

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 33.1 L 22.6	H 32.2 L 20.0	H 32.8 L 21.5	H 33.8 L 20.2	H 36.0 L 19.5	H 32.5 L 19.6	H 34.5 L 23.6	H 33.1 L 21.4	H 32.7 L 21.3

Rain/thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Dhaka, Mymensingh and Khulna divisions in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today, said the Met office. **The sun sets in the capital today at 6:11pm and rises tomorrow at 06:00am.**

Discussion on Abul Mansur Ahmad at DU today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A discussion on the life and works of renowned litterateur, journalist and politician of the sub-continent Abul Mansur Ahmad will be held at Dhaka University today.



Abul Mansur Ahmad Smriti Parishad and Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Foundation will jointly organise the discussion titled "In search of Abul Mansur Ahmad: In regards to debates with Buddhadeb Basu" in Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium of social science faculty building at DU at 4:00pm, marking his 39th death anniversary, said a press release.

Emeritus Professor Anisuzzaman will preside over the discussion while researcher Mohammad Azam will present the keynote paper. Essayist Hayat Mamud and researcher Murshed Shafiqul Hasan will take part in the discussion.

The organisers requested all interested to attend the discussion.

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Mosquito rules Ctg

MOSTAFA YOUSUF, Ctg

It was around two in the afternoon. Hasan Mohammed, a student of a private university, sat in front of a desk in his room to concentrate on his studies.

The English major had an exam the next day and he was worried that he did not study enough.

But for Hasan, there were bigger things to worry about, even though it came in a minuscule form.

Every time he tried to concentrate, he was being attacked by mosquitoes.

Finding no other alternatives, the resident of Chittagong city's Hemsan Lane sat on his bed and used a mosquito net as a protection.

"I even tried burning coils underneath the table. That did not help much. After a while, my eyes started to ache," he said. "Seems like there is no respite from the menace. Day or night, the situation remains the same. Normalcy has become quite impossible due to the attack of mosquitoes."

Hasan eventually appeared at the exam and did quite well. Though, he said, he could have done better if he had studied uninterrupted and peacefully.

Not just him, for the last few weeks, the port city residents have been experiencing the menace of these buzzing bloodsuckers.

This correspondent spoke with many of the residents. Not only they shared their angst, they also blamed the Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) for their sufferings. According to the city dwellers, the corporation's inefficiency is prolonging their misery.

"Even though city dwellers, especially children, are suffering, I do not see any measures taken by the city corporation in my neighbourhood," said Ripa Chowdhury, a resident of Al Falah Lane in Gate 2 area.

The problem worsens during the evening, she said. "It's quite impossible to get rid of these tiny nuisances by burning coils or spraying aerosol."

Many of the residents of Solokbohor, Chadgaon, Bogarbil, Anderkilla, Halisahar, Chaktai and other areas echoed her.



Kids studying inside a mosquito net in Goalpara of the port city's Enayet Bazar to protect themselves against the buzzing bloodsuckers. The residents blame the Chittagong City Corporation for its inefficiency that is prolonging their miseries. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Azizur Rahman Siddiki, civil surgeon of Chittagong, told The Daily Star that if the mosquito menace is not controlled, city dwellers might be in a risk of getting affected by chikungunya, malaria and dengue.

He also requested city dwellers not to use coils and aerosol sprays to repel mosquito as those are injurious to health, particularly to minors.

He said people should use mosquito nets first. Secondly, they must make sure that stagnant water is not left cleaned for three days. If so, mosquitoes will proliferate in a way that would be tough to tackle.

Contacted, Shafikul Manna Siddiki, chief conser-

vancy officer of CCC, said they were working non-stop to ensure a mosquito-free atmosphere.

"In the city's 41 wards, 120 workers are engaged in spraying insecticide to control the mosquito menace. We are monitoring them strictly," he assured.

In 2017-2018 financial year, Tk 10 crore has been allocated for mosquito control, he said. "We have spent Tk 5 crore to procure equipment and chemical substances."

"For every ward, we are supplying sufficient amount of larvicide and adulticide (an anti-mosquito substance) to wipe out mosquitoes."

CCC has procured 10,000 litres of larvicide and 25,000 litres of adulticide for 2017-2018 financial year, sources at the conservancy confirmed.

