

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 31.9 L 20.7	H 29.0 L 20.0	H 30.2 L 20.0	H 31.1 L 18.6	H 33.1 L 20.5	H 27.0 L 21.0	H 32.8 L 22.0	H 32.0 L 19.8	H 31.0 L 20.5

Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country having chances of rain or thunder showers over Dhaka, Rangpur, Rajshahi, Mymensingh and Sylhet divisions till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged and night temperature may rise slightly over the country, says Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:11pm and rises tomorrow at 5:58am.

Japan to give \$60,291 to improve Nat'l Zoo audio-visual system

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Japan will provide grant assistance worth \$60,291 to Bangladesh National Zoo for improvement of audio-visual equipment for educational exhibition.

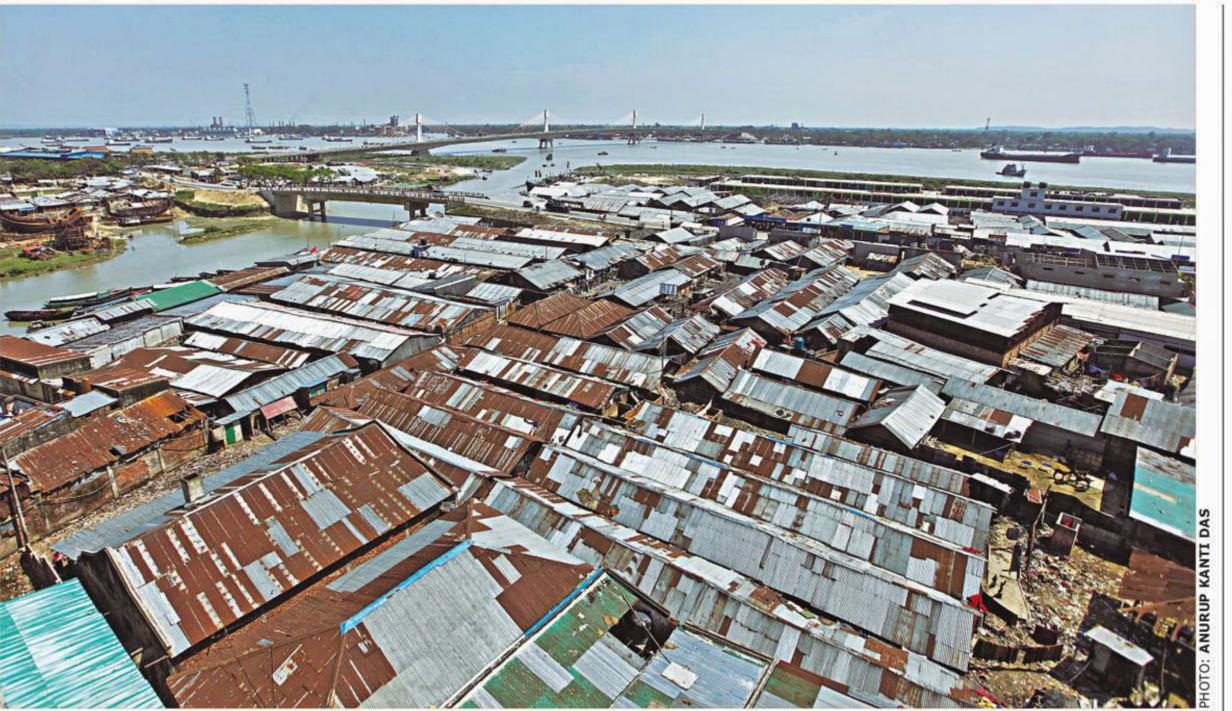
In this regard, an agreement was signed between Masato Watanabe, ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh, and Dr SM Nazrul Islam, curator of Bangladesh National Zoo, at the Embassy of Japan in the capital yesterday.

This project contributes diversification of education on biology of wild animals and environment in Bangladesh through improvement of audio-visual equipment including signboards and speaker system in the zoo, according to a press release.

In terms of strengthening longtime amicable bilateral relationship between Bangladesh and Japan further, the government of Japan made a study on additional cooperation between two countries in the field of biodiversity and wild animal conservation to improve conservation of endangered Bengal Tigers raised in Bangladesh National Zoo.

Ambassador Watanabe said the mutual understanding between the people of Japan and Bangladesh should be deepened further in various fields. In this regard, the ambassador stressed the importance of cooperation in the field of culture and higher education including this project.

Nazrul Islam expressed his gratitude to the people of Japan and the Japanese government.



Tin-roofed shanties on the bank of the Karnaphuli river in Chittagong city. To save the river from encroachment and pollution, the High Court in an order in August, 2016, directed the district administration to publish a circular in two local newspapers within seven days after receiving the full judgement, asking the owners of the structures to relocate them in 90 days. If they do not comply with the order, the authorities concerned will demolish them in the next 90 days. But nothing has changed yet. The photo was taken from Shah Amanat Bridge area yesterday.

