

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 35.5 L 26.6	MYMENSINGH H 35.0 L 27.0	CHITTAGONG H 33.5 L 26.0	SYLHET H 31.0 L 25.6	RAJSHAHI H 36.0 L 26.6	RANGPUR H 34.8 L 25.7	KHULNA H 35.2 L 26.3	BARISAL H 34.6 L 25.9	COX'S BAZAR H 31.5 L 25.5
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Light to moderate rain/thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty winds is likely to occur in many places over Rangpur, Mymensingh, Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and the plains over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Dhaka divisions with moderate to heavy to very heavy fall of rain over the hills. (2 hours of 0.0mm to 20.0mm today, says the Met office. The rain sets in the capital today at 6:13pm and rises tomorrow at 05:24am. Highest and lowest temperature recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:—

Once Dhaka was adorned with several hundred ponds. Like canals, only a handful exist now. But they are also in death throes due to negligence of the authorities concerned. Although, according to the Playground, Open Space, Park and Natural Water Body Protection Act 2000, filling up of any water body including pond is illegal, it's going on unabated. The Daily Star found 63 ponds in the maps of undivided Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) in its 28 wards out of 90. A survey for the map was carried out between 2003 and 2011. But many of the water bodies were filled up before the period and also even after the survey. We are publishing the twentieth report of the series today covering the then DCC ward 30 and 36.

DMP constable stabbed to death in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

A constable of Dhaka Metropolitan Police has been stabbed to death allegedly by a Union Parishad chairman over establishing supremacy in Araihash upazila of Narayanganj.



Ten people were also injured in the attack at Kalapahar village on Friday afternoon.

The deceased, Sumon alias Rubel, son of ward-7 Awami League leader Rup Miah, was a constable of the counter terrorism unit of DMP.

Quoting witnesses, Assistant Sub-inspector Pusto Lal Biswas said there has been a long standing dispute between Rup Miah and Kalapahar IUP leader Saiful Islam Swapan.

Following the conflict, the supporters of Saiful along with a gang attacked the house of Rup Miah on the day.

They stabbed Rubel, who went to his residence to celebrate Eid, with knives and injured the others who tried to prevent the attack.

The attackers also fired blank shots and left the scene.

Rubel died at Dhaka Medical College Hospital around 8:00pm.

Zahurul Islam, in-charge of Kalapahar police box, said police high officials visited the spot.

Rubel's brother Kamal Hossain filed a case with Araihash Police Station.

PART 20



The lone pond in the capital's Manikganj area has not only shrunk alarmingly due to encroachment, it is also in need of care.

Shrinking fast



HELEMIUL AIAM

Once Manikganj area in the capital was peppered with canals, marshlands and ponds. But most of the water bodies have fallen victim to urban sprawl after the 80s.

Now all that remains is a lone pond in the area, which has also shrunk alarmingly due to encroachment over the years.

According to locals, a mosque committee, in-charge of the pond, have allegedly constructed a market around it after filling up a portion.

The condition of the reservoir, situated beside Manikganj Kendrijo Jam-e-Masjid, is also deplorable.

Abdul Kader Bhuiyan, a resident of Manikganj, said people from other neighbourhoods also used to throng the pond

for bathing or swimming. "The number is very low now due to its condition."

There were two ghats (landing spots) in it. Now, only one exists on the southern side, he added.

Mohammad Hasan, khadem (care-taker) of the mosque, said the pond is there since the Pakistan period.

ABM Zakaria Alamgir, mutawalli (trustee) of the mosque, said they have a plan to restore the pond. "At present, we have a fund crisis for which we cannot pay attention to it," he added.

The mosque committee constructed some makeshift shops around two years back and a market around six months back filling up some portions of the reservoir to generate income for the mosque, he said.

"We have a plan to renovate the mosque building and after doing so we'll take necessary steps to renovate the reservoir."

He said the size of the pond is around 2 bighas.

(Edited by HASAN MEER)

Struggling to survive

There used to be three ponds in the capital's Shantinagar area. Two of them are still alive while the other one was filled up to make way for a multi-storey building.

BALURMATH POND

The privately-owned pond was used by many of the locals. But over the years, portions of it have been filled up. Surrounded by buildings, only a small part of it remains alive.

Aub Ali, a resident of the area, said it used to be a huge waterbody even around two decades ago.

Naznin Habib-uz-Zaman, owner of the remaining 2.25-katha pond, said the reservoir was there since the Pakistan period.

