

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 32.6 L 20.8	H 30.3 L 19.8	H 29.9 L 21.5	H 31.2 L 19.0	H 33.4 L 18.4	H 31.0 L 19.0	H 33.5 L 20.0	H 32.9 L 20.0	H 30.6 L 20.3

Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country having chance of rain accompanied by temporary gusty wind at one or two places over Rangpur, Mymensingh and Sylhet divisions in 24 hours till 6:00pm today, says the Met office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:02pm and rises tomorrow at 06:18am. Highest and lowest temperatures recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

BCL men hit his face with hammer

Rajshahi Govt College student attacked over 'love affair'; undergoing neurosurgery treatment at RMCH

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

Bruised and battered, the second-year undergraduate student of Rajshahi Government College could hardly speak as he was lying in his hospital bed.

Golam Mawla, a psychology student at the college, is in fact quite lucky to be alive. A number of activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League of the college had left him unconscious at the college ground after beating him up with a hammer on Wednesday morning. Right side of his swollen face -- especially the cheek, the eye and the lips, clearly bore signs of the vicious attack he had undergone that day. After being taken to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital the same day, the doctors had to apply over a dozen stitches on his wounds.

Mawla's elder brother Alauddin was attending him at Neurosurgery ward of the hospital yesterday. Observing Mawla's condition warily, Alauddin wondered if the injuries would affect his brother's memory and if he would become incapacitated to be unable to resume his studies. "He is having nightmares about the attack," he told this correspondent.

RMCH Director Brig Gen Jamilur Rahman said they kept Mawla under close observation. "His condition seems better. But it might take some time to recover," he added.

On the morning of the attack, Mawla was studying at the seminar room of the psychology department before his next class.

Jalal, a BCL activist of the college, asked him to come out of the room as he (Jalal) needed to have a talk with him, Mawla and eyewitnesses said.

Soon after Mawla complied, Jalal started slapping, punching and kicking him. He dragged him near the college pond where several other BCL activists were waiting.

All the BCL men then started beating him up. At one stage, Mawla fell on the ground after Jalal knocked him on the right side of his face with a hammer. He could feel striking of the hammer on his hands and legs before losing consciousness, said his brother Alauddin.

Rashik Dutta, joint secretary of BCL's college unit, also choked Mawla by stepping on his throat with his foot while he was lying on the ground, Alauddin said quoting Mawla.

"His attackers wanted to kill him," he said, adding that his brother has told him the names of the others who took part in the assault on him.

Prof Hobibur Rahman, the college principal, said no one dared to come to the rescue of the unconscious student for a while.

Later, a number of teachers from the nearby history department rescued and sent him to the hospital, he added.

A three-member committee, headed by Prof Partha Sarathi Biswas, chairman of psychology department, has probed the incident and they "identified the involved persons after talking to eyewitness and watching CCTV video footage," the principal told The Daily Star.

The college authorities will make a decision on Saturday based on the probe findings. "We will not tolerate such audacity [of the attackers]... We will file a case and cancel [their] studentship considering their crime," said Prof Hobibur.

The college BCL's joint secretary, Rashik Dutta, could not be reached on his cell phone for his comments.

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Rajshahi Government College student Golam Mawla lies unconscious on the college ground on Wednesday after several BCL men brutalised his face, inset, with a hammer. The student lay near the college pond, beaten senseless, for a while but no one came to his aid "out of fear". Later, a number of teachers rescued and sent him to a hospital, where he is being treated.

PHOTO: STAR

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Mandar tree at Satchori.

PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

A Very Special Tree

We see mandar (erythrina variegata) all over Bangladesh. Also known as coral tree, its bright red flowers bloom in February and last through spring and summer. The tree sheds all leaves during this season, so the flowers stand out. While I have seen flowers on trees as small as four feet, a tall full-grown mandar tree in spring, loaded with crimson, is a sight to behold.

However, among the thousands upon thousands of mandar in Bangladesh, one stands out for birders. It is in Satchori National Park in Habiganj. Here is how you find it. A hundred metres after you enter the park, the trail splits in two. One part continues straight into a well-worn but narrow hiking trail through the forest. The other part veers to the left, leading to a wide set of cement stairs, leading 60-70 steps in all. Climb them and you have arrived at the park's watchtower. Our mandar tree, about five stories high, is on the west side of the tower.

With its flowers in bloom, the tree attracts hundreds of birds. And the birds, in turn, attract dozens, perhaps hundreds of enthusiasts: birdwatchers, nature-lovers, photographers and scientists. In very few other places in Bangladesh can you come so close to birds in the wild.

Today I arrive at 9am and there are seven or eight people up there; one of them is an overnight guest. Another time in early February when the cold wind made you shiver, I met two groups that had shown up at daybreak with bundles of sleeping bags and blankets, waiting to watch the birds to alight on the flowers by first light.

And what a show the birds put on! The dominant variety is chestnut-tailed starling (*kath shalik*), which comes and

goes in flocks like waves. Another common species is red-whiskered bulbul (*sipahi bulbul*.) But it is the less common birds which draw attention. Green leafbirds (*harbola*) with their orange foreheads, vernal hanging parrots (*lotkon-tia*), white-eyes (*dholachokh*), hair-crested drongo (*keshori finge*) all take turns landing on the branches, just a few feet from the observers.

