



YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 32.6 L 26.8

MYMENSINGH H 33.0 L 28.0

CHITTAGONG H 30.5 L 26.7

SYLHET H 31.0 L 26.4

RAJSHAHI H 35.6 L 27.5

RANGPUR H 35.2 L 27.5

KHULNA H 34.5 L 27.2

BARISAL H 31.5 L 26.9

COX'S BAZAR H 29.4 L 25.5

Rain accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Rangpur, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places over the country till 6:00pm today, reports UNB. Day and night temperatures may remain nearly unchanged over the country, says Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:22pm and rises tomorrow at 5:39am.

US official due in Dhaka this week

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Acting assistant secretary of US Department of State for South and Central Asian Affairs and acting special representative for

Afghanistan and Pakistan, Alice Wells, will be in Dhaka on a two-day visit this week.

She will travel to Dhaka, Islamabad, and Colombo from August 28-September 2, said the US Department of State yesterday, without specifying dates for the Dhaka visit, although diplomatic sources say the Dhaka leg will span August 29-30.

Alice Wells will meet government officials including Foreign Minister AH Mahmood Ali, business leaders, and civil society representatives to discuss US cooperation in the region.

A diplomatic source said the US official, in her maiden trip to Dhaka on August 29-30, is likely to meet Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's advisors on energy, defence and international affairs.



People help push a car out of a pothole after it got stuck there on Begum Rokeya Sarani in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area yesterday. A large portion of the road has been dug up for the ongoing metro rail project.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

NEWS IN brief

Briefing held for C'wealth scholars

CITY DESK

The British Council recently organised a pre-departure briefing for departing Commonwealth Scholars and Fellows for 2017-18, said a press release yesterday.

The British Council organised the programme on behalf of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the UK in the auditorium of the council's Dhaka University branch. Towhidur Rahman, regional manager of Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, South Asia, conducted the briefing that was attended by 45 scholars and fellows from Bangladesh.

Syngenta supports flood victims

CITY DESK

Syngenta Bangladesh Ltd has provided support to the flood affected people in the country's northern areas, says a press release.

Dry food, drinking water and oral saline were given to 1,200 families in Dinajpur, Kurigram and Naogaon on August 21 and 23. Syngenta Managing Director Sazzadul Hassan joined the relief distribution programme.

JU Eid vacation begins today

JU CORRESPONDENT

Jahangirnagar University is going on a 12-day vacation today on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha.

All the classes will remain suspended till September 7, said a press release. However, administrative activities will be closed on August 29.

Canal encroachment plays the biggest part

Says joint survey of Bangladesh Environment Forum and Cuet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Encroachment of canals is the main reason that contributes to perennial waterlogging in Chittagong city, according to a survey disclosed yesterday.

To find a suitable solution to this problem, Bangladesh Environment Forum in association with Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) conducted the survey in July, studying the total number of canals in the port city and its water flow capacity.

The findings of the survey were disclosed in a press conference at Chittagong Press Club yesterday, with environment activist Aliur Rahman in the chair.

Quoting the Drainage Master

Plan formulated in 1969 by Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), Aliur said there are more than 70 canals in the city.

But Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) could mention the existence of only 37 canals, he said referring to the survey.

"The reality is 15 percent of these canals have been encroached upon -- either completely or partially," Aliur said.

Due to heavy rainfall, different parts of the city remained under water for one-third period of 120 days from April to July, according to the written statement provided in the conference.

The downpour burdens the city with 14 crore 58 lakh cubic feet of water.

CTG WATERLOGGING

The data provided by CCC showed that the existing 37 canals with 161 kilometers of length have the capacity of containing 10 crore cubic feet of water. The excess 4 crore 58 lakh cubic feet of water spells trouble in the rainy season.

As per the survey, the city has 33 more canals with the capacity of containing nearly 10 crore cubic feet water. If these canals are recovered from encroachers, the city's waterlogging problem would be solved, it said.

The encroachment of Chaktai, Mohesh and Kattali canals caused the week-long waterlogging in Agrabad and CDA area recently.

The survey showed that the width of Chaktai canal is only 80 feet, which was recorded 125 feet in 1969's master plan. However, the width of the junction of Mohesh and Kattali canals was recorded as 100 feet, which is now less than 40 feet.

The remaining portions of all these canals have been encroached illegally, as per the survey.

Engineer Ali Ashraf, Professor Dr Swapan Kumar Palit and Professor Idris Ali of the Department of Civil Engineering at Cuet, also spoke at the conference.

The speakers urged the authorities concerned to develop a proper drainage network in the city.

Engineer Ali Ashraf said the

efficiency level of existing drainage system is 60 percent.

For a permanent solution to the waterlogging problem, the drainage system should reach up to at least 90 percent of efficiency, he added.