"It was purchased under the name of my mother-in-law. She looked after the pond and enjoyed spending time beside

it. After her death, the pond was divided among the family members, who sold it afterwards."

"I want to protect it," said Naznin. "But many of the residents from the nearby buildings continue to throw waste in it."

She said though she cleans the reservoir regularly, it gets dirty again due to the dumping of garbage.

"Once after cleaning the pond, I was directed to a hospital as I became sick. I stayed there for almost three months. When I returned home, I found the pond dirty again," she sighed. "I have spent so much time and money to keep the pond alive."

So she said she had also set up a boundary wall so that people living nearby the reservoir cannot throw waste in it. "I also

used netting over the pond for its protection."

"As long as I'm alive, I will not allow anybody to fill it up," said Naznin.

POND AT PEER SAHEB BARI

A major portion of the pond located at Peer Saheber Bari (house) on Peer Saheber Goli (lane) has been filled up for constructing a building.

The remaining portion, however, is being used as a swimming pool by the family members.

Manjur Ahmed Babul, khadem of Peer Saheber Bari, said the pond is there since the British period. "Peer Maulana Abdul Gafur purchased the land along with the pond in 1950," he said.

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A major portion of this pond in Shantinagar area has been filled up. Now, it is being used as a swimming pool.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Surgery patients

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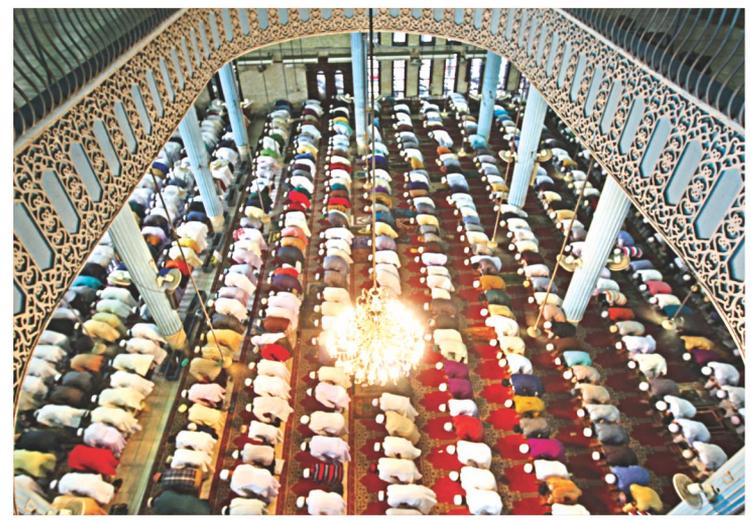
from a shortage of doctors and nurses, but many necessary tasks including doing X-rays or blood tests, required before performing surgery, were hampered because there was not enough staff to do the job.

Meanwhile, patients of several public hospitals alleged that the hospital authorities released a huge number of patients before Eid holidays although they were not fully cured.

A week back, Dr Samir Kanti Sarkar, director (admin) of the Directorate General of Health Services, told the Daily Star that during Eid vacation, the hospital authorities preferred running the operations by non-Muslim doctors, nurses and other staff.

If there are not enough non-Muslim staffers, health services will be provided by the Muslims, he said.

When informed that not many non-Muslim staffers were there at Niaz, he replied that the matter would be taken into consideration.



Muslims offer Eid prayers at Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in the capital on Saturday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Ctg rawhide traders eye loss recovery

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Although low price of rawhide in Chittagong is disappointing those who sacrificed animals, it brings a sigh of relief to the traders as they are eyeing to recover the losses they reportedly incurred during the past two seasons.

The traders say a downward trend in the demand of leather product in the international market put the tanners industry in pain, which was caused, among others, by some domestic reasons.

Muklesur Rahman, managing director (ops and sales) of Riff Leather Ltd, told the Daily Star that this time the rawhide price is reasonable and they want to take it as a chance to recuperate the losses.

International leather market depends on the demand of the US. It sees a downward trend when it is less cold in the countries where long spell of cold wave increases the demand of leather-based products, he added.

Hoarders of rawhide claimed that they spent Tk 5 to Tk 10 more for per square feet of rawhide than the price fixed by the tanners as the hike in sale price during the sacrificial event this year.

Muslem Uddin, former president of Chittagong City Corporation Rawhide Traders Association, said they every year pay to buy five lakhs of rawhides within two days of Eid-ul-Azha.

But this year, they were able to collect three lakh in the last two days as the seasonal traders were assumed to pre-serve the skin for high price.

