, Supreme Court Bar Association President Advocate Yusuf Hossain Humayun, National Legal Aid Services Organization acting director Mostafizur Rahman, and Manusher Jonno Foundation Executive Director Shaheen Anam, among others, will speak at the programme, an SC press release said.

Death anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

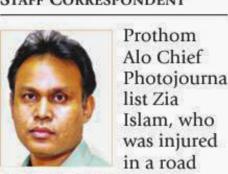


Today is the 12th death anniversary of AKM Farid Uddin Ahmed, a freedom fighter and former deputy assistant director of erstwhile BDR, says a press release.

A Qurankhwan and a doa mahfil will be held at his residence at 1163/A, Khilagaon Chowdhury Para, Dhaka. Foods will also be distributed among the destitute at local Noor mosque and madrasa.

Journalist Zia out of danger

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Prothom Alo Chief Photojournalist Zia Islam, who was injured in a road accident, is now out of danger, said a senior correspondent yesterday quoting his doctors in Singapore.

He said Zia opened both of his eyes normally, but yet to recognise anyone. It would take some time for him to get cured, said the doctors of Singapore's Gleneagles Hospital where Zia has been undergoing treatment for the last 15 days.

Zia suffered injuries in the head and leg when a speeding car hit his bike from behind before

ACC to check 'admission trade' in schools

Says Chairman Iqbal Mahmud

A CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Chairman Iqbal Mahmud yesterday said they have formed a separate team to check on "admission trade" in the schools enjoying the government's monthly pay order (MPO) facility.

"All the schools under MPO are government institutions [as they receive government's money]. The government has a right in those institutions that receive its money. We have formed the team so that none can get involved in admission trade in those institutions," he said.

The ACC boss made the remarks while talking to reporters after emerging from a programme marking the ten years of Biddyaniketon School in Narayanganj.

"We do not want to see that people admit their children into schools paying extra money, because admission trade is a corruption," he said, adding that a team had already started working to check on the corruption practices in schools.

Earlier, he asked the students to obtain real education. Getting GPA 5 is not an education; real education is something that helps our lives, he added.

CJ joins event of Manikganj hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

The 17th founding anniversary of Manikganj Sahera Hasan Memorial Hospital was observed on its premises yesterday.

Chief Justice SK Sinha, attorney general Mahbubey Alam, State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Zahid Malik, Bangladesh Red Crescent Society Chairman Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, National Professor Shaila Khatun, Justice Obaidul Islam, were, among others, present on the occasion.

Dr Rawshan Ara and her family members established the hospital named after her father Mir Hasan Ali and mother Sahera Khatun in 2001.



Visitors at a group exhibition titled "Chhapai Chhobi-3" yesterday at the capital's Galleri Kaya. The exhibition brings together print work of 10 eminent artists of different generations. The artists are Murtaja Baseer, Monirul Islam, Rafiqun Nabi, Ratan Mojumder, Rokeya Sultana, Wakilur Rahman, Atin Basak, Rabeya Ahmed Holy, Moazzem Hossain and Rashida Akter. Syed Manzur Elahi, chairman of Apex Group, inaugurated the exhibition where architect and art critic Rabiul Hussain attended as the special guest. Sponsored by ADN Group, the exhibition will remain open everyday from 11:00am to 7:30pm till February 10.