

**WEATHER FORECAST**

| YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES | DHAKA         | MYMENSINGH    | CHITTAGONG    | SYLHET        | RAJSHAHI      | RANGPUR       | KHULNA        | BARISAL       | COX'S BAZAR |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| H 33.6 L 23.6            | H 32.0 L 22.0 | H 31.5 L 23.3 | H 31.7 L 20.3 | H 36.4 L 22.9 | H 32.9 L 21.4 | H 32.2 L 22.4 | H 33.0 L 20.3 | H 33.5 L 21.7 |             |

Rain/thunder showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions and weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere 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 5:59am. Highest and lowest temperatures recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

### SBMC intern doctors on indefinite strike

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The intern doctors of Barisal Sher-E-Bangla Medical College (SBMC) went on an indefinite strike since Thursday protesting assault on doctors.

They also demanded safety and security of doctors at workplaces and punishment of the attackers.

President of the Intern Doctors' Association at the college, Raju Ahmed confirmed the matter to the Daily Star yesterday.

"A case has been lodged at Kotwali Police Station over the assault on doctors and vandalism inside the SBMC operation theatre," said Dr Abdul Kader.

On Thursday, Khadiza Akhter, 23, a nine-month pregnant woman, died at the hospital.

Following this, the patients' attendants allegedly swooped on the intern doctors and an altercation ensued between the two groups.

The attendants allegedly broke the door of the operation theatre and assaulted the interns, leaving three interns injured, Raju told reporters.

The association president further said that the strike would continue until the demands were met.

The association general secretary Nahid Hasan said that they would discuss their demands with the hospital authorities on today and if needed, would also seize the director's office to press home their demands.

As intern strike the treatment facilities disturbed' said Harun mia one of injured patient admitted at the hospital.

# Praying mosquito away!

## Inadequate funds and insecticides as well as decaying machines leave RCC helpless in tackling mosquito menace

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

While residents of Rajshahi city are facing a severe mosquito problem, the Rajshahi City Corporation (RCC) has come up with the perfect plan to solve the crisis - praying.

These deadly insects have made the city corporation so helpless that they are desperately hoping for a storm or rain in order to get rid of the mosquito menace that started from the middle of February.

To the city dweller's relief, a thunder storm swept over the city and its surrounding areas last Sunday night. And, the much-awaited rain followed, cleaning some of the mosquito larvae from the city drains, water bodies and croplands.

But, within a couple of days after the rain, mosquitoes struck back.

Despite the "temporary" relief, this season's mosquito menace remains the worst as the RCC is facing a financial hardship to carry out its anti-mosquito drives properly, while the residents continue to bear the brunt.

Moreover, the budget the corporation allocated this year for controlling mosquitoes is the lowest in the last five years.

"We could not buy sufficient adulticide [an insecticide used to kill adult insects] for destroying adult mosquitoes...", said Rabiul Alam Milu, chairman of the corporation's standing committee on waste management and conservancy.

He said they were allocated Tk 20 lakh against the required Tk 2 crore for carrying out anti-mosquito operations this season. They have received only Tk 3 lakh so far, said Milu.

Against the required minimum of Tk 2 crore, in 2016-17, the conservancy department received Tk 16.22 lakh. It was Tk 50.51 lakh in 2015-16



This is one of the many clogged up drains that has become a mosquito breeding ground in Rajshahi city. The photo was taken near Gourhanga intersection recently.

PHOTO: STAR

year while Tk 49 lakh in 2014-15. In 2013-14 fiscal, it was Tk 54.19 lakh.

"How will the authorities allocate funds when there is none," said Milu, also a ward councillor. "We tried to control mosquitoes by spraying low-cost larvicide, petrol and kerosene in stagnant water bodies with the money we had."

"This is not enough," he admitted. "What else can we do with such a poor budget? Now, we can only hope for storms and rain..."

The fund constraints surfaced after the government's annual allocation of fund for the RCC has been reduced to Tk 10 crore from Tk 30 crore a few years back, said Ashraf Haque, chief engineer of RCC.

"For that reason, we are unable to allocate more for controlling mosquitoes," he added.

The corporation is also in short of fogger machines. Instead of the required 120 fogger machines, they are working with only 30, said Sheikh Md Mamun, chief conservancy officer of the corporation.

"Those machines are also around 20 years old."

"Finding no other options, at times, we hire machines from other government agencies," he said.

Mosquitoes usually start growing in stagnant water during a period from late October to November and from February to March, said Prof ABM Mohsin, a fisheries department teacher of Rajshahi University.