NEWS IN brief

Freedom fighter Irshadul Azim passes away

CITY DESK



Md Irshadul Azim, a freedom fighter and former principal engineer of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, died from a heart attack on Wednesday. He was 70.

He left behind a son and a daughter, says a press release.

Irshadul was buried with state honour at Mirpur Martyred Intellectuals Graveyard in the capital yesterday.

Two Ctg cops injured during raid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Two policemen were injured by an alleged criminal before arresting him during a raid in Harishpur area of Sandwip upazila in Chittagong yesterday.

Assistant Sub-Inspector Akbor Hossain, who was shot, and Constable Faruk Hossain were being treated at a local hospital, said Shamsul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sandwip Police Station.

Jafor Alam, an accused in 10 various cases, who fired gunshots targeting the policemen, was arrested with a pistol and three bullets, said the OC.

US embassy closed on Sunday for Independence Day

CITY DESK

The American embassy will remain closed on Sunday on the occasion of Independence Day, a Bangladeshi national holiday.

The Consular Section and the American Center with the Archer K Blood American Center Library and the EducationUSA, Student Advising Center will also be closed.

American citizens, however, can contact the duty officer at 5566-2000 for emergency services.

Transcraft production officer Badrul Amin dies

CITY DESK



Badrul Amin Khan Imran, production officer of Transcraft Ltd, died from a heart attack at Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in Uttara yesterday. He was 50.

He left behind his wife, a son and a daughter. Press employees of Transcraft, Prothom Alo and The Daily Star expressed deep shock at his untimely demise and prayed for the salvation of his departed soul.

People won't accept any anti-state deal

Fakhrul says ahead of PM's India visit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said the whole nation is concerned about Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's upcoming visit to India.

The country's people will not accept if any agreement, which will put the country's independence and sovereignty under threat, is signed with the neighbouring country, he reiterated at a meeting of BNP Dhaka City Unit in the capital's Bhasani Auditorium.

The meeting was organised as part of the party's preparation to observe Independence Day on March 26. "A minister already said Teesta water sharing deal would not be signed during the visit," said Fakhrul. The government is yet to reveal which agreements it is going to sign with India, but media reports on the deal are making the party worried, he said.

It is necessary for the premier to go to India to resolve many issues including the Teesta water sharing one.

Pointing to the recent increase in militant activities, Fakhrul said the government was using militancy issue to put the blame on BNP.

'BCL halts' construction of RU research centre

OUR CORRESPONDENT, RU

The construction work of the "Liberation War Research Centre" at Rajshahi University has remained suspended for four days as Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders allegedly barred the RU authorities from continuing it.

On Monday, 15 to 20 BCL leaders and activists of the RU unit rushed to the construction site and forced the workers to leave the place, alleged some staff of the university's central library, seeking anonymity.

Since then, the construction work has been halted.

On March 14, the RU authorities started constructing the research centre to preserve rare documents, documentaries, films, music, digital and print versions of newspapers and magazines of the 1971 Liberation War, officials said.

RU unit BCL General Secretary Faysal Ahmed Runu, however, denied the allegation. "As far as I know, no Chhatra League member went there and stopped the work."

Prof Shafiqunnabi Samadi, the coordinator of the construction work, said, "We feel helpless as some 20-30 youths came there and forced them to stop the work."

"What can we do then? We know they are students, we cannot fight them."

He said he cannot complain to the vice chancellor or the pro-VC as their tenures expired on Sunday.

He, however, said an 11-member committee, which is entrusted with supervising the construction work, might hold a meeting next week to resolve the crisis.

NO TO NEW TUBEWELL INSTALLATION

AL men demonstrate against engineer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Awami League leaders and activists in Bagmara upazila yesterday besieged the office of a government engineer and demanded his removal within 24 hours.

Nearly a hundred agitators took position in front of the office of the engineer, Rezaul Karim, at Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA), and demonstrated for about an hour, said Inspector Asaduzzaman of Bagmara Police Station.

Led by Mokbul Hossain Mridha, vice president of the upazila unit AL, they also demanded authorisation of installation of new deep tubewells.

Amid heightened tension "we retracted [from the office premises] to avoid any untoward incident, but we called for reinforcement to disperse them," Inspector Asad said. The AL men left the scene before the additional forces arrived.

Speaking to this correspondent, the assistant engineer, alleged that Zakirul Islam Sunto, the upazila chairman as well as the AL general secretary in the upazila, is behind the agitation. After he did not give in to Sunto's unlawful demands for authorising installation of 268 new deep tubewells and upgrading a deep tubewell to twice its authorised horsepower allocation, Sunto instigated his followers to launch the demonstration, Rezaul said.