Muslem said they were expecting the rest of the skins to be supplied in the week ahead.

"Seasonal buyers of rawhide created a syndicate and bought cattle hides at a very low price but they supplied it to us for twice the price they bought from those who sacrificed animals," he added.

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Woman feels betrayed

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 from finding her husband getting married to another woman. Out of frustration, she later killed her husband with a kitchen knife (bater) and went into hiding.

She also attacked co-wife Rokhsana with the same knife. Rokhsana is in a critical condition and undergoing treatment in Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), said police and medical sources.

Quoting her neighbour, police said Shaheen had been living in the one-room Mirpur house for the last six months with his second wife. Aklima came there two days before Eid and she often got locked into a clash with Shaheen over the marriage, they said.

Around 1:30am yesterday, the neighbour heard screams from Shaheen's house and

found Shaheen and Rokhsana lying in blood inside the room but Aklima was missing.

On information, police rescued the couple around 3:00am and sent them to DMCH where the doctors declared Shaheen dead, said Mizanur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Mirpur Police Station.

He told the Daily Star that last night when Shaheen and Rokhsana went to sleep, Aklima attacked them with the knife.

"In primary investigation, we came to know Aklima used to live in Saudi Arabia and could not accept her husband's second marriage and it led to the killing," said Mizan, adding that a drive was underway to arrest Aklima.

It could not be known whether Aklima had any child with her husband.

Hides sold at low prices

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Shaheen Ahmed, chairman of Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA), said the tanners would begin buying the salt-applied hides from warehouses a week later.

"We have already suggested that the seasonal traders and warehouse owners apply adequate salt on the hides so that the quality does not deteriorate," Ahmed said.

Ahamed said this year at least 20 percent fewer animals were sacrificed due to the floods.

This year is different from other years as not all tanners could go into production at the newly constructed leather estate in Savar, he said, adding that about half the tanneries were in production.

Many tanners could not manage adequate funds from banks mortgaging their land, which were yet to be registered to them, he said.

He urged the government to continue its vigil at the borders so that rawhides could not be smuggled out to India, where hide prices are higher.

"The price declined so low this year that I had to sell a piece of goat rawhide for Tk 20 when the government rate is Tk 80," said Loban Ali Mondol, a resident of Natore.

The prices of cow hides were also low. Cowhides were sold between Tk 500 and Tk 700 a piece, which were sold between Tk 1,000 and Tk 1,200 a piece in Natore, the country's second largest rawhide trading market.

The number of seasonal traders was low in the northern region because of the floods, sources said. Rawhide warehouse owners in Natore were also not paying the seasonal traders much for the hides.

"We do not want to take risks as there is a possibility of losing capital

if we purchase rawhides from seasonal local traders," said Samad Mia, a trader in Natore.

He said the sale of rawhides would be on Friday when the seasonal traders in the north bring in their hides.

Rawhide traders in Sylhet also alleged that they had not been getting support from tannery owners in Dhaka for the last three years, which was discouraging them.

Mohammad Ibrahim, owner of M/S Ibrahim Chandra Dokan in Sylhet, said, "Since 2014, we barely get 30 to 40 percent of our money from them as they told us that they had to move their factories, which was expensive."

He said many rawhide traders collected a very small number of hides this time to avoid losses.

The industries ministry recently claimed that 67 of the 155 tanneries started fully fledged operation at the newly constructed leather estate

in Savar. But the tanners said only 20 of them were up and running.

The majority of the tanneries could not start operations as they had no gas connection, or had incomplete factory structures.

This Eid-ul-Azha, the price of per square foot of cow rawhide was fixed at Tk 50-55 in Dhaka and Tk 40-45 outside of the capital. For he-goat hides the rate was Tk 45 and for the he-goats Tk 15-17 across the country.

Leather and leather goods are the second highest export earning sector after apparel. It raked in \$1.23 billion last fiscal year, up 6.29 percent year-on-year, according to data from the Export Promotion Board.

This year, 44.57 lakh cows and buffaloes and 71 lakh goats and sheep were expected to be sacrificed in the country, which is lower than the previous year, according to data from the commerce ministry.

Dhaka yet to get back

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Signs. Street children were seen gossipping. Most of the food shops remained closed at noon, while most of the city markets stayed shut. There were poor supply of vegetables and fish at the kitchen markets. As a result,

many people, especially bachelors, who stayed in Dhaka on different purposes, suffered.

Traffic police were seen having a comfortable time, as the low traffic flow did not require much effort to control vehicles.