



YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA H 33.4 L 21.6

MYMENSINGH H 32.2 L 19.3

CHITTAGONG H 33.6 L 23.7

SYLHET H 32.2 L 21.6

RAJSHAHI H 33.0 L 17.5

RANGPUR H 31.5 L 18.5

KHULNA H 33.5 L 22.5

BARISAL H 33.6 L 21.4

COX'S BAZAR H 31.0 L 21.5

Trough of low lies over Sub-Himalayan West Bengal and adjoining area. Seasonal low lies over South Bay in the next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, said the Met office. Weather may remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:04pm and rises tomorrow at 06:16am. Highest and lowest temperatures recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

A show of arms at press club

Plainclothes police storm the premises to arrest Swechhasebak Dal chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was around 11:30am. As part of the BNP's countrywide human chain programme, the party's Dhaka city unit formed a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club.

Hundreds of party leaders and activists thronged the venue and vehicular movement apparently came to a halt on one side of the street.

Soon senior leaders started delivering speeches. Meanwhile, front and associate body leaders started leaving the spot to avoid police harassment.

At 11:45am, Swechhasebak Dal President Shafiul Bari Babu entered the press club to escape police arrest. Some journalists were inside the press club and there were some BNP leaders also.

Immediately afterwards, some people entered the press club. Nobody suspected anything.

All on a sudden, they encircled Babu and tried to take him away. People were confused seeing the situation as there was no sign of the presence of law enforcers.

Agitated, some people started throwing helmets kept on motorbikes parked inside the club, targeting the bunch of people who were scuffling with Babu.

Situation changed suddenly. The ones in a tussle with Babu took out their firearms and shouted that they were cops.

BNP leaders and activists soon started leaving the place. The cops detained Babu and left the place boarding a microbus, and entered the secretariat.

Aggrieved by the detention, BNP supporters allegedly vandalised some windowpanes of the secretariat.

Masudur Rahman, deputy commissioner (media) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said members of detective branch (DB) of police were assisting the uniformed policemen to arrest Babu. Jafar Ali Biswas, inspector (investigation) of Shahbagh Police Station, said Babu is an accused in cases filed with Shahbagh and Ramna police stations.



Clockwise from top left, Blocking one side of the road, BNP leaders and activists gather in front of the capital's Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding party Chairperson Khaleda Zia's release from jail. At one point, plainclothes law enforcers brandishing firearms detain Shafiul Bari Babu, president of Swechhasebak Dal, second from right, from the area. A BNP supporter throws a brick chip at law enforcers. Broken windowpanes of the secretariat in the area. As a result of the agitation programme, a long tailback ensued on Topkhana Road.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN, PALASH KHAN

Zebras make Ctg zoo their new home

AMIR HASAN SHAHRIAR, Ctg

The Chittagong zoo authorities yesterday added six new zebras to the zoo as part of its Tk 3-crore renovation project.

The zebras have been brought from South Africa at a cost of Tk 48 lakh, said Shahadat Hossain Suvo, acting deputy Curator and veterinary officer of the zoo.

The zoo now houses 52 species of birds, reptiles and mammals.

The renovation work includes building a high boundary wall around the zoo, paved roadways, public toilet facilities, a kids zone and paintjob on all structures, he added.

Besides, "a new quarantine room has



The six new residents. PHOTO: STAR

been made to treat the animals. A guard wall to protest the cages along the hilly slope has also been installed," the curator said, adding, "Adequate food is being given to the animals now."

After completing the projects, the zoo authorities still has a balance of Tk 62

lakh, Shahadat said.

Mohammad Mannan, who was visiting the zoo yesterday with his family members, said, "The zoo is one of the few places to visit with the entire family. But its condition was really awful. Thanks to the zoo authorities, the situation has improved a lot."

FIVE YEARS INTO TAQI MURDER No charges pressed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

After placing a bunch of red dahlia on the grave of Tanwir Muhammad Taqi, his father Rafiur Rabbi stood there for a while. Tears rolled down his cheeks and he did not utter a word.