The agriculture ministry has halted installation of new deep tubewells due to the groundwater depletion, but Sunto assaulted him in his office after Rezaul did not entertain his demands, he claimed. He also said he has filed a general diary with Bagmara Police Station Tuesday after the assault and he was staying in Rajshahi city fearing further assault.

However, Sunto denied Rezaul's allegations, saying he only "pushed" him out of his office Tuesday when Rezaul failed to give him a "reasonable explanation" why he was not visiting the place where tubewells were demanded for irrigation.

SC allows FBCCI to proceed with election process

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday allowed the authorities concerned to continue the process for holding the election of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) until further order.

The FBCCI election is scheduled for May 14.

Yesterday, Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division of the SC Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain passed the order following a petition filed by FBCCI seeking a stay on a recent High Court order halting the election for two months.

The chamber judge also sent FBCCI's petition to the full-bench of the Appellate Division for its hearing on Monday. FBCCI lawyer Imtiaz Moinul Islam told The Daily Star that there is no legal bar for continuing the election process following the SC judge's order.

Following a petition filed by Mymensingh Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Aminul Haque Shamim, the HC on Wednesday stayed the election process.

RISHA MURDER Charge accepted, case transferred

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday accepted the charge against Obaidul Khan, the lone accused in a case filed for the murder of Suraiya Akter Risha, a class-VIII student of Willes Little Flower School in the capital.

Judge Kamrul Hossain Mollah of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka scrutinised case dockets and accepted the charge.

The court also transferred the case to the Eighth Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka for its disposal and fixed April 17 to hear charge framing against the accused in the case.

During the investigation, Obaidul confessed to the killing. Risha was stabbed near the school at Kakrail on August 24 last year. She succumbed to her injuries at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Obaidul, a tailoring shop worker in the city, was arrested in Domar upazila of Nilphamari with the help of locals a week after he stabbed Risha.

Seven-day military hardware

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displaying the contributions and bravery of the armed forces during the Liberation War. The stalls and pavilions also showcase the activities of the armed forces in nation building and their contributions to the UN peacekeeping missions.

ISPR Director Lt Col Mohammad Rashidul Hassan briefed journalists about the display at a press briefing yesterday.

Commander Mohammad Shahin Majid of Armed Forces Division, Wing Commander Mohammad Mamunur Rashid of Bangladesh Air Force, Maj Syed Maghudur Rahman of Bangladesh Army and Commander M Humayun Kabir of Bangladesh Navy also spoke.



Risking their lives, passengers board and jump off a Kamalapur-bound train as it slows down before entering Tejgaon Railway Station in the capital Wednesday. Though the practice, which can lead to fatalities anytime, is very rampant, the authorities concerned choose to turn a blind eye.



Firemen at Munshiganj Paper Mills spray water on a stack of paper bundles after a fire broke out at the factory around 11:00am yesterday. It took them four hours to contain the fire. Four people including a fireman was injured during the incident.

HC sends records to CJ

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two appeals filed by the then government in 1992 praying for enhancing the sentence of Ershad in this case are pending with the HC, Anti-Corruption Commission's lawyer Advocate Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star.

He said all the three appeals filed by the government and Ershad relating to the corruption case will now be sent to the chief justice.

After receiving the records, Chief Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha may assign the HC to hold hearing on all the three appeals simultaneously, Advocate Khurshid said.

He said it might not take a long time to hear and dispose of the three appeals, as the HC has already heard arguments on the appeal of Ershad and was set to deliver a verdict on it yesterday.

The then Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac), which became defunct after formation of the ACC in 2004, had filed the case against Ershad with Cantonment Police Station in 1992 on the charge of misappropriating Tk 1.91 crore by misusing powers at different times when he was the president from December 11, 1983 to December 6, 1990.

On February 3, 1992, a Dhaka court convicted Ershad, also chairman of the Jatiya Party, and sentenced him to three years' imprisonment.

Ershad the same year had filed an appeal with the HC, challenging the lower court judgment. In the appeal, Ershad prayed to the HC to acquit him of the corruption charge.

Following the appeal, the HC stayed the lower court verdict, Advocate Khurshid said, adding that the ACC on February 26 in 2012 became a party of the case under the HC's permission, as the Bac was not functional. The lawyer said Ershad had obtained bail from the HC in the case, as he served three years' in jail in the case.

Mamata to

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Bangabandhu Memorial Museum.

A section of students on Tuesday brought out a procession towards Bangladesh deputy high commission on Bangabandhu Sarani in Kolkata. Barred, they handed over a memorandum to a local police station.

According to the memorandum addressed to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, they came to learn via media on March 18 that a bust of Bangabandhu was installed at the hostel as West Bengal Communist Party leader Biman Bose had laid garland to the statue on March 17.

PHOTO: STAR