"If the corporation fails to take proper measures during that period, containing mosquitoes becomes extremely difficult," he said.

He said mosquito menace is acute in Rajshahi city due to cultivation of late paddy on marshlands and dense mango orchards around the city.

In addition, a lack of cleaning drives such as cleaning of ponds, water bodies and drains, and a poor garbage and sewerage management, has turned the city into a fertile ground for mosquito breeding.

Meanwhile, city dwellers continue to fight the battle by themselves.

"Coils and electronic devices can hardly control the menace," said Mohammad Shahin, a resident of Khirshintikor area. "I use mosquito nets even during the day to protect my family."

But Shahin, a trader by profession, remains worried about his cattle. "I burn coils at the cow-shed, which is also risky. But what else can I do?"

"The Sunday night's storm reduced the mosquito severity a bit. But, it's not a solution," he said.

Many of the residents in the area said they burn dhups (incense) and coconut fibres to generate smoke for driving mosquitoes away.

"Mosquitoes bite all day. It's very hard to concentrate on anything due to the attack," said Sanaul Haque, a college teacher of Sagarpara.

Abdus Sattar of Salbagan area said, "My children feel sick due to burning coils and spraying insecticide all the time."

This correspondent also spoke with many of the residents from Nawdapara, Rajshahi University area, Budpara and Dingadoba among other areas. All of them said that mosquito menace has intensified over the years due to a lack of initiative taken by the city corporation.

Be it day or night, mosquitoes seem to lurk everywhere -- residences, offices, classrooms, streets and fields, they added.

When asked, Mosaddek Hossain Bulbul, mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation, said, "The city corporation would use its revenue funds for tackling the mosquito menace."

"Facing all our limitations, we would continue the anti-mosquito drives," he said. "We will start our drives in full swing as soon as the budding and flowering of the mangoes complete, so that those are not affected."

## NEWS IN brief

### Man dies as electric pole falls on him

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A worker died as a concrete electric pole of Palli Bidyut Samity fell on him while he was unloading them from a truck at Sarkarhat in Hathazari upazila of Chittagong early yesterday.

Md Jamal, 25, of Naogaon, was declared dead at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH), said Assistant Sub-Inspector Alauddin Talukder of CMCH Police Camp.

### Six cops closed in Chuadanga

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Chuadanga police closed five assistant sub-inspectors (ASIs) and a constable to police lines for breaking discipline yesterday.

On Thursday evening, ASIs Kamruzzaman, Indrajit Sarker, Romen Das, Kamrul Hossain and Yusuf Ali with Constable Zasim Uddin of Chuadanga Sadar Police Station conducted a drive in plainclothes at Singnagar village in Jibonnagar upazila, said Delwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Chuadanga Sadar Police Station.

They did not take any permission from the higher authorities concerned for the drive and also beat up some villagers, the OC said.

### Debate festival begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A three-day debate festival began at Shaheed Bir Uttam Lt Anwar Girls' College (SAGC) in Dhaka Cantonment on Thursday.

SAGC's Principal Col Mohammad Wahidur Rahman presided over the inaugural session where President Brig Gen Iqbal Ahmed of its Governing Body and Chairman of Debate for Democracy Hassan Ahamed Chowdhury Kiron spoke among others. Some 48 teams from 25 educational institutions, including Notre Dame College, Dhaka Residential Model College, and Adamjee Cantonment Public School and College, are participating in the festival, said a press release.

### Kali temple gets new committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Utpal Saha and Sajib Biswas have unanimously been selected as the president and general secretary of Ramna Kali Mandir and Ma Anandamayee Ashram Management Committee.

They were declared as president and general secretary at the annual general meeting of the management committee for two consecutive years from 2018.

The meeting was held yesterday at 10:00am on the premises of the temple, reads a press release.



Guests and visitors at an exhibition of artworks by renowned poet Syed Shamsul Haq in the Daily Star-Bengal Arts Precinct at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka yesterday. Bengal Foundation organised the exhibition.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

### FFs to get three more bonuses: Mozammel

BSS, Natore

The freedom fighters will soon get three additional bonuses every year along with the existing two.

Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq made the announcement on Thursday while inaugurating the Muktiyoddha Complex at Gol-E-Afroz Govt College in Singra upazila.

The minister said, "The freedom fighters are now getting two bonuses during eid, and soon they will get three additional bonuses on Independence Day, Victory Day and Bengali New Year."