When asked, many residents said they have not seen any CCC worker cleaning the drains or conducting anti-mosquito drives in their neighbourhoods.

The chief conservancy official said the allegations were not correct as they were working relentlessly.

CCC also published advertisement on local newspapers urging the city dwellers not to clog up drains by throwing waste, he said.

Prof Sikandar Khan, president of Forum for Planned Chittagong and also vice-chancellor of East-Delta University, said clogged-up drains are one of the major reasons for mosquito menace. It is vital to clean drains, canals, septic tanks and bushes, which are the breeding grounds of mosquitoes.

Regarding CCC's claim that they were working relentlessly, he said then why people are still suffering.

"If I take their claim of working relentlessly as true, then the chemical substances they bought must be of a lower grade. That is why, we are not getting any result," he said.

When asked, CCC Mayor AJM Nasir Uddin said they would not be able to fight the mosquito menace alone.

"We need city dweller's support and awareness in this regard. If we want to eradicate mosquitoes, we will need at least Tk 100 crore. With the money we have right now, we can control the problem but cannot get rid of it for good," he added.

In 2016-2017, CCC's expenditure was Tk 2.8 crore and for year 2015-2016 Tk 1.30 crore while Tk 1 crore each for fiscal years 2014-2015 and 2013-2014.

The total amount spent by the CCC to control mosquito stands at Tk 16 crore in the last five years.

Even though the amount of money allocated for controlling mosquitoes have gone up significantly this year in comparison to the previous years, the residents are yet to see any result, said many of the city dwellers.

10-TRUCK ARMS HAUL CASE

HC bench assigned to hear death reference, appeals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain has recently assigned a High Court bench to hear and dispose of the death reference and appeals in the sensational 10-truck arms haul case.

In the case, 14 people including ex-ministers Motiur Rahman Nizami and Lutfozzaman Babar were sentenced to death.

The bench of Justice Bhabani Prasad Singha and Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam may fix a date on Sunday for commencement of the hearing for the death reference and appeals, said court sources.

If a lower court sentences a person to death in a case, its judgment is exam-

ined by the HC through hearing arguments for confirmation of the death sentence. The case documents and judgment reach to the HC from the lower court as death reference in seven days after the latter delivers the verdict.

Twelve death-row convicts out of a total 14 in the 10-truck arms haul case have filed separate appeals with the HC, challenging the trial court verdict on them.

In the appeals, they prayed to the HC to acquit them of the charges, claiming themselves innocent, according to the sources.

On January 30, 2014, the Chittagong Metropolitan Special Tribunal-1 handed down death penal-

ties to 14 people, including former minister and former Jamaat-e-Islami Amir Motiur Rahman Nizami as well as former BNP state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar, for smuggling 10 truckloads of firearms in 2004.

The same 14 convicts were also given life term imprisonment in another case filed for possessing illegal firearms.

Motiur Rahman Nizami was executed on May 11 in 2016 after the Supreme Court upheld his death penalty for committing crimes against humanity and war crimes during the country's Liberation War in 1971.

Meanwhile, another HC bench of Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and

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Holy Ashtami Snan starts tomorrow

Two-day long event is believed among Hindus to be a purifier of all sins

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Every year devotees from all over Bangladesh and other regions come to Langalbandh in Narayanganj for a dip in the holy waters of the Brahmaputra.

The holy Ashtami Snan, a Hindu religious ritual, is celebrated on the eighth day of the lunar month which falls in the Bengali month of Chaitra.

The bath is important because, according to Hindu mythology, it purifies all sins of a pilgrim.

Langalbandh on the bank of Brahmaputra is ready for the Ashtami Snan which will start tomorrow.

As per the auspicious time, this year Mahastami Snan will start tomorrow at 10:14am in the morning and continue till 7:52am on Sunday.

A three-tier security measure has been designed ahead of the religious festival in 12 ghats at Langalbandh.

Besides, Basanti puja will start at Langalbandh on March 23 with Mahashoshti and end on March 26 with Mohanabami and Dasami.

Narayanganj police said over 1,200 policemen will be deployed for ensuring security of the pilgrims.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (general) Md Abdul Hamid Miah of Narayanganj said mobile courts will be deployed in three spots. Moreover, watch towers and CCTVs will be installed.