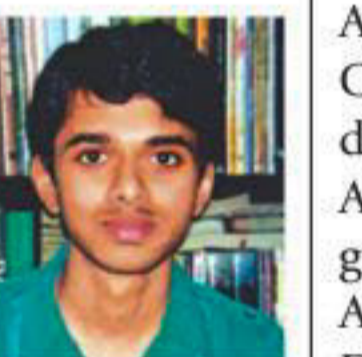
Rabbi went to Siraj Shah Astana graveyard in Narayanganj Bandar upazila around 10:00am yesterday to offer prayers on the fifth death anniversary of his murdered son.

A doa mahfil was held there seeking salvation of the departed soul.

After Rabbi, Narayanganj City Corporation Mayor Selina Hayat Ivy, Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Narayanganj district President Hafizul Islam, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal (BSD) district Coordinator Nikhil Das, and Narayanganj Sangskritik Jote General Secretary Dhiman Saha Jewel, placed flowers and wreaths at the grave of the bright teenager.

Narayanganj Sangskritik Jote Advisor Bhabani Shankar Roy said, "We will continue the movement unless the trial of Taqi's killing case starts. If the government wants, a quick disposal of the case is possible."

Seventeen-year-old Taqi went missing after he left home



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ACC seeks wealth statement of addl secy, wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday issued a notice to Additional Secretary (Budget) of Ministry of Home Affairs ASM Emdadud Dastagir and his wife special judge of Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal Hosne Ara Aktar for submitting their wealth statement.

ACC has recently began an inquiry against the couple on the basis of allegations that 'they have amassed huge wealth illegally', said Pranab Kumar Bhattacharya, ACC's Public Relations Officer.

Contacted, Dastagir said the allegations against him are baseless.

Unite to make country middle-income one

President urges all on the eve of historic March 7

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

President Abdul Hamid yesterday urged citizens of the country to forge unity in order to make Bangladesh a middle-income country by 2021 and a developed one by 2041.

"We should continue our efforts to make the country into Sonar Bangla [that was] dreamt by Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman," he said in a message on the eve of historic March 7.

Bangabandhu's 7th March historic speech of 1971 was a fervent call for the freedom of the people of this country, he added.

In a separate message, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina urged people to build a country that would be free from hunger and poverty as well as a non-communal, happy and prosperous one.

March 7 is an unforgettable day in the thousand-year history of the Bangalee nation, she said, adding that the magnificent speech of the Father of the Nation was the inspiration for the nation's struggle for freedom.

Different political parties including Awami League and other socio-cultural organisations have taken elaborate programmes across the country to observe the day.

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Students of the Institute of Fine Arts of Chittagong University at a daylong art camp at the institute yesterday. The camp titled, "Equality through dignity", was organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation and the fine arts institute. Story on page 4.

PHOTO: STAR

GULSHAN CAFÉ ATTACK Court wants probe report by April 10

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday once again asked the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CITC) unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police to submit by April 10 the probe report of the case filed over the Holey Artisan Bakery attack in Gulshan in July 2016.

The court passed the order after Humayun Kabir, a CITC inspector and the case's investigation officer, failed to submit any probe report to it by yesterday. With this, the CITC got extension for 16 times for filing the report.

Earlier, the CITC unit arrested six people including five suspected militants and a former private university teacher. Of them, five "militants" gave confessional statements before magistrates on different dates.

In their statements, the militants, now behind the bars, said they were directly involved in the heinous offence, court sources said.

Khaleda deprived of due rights: BNP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP yesterday alleged that its Chairperson Khaleda Zia was being deprived of her constitutionally guaranteed legal rights as she has been denied bail through various tactics.

"Our leader Khaleda Zia has been kept in jail in a totally false case...", said Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, secretary general of the party.

Addressing a human chain organised by BNP in front of Jatiya Press Club demanding Khaleda Zia's release from jail, the BNP leader alleged that the government is resorting to various ploys to prolong her stay in jail.

The BNP leader called up all political parties to get united to save the country and restore democracy.

Referring to the attack on Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, the BNP leader alleged, "As part of a plot to make the country a dysfunctional and failed one, country's popular writer Dr Zafar Iqbal was stabbed in broad daylight in Sylhet."

Fakhru said BNP has been made accused in the incident without any investigation. "But those who are arrested belong to Awami League," he alleged.

Meanwhile in Chittagong, BNP national standing committee member Ameer Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury alleged that the government is not allowing BNP to hold rallies whereas the ruling party chief is doing so in various districts, reports our staff correspondent.

He was addressing a human chain

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

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