Apart from this, the government is going to provide medical treatment and free medicines to the freedom fighters from next month.

State Minister for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Zunaid Ahmed Palak also addressed the rally.

# Creating jobs can help continue economic growth

## Muhith tells workshop on Bangladesh's LDC graduation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith has underscored the need for creating more jobs and utilising resources properly to keep the economic development going.

"We have to give importance to generate more employment opportunities as the current growth in employment is not a satisfactory one," he said.

Muhith was speaking at a workshop organised by Economic Relations Division (ERD) on "Bangladesh Graduation from LDC Status: Opportunities and Way Forward" at a city hotel yesterday.

The finance minister presided over the workshop while ERD Secretary Kazi Shofiqul Azam presented a keynote paper.

Muhith said Bangladesh will not face any difficulty in attracting foreign direct investment (FDI).

"Resources will be available to Bangladesh and we will have to utilise the resources," Muhith observed.

Termining climate change a very important issue for Bangladesh, he said the government has been taking different measures to tackle the impacts of climate change.

Bangladesh has been doing very well in social indicators, said the minister, adding, "We should continue to do better..."

Nojibur Rahman, principal secretary of Prime Ministers' Office (PMO), said the political leadership will have to play an important role in upholding the achievement.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's leadership will be able to face the graduation challenges, he observed.

Abul Kalam Azad, chief coordinator of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) affairs at PMO, said Bangladesh needs additional US \$60 billion investment to continue the progress.

In this regard, the private sector will have to play an important role to steer the economy, Azad added.

Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Chairman of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), said Bangladesh's prospect is very bright.

"Bangladesh would not have to wait for official graduation from LDC by 2024, it would become a developing country by 2021."

Shahidul Haque, secretary of foreign

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# Road crashes kill 2

STAR REPORT

At least two persons including a minor were killed in separate road accidents in Mymensingh and Jamalpur districts yesterday.

In Jamalpur, schoolboy Rifat, 13, died on the spot, when a Sherpur-bound speeding truck lost control on the wheels and ran him over in Baksiganj upazila, reports our correspondent.

He was a student of Dhanua Kamalpur Co-operative High School in the upazila.

The driver managed to flee the scene, however the vehicle has been seized, police said.

Meanwhile, in Mymensingh, farmer Maiz Uddin, 55, died on spot on Mymensingh-Kishoreganj road in Ishwarganj upazila, when an auto-rickshaw overturned after the driver lost control of the vehicle, police said.

The incident also injured a woman, Achhiya Akhter, 55, who was later taken to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said Badrul Alam Khan, officer-in-charge of Ishwarganj Police Station.

No further details could be known immediately.

# Health condition of plane crash survivor Kabir deteriorates: Doctors

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The health condition of US-Bangla plane crash survivor Kabir Hossain, who is undergoing treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), has deteriorated, doctors said.

"His condition has deteriorated as his respiratory complexities have increased," Dr Samanta Lal Sen, national coordinator at National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery of DMCH, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The doctor is leading a 13-member board that is overseeing the treatment of the seven Bangladeshis, who survived the US-Bangla plane crash at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu.

Replying to a question whether Kabir will be sent abroad for his better treatment, Dr Lal Sen said the medical board is yet to decide it.

Kabir's son Al Helal Sawon told The Daily Star that his father could not talk to others since yesterday morning. He even cannot take any food himself, said Sawon.

Kabir Hossain, 53, a cosmetic trader by profession, was brought back to Dhaka on March 19.

From the Dhaka airport, he was first taken to the burn unit of the DMCH directly and shifted to its Intensive Care Unit (ICU) on March 20 as his physical condition deteriorated.

Hailing from Shibchar of Madaripur district, Kabir was going to Nepal by the US-Bangla flight BS211 on March 12 to buy cosmetic goods. He suffered from severe pain in his two legs and chest during the plane crash.

Besides, six other survivors -- Mehedi and his wife Shwarna, Almunahar Annie, Sheikh Rashed Rubayet, Shahreen Ahmed and Shahin Bepari -- are also undergoing treatment at the DMCH's burn unit.

Of them, Shahreen Ahmed and Shahin Bepari underwent successful surgeries at the DMCH on March 21.

Meanwhile, the physical condition of Shahin Bepari has deteriorated, Dr Lal Sen said.

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Several organisations formed a human chain, inset, yesterday on Road 8 in the capital's Uttara Sector 3 to protest felling of trees. Story on page 3. PHOTO: COLLECTED