In the conference, the speakers proposed a number of resolutions to the CCC mayor, CDA chairman, divisional commissioner, district commissioner, Chairman of Water and Sewerage Authority (Wasa), and the Water Development Board.

The resolutions include recovering the canals, developing efficient drainage system, establishing sluice gates where necessary, enforcing law against polluting water bodies, and raising social awareness.



Canals were built long ago and served as the lifeblood of the country by smoothly dispersing water from monsoon rain. One such canal belonging to Dhaka South City Corporation in north Kutubkhali area is about to go out of existence. Now hardly visible on the left side of the road, encroachers are slowly gobbling it up by setting up makeshift shops on it and dumping solid waste in it.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Facebook reunites girl with parents

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A speech-impaired girl, who went missing five months ago, has got her parents back through a Facebook post.

Nasreen Akther, 15, was handed over to her family at the centre of Women Support Programme (WSP) under the women and child affairs ministry on Friday afternoon.

Zakir Hossain, additional deputy commissioner, gave the post on a Facebook page -- Barisal-Problem and Prospects -- of the Barisal District Administration on August 20 seeking whereabouts of Nasreen's parents.

Five months ago, Barisal Kotwali Model police handed her over to the authorities of WSP centre after she was found in Barisal Rupatali Bas Stand area.

Nasreen was just able to write down her name, said the ADC.

Seeing the post, Rubel, a youth of her area, instantly responded to it and helped find her parents.

Nasreen's father Hamid Mridha of Karnakathi village in Barisal Sadar upazila said he filed a general diary with a local police station after his daughter went missing.

Article blocked SQ Chy's

FROM PAGE 4

Scholars Publishers, also features 19 lectures delivered by the former Bangladesh diplomat. It highlights the country's "anarchic and unstable" situation during 2001-2008, while one of the articles "Curious Crusade against Family Politics" depicted the move against "dynasty" in Bangladesh politics after the 1/11 incident.

Abdul Momen served as permanent representative to the UN from 2009 to 2015.

Prime Minister's Political Affairs Adviser HT Imam, Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, and Prof Emeritus Anisuzzaman were present, among others.

Train rams truck, kills 2

FROM PAGE 3

Express train was passing the unprotected crossing at the time and rammed the vehicle.

The train dragged the truck with it for nearly half a kilometer, leaving two people spot dead. Three others, injured during the collision, were hospitalised.

Ensure rights of informal

FROM PAGE 3

not have fixed holidays or fixation of wage, she said, adding that those are vital to ensure their rights.

The workers' leaders also demanded issuance of appointment letters and identity cards, fixed working hours and adequate salary for the workers.

50km of Dhaka-Barisal waterway risky

M JAHIRUL ISLAM JEWEL, Barisal

Around 50 kilometres of waterway on Dhaka-Barisal route is risky due to narrowness of a river, one of its sharp curves, hidden islands and inadequate signal lights demarcating the danger zones, said BIWTA officials and crewmen.

As a result, accidents often occur at the portion from Bhashancher in Mehendiganj upazila to Barisal launch terminal, said the masters.

So, a tension is growing up as a large number of vessels will have to pass through the 50km portion during Eid.

Thousands of passengers of the southern areas will use the route to reach their destinations.

On June 13 night, a launch, MV Tashrif 1, collided with an oil tanker at Charbaria point on the portion, injur-

ing 12 people, naval sources said.

In another incident on April 23, a water bus, MV Green Line, hit a stone-laden cargo at the same place, capsizing the cargo. The other vessel also got damaged, said sources at Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA).

Another launch, MV Surovi-7, collided with an oncoming steamer, PS Masud, there during Eid-ul-Fitr last year, killing seven passengers and injuring 15 others, said the sources.

Some drivers said many islands cannot be identified due to a lack of signal lights, causing accidents.

The Charbaria point is more risky due to narrowness of the river Kirtonkhola, said Jahangir Hossain, an operator of a launch, Parabat.

He added that there is no mechanism at any vessel to detect hidden

islands.

The 50km waterway remains busy as the vessels -- both the passenger and goods carrying ones -- use it always, said Hafeezur Rahman, master of a launch, Surovi.

When asked about ensuring safe Eid journey, BIWTA officials said special services will start today and they have taken necessary steps in this regard.

They asked all the goods-laden vessels, including tankers and cargos, not to use the 50km risky portion from today to September 8, said Azmol Huda, a deputy director of BIWTA, Barisal.

Besides, the operators of the passenger vessels were asked to drive slowly and carefully while passing through the risky portion, he said.

To monitor the situation, BIWTA people will be present there, he added.



Green Line Paribahan yesterday launched a double-decker bus service at the capital's Bangabandhu International Conference Centre. The buses will travel between Dhaka and Chittagong.

PHOTO: STAR