Rab-11 commander Lt Col Kamrul Hasan said six

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Fanaticism a roadblock for country

Discussion told

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Despite significant economic growth, over-coming fanaticism still remains a major challenge for Bangladesh in the way to fulfilling the promise of the Liberation War, speakers told a discussion yesterday.

They said the country earned sovereignty through winning the war in 1971 but it could not free itself from social ills. Returning to the original 1972 constitution will be required to this end, they said.

War Crimes Facts Finding Committee and Research Initiative and Development jointly organised the discussion at the capital's Bishwo Shahitto Kendro.

Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled, former deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, said everyone talks about the 7 percent economic growth, but inequality continues to

increase in the country with the rich getting richer.

It was a constitutional promise that there would be no state religion, but it did not materialise, he said, adding the country was yet to eliminate corruption.

Stamford University Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr K Moudud Elahi said the defeated forces of 1971 are still active, as many people fear to talk against fundamentals at open forums.

On the other hand, nationalism and democracy are at stake because of "worshipping of individuals", he said. "We have turned the sacred constitution into an insignificant one because of an attitude of compromise," he added.

Prof Pradip Kumar Roy, chairperson of the department of philosophy at Dhaka

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Bamboos set up in the river Brahmaputra at Rajghat demarcate the area where Hindu devotees will join Holy Ashtami Snan from tomorrow. The photo was taken at Langalbandh in Narayanganj yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

CASES AGAINST KHALEDA Plea seeks document from jail authorities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A lawyer for BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking its directive on the jail authorities to provide Vokalalnama to the lawyers for taking legal steps against the cases filed against her.

A Vokalalnama is a document in writing, appointing a lawyer to represent the client's matter in a court.

Barrister Kayser Kamal, also legal affairs secretary of BNP, submitted the petition also praying to the HC to issue a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain as to why the jail authorities' refusal to provide them with Khaleda Zia's Vokalalnama should not be declared illegal.

Citing the petition, Kayser Kamal told The Daily Star that they have requested the jail authorities to give them Khaleda Zia's Vokalalnama after she landed in jail on February 8 so that they can take legal steps over the cases filed against her in and around Dhaka.

But, the jail authorities refused to provide the lawyers with the Vokalalnama of Khaleda Zia, he said.

The lawyer also said he has recently sent a legal notice to the jail authorities requesting them to give them Vokalalnama, but the jail authorities did not respond.

Home secretary, inspector general of prisons, deputy inspector general of prisons and jail superintendent of Dhaka central jail have been mentioned as the respondents to the rule, Barrister Kayser added.

Kakon Bibi laid

FROM PAGE 3

She married Abdul Majid Khan, a Punjabi EPR member. Later, Abdul Majid was transferred to Sylhet and she lost contact with him. She then married Shahid Ali, a local of Kathalbari area in Doharabazar, and started her new family with a new name, Nurjahan Kakon Bibi.

When Liberation War of 1971 broke out, she moved to Kathalbari camp under Bashbari sub-sector leaving her 3-day old daughter and she was later introduced to Sector-5 commander Mir Shawkat Ali and started working as a spy in the guise of a beggar.

While spying, she was captured by Razakars. She was then tortured and sexually assaulted. But finally, she was released after she convinced them that she was searching for her Punjabi husband. Pakistan Army then gave her a pass and requested her to spy for them what she agreed upon. She soon started providing information about the Pakistani army camps to the freedom fighters.

Enlist 308 teachers under MPO facilities

HC directs govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed the government to immediately give monthly payment order (MPO) facilities to 308 teachers across the country.

The bench of Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam and Justice KM Kamrul Kader issued the directive following three separate petitions filed by 285 lecturers and 23 school teachers.

Petitioners' lawyer Advocate Mohammad Siddique Ullah Miah, told reporters that his clients have been discharging duties as teachers at different educational institutions for long periods of time.

But, they are not getting MPO facilities unlike most of their colleagues are getting it, he added.

Two get death

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Later, police arrested Tuhin Madbar and Suruj Miah and on the basis of their statements police recovered the skeletons of the two youths from Bhadur area on September 10, 2010.

Tuhin and Suruj gave confessional statements before magistrates on different dates.

DB Sub inspector Hafizur Rahman, also the investigation officer of the case, submitted a charge sheet against the four people on June 3, 2011. DB submitted another charge sheet against Tuhin as he is a juvenile.

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