They have come to feast: on the insects inside flowers, on the nectar and on parts of the flowers. But they also play, squabble, preen their mates and feed their young.

Something else happens on this day. In the past, a moronic visitor had tossed a polythene bag filled with several plastic bottles into the tree where it had lodged itself into a nook. For months it was an eyesore for every visitor and created a hazard for the wildlife. But today, folks are fed up. My guide Rahim locates a discarded bamboo near the tower, a long, robust piece. Then he, along with other young naturalists visiting the tree - Sayam, Prince, Masud and Foyzal - heave and push the bamboo all the way to the top of the tower and, using it like a giant toothpick, poke and dislodge the plastic bag from its niche. A small act perhaps, but a useful one, and if every conscientious traveller in Bangladesh acted like this, we could eliminate the plastic rubbish that sometimes taints our most pristine places.

The Satchori mandar tree should be in bloom through March. From Dhaka it is less than three hours by car. Try to arrive early in the day to avoid the crowds. Enjoy the show!

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Ducusu formation soon

Says VC Prof Akhtaruzzaman

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University Central Students' Union (Ducusu) will be formed soon, said Vice-Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman yesterday.

He made the comment while speaking as the chief guest at a programme held at Battala on the campus, marking "national flag hoisting day".

For the first time on March 2, 1971, the then vice president of Ducusu, ASM Abdur Rob, hoisted the first version of Bangladesh's national flag on behalf of Swadhin Bangla Chhatra Sangram Parishad atop the DU arts building.

The VC said, "Ducusu leaders took the

initiative to hoist the national flag at the directive of Banagabandhu [Sheikh Mujibur Rahman]. I can feel how important the role of Ducusu was in this regard."

Ducusu will play a pivotal role in any democratic movement of the country in future like it did before, he said.

DU Pro-VC (academic) Prof Nasreen Ahmed, Treasurer Prof Kamal Uddin and arts faculty Dean Prof Abu Md Delwar Hossain were present at the programme among others.

Later, a discussion and a cultural programme were held where students of music and dance departments of the university performed.

The last election to Ducusu took place on June 6, 1990.

Prof Farzana takes charge as JU VC for second term

CITY DESK

Prof Farzana Islam, who has been reappointed vice chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, took charge of the office yesterday for another four-year term.

A teacher of anthropology, Farzana is the first female VC of the country. She had been first appointed on March 2, 2014 from a three-member VC panel nominated by the university Senate. On February 18, President Abdul Hamid reappointed her for another four years.

On the occasion, teachers, students, and employees and different tiers of the administration including the offices of deans, proctor, and provosts congratulated her at the university Senate Hall.

Prof Farzana was born in Bhedorganj upazila of Shariatpur in 1957. She graduated in sociology from Dhaka University in 1980 and joined Chittagong University as a lecturer of the discipline in 1982. Four years later, in 1986, she joined the anthropology department of JU.



Police working hard: IGP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Police have been working round the clock for maintaining the country's law and order situation, said Inspector General of Police (IGP) Javed Patwari yesterday.

"Behind the development of any country, maintaining law and order is a prerequisite. Police personnel have been doing that with all-out efforts," he said.

The IGP was addressing the "Annual Police Conference and Sports Competition" of Chittagong District Police, held at the district

police lines at Chittagong's Halishahar.

The IGP said police are working relentlessly to make the country more secure and safe with the help of everyone.

Presided over by Chittagong District Superintendent of Police Noor E Alam Mina, Chittagong Metropolitan Police Commissioner Iqbal Bahar, Deputy Inspector General of Chittagong Range Dr Monir Uz Zaman and senior police officials were also present.

The IGP handed over the prizes among the winners of the sports competition.

Selina Hossain, Hasan Azizul to get DLitt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, RU

The Rajshahi University authorities will honour prominent litterateurs Selina Hossain and Hasan Azizul Haque with the Doctor of Literature (DLitt) degree at its 10th convocation on March 24, for their contributions to Bangla literature.

The decision was taken at the 464th syndicate meeting on March 29, 2016, Vice-Chancellor Prof M Abdus Sobhan told journalists when they contacted him over the phone. Both Selina Hossain and Hasan Azizul Haque were students of Rajshahi University.

Selina Hossain obtained her bachelor's degree in Bangla in 1967 and post-graduate degree in 1968. She received Bangla Academy Literary Award in 1980, Ekushey Padak in 2009 and Independence Award in 2018. Her major works include Hangor Nodi Grenade (1976), a novel set during the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

Hasan Azizul Haque studied philosophy at the university and earned his post-graduate degree in 1960. He joined the department as a lecturer in 1973 and retired in 2004. He also went to Rajshahi Government College.

Azizul also received Bangla Academy Literary Award in 1970 and Ekushey Padak in 1999. Among his works, the historical novel Agunpakhi (The Phoenix, 2006) received the Prothom Alo book of the year prize in 2007.

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