

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHITTAGONG	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 33.2 L 27.0	H 31.6 L 27.4	H 32.0 L 26.4	H 30.5 L 25.2	H 33.8 L 27.3	H 33.0 L 27.6	H 32.3 L 26.4	H 31.8 L 26.0	H 31.3 L 26.5

Light to moderate rain/thunder showers is likely to occur at many places over Rangpur, at a few places over Barisal, Chittagong, Mymensingh & Sylhet and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka & Khulna with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places in the next 24 hours, reports UNB quoting Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 6:50pm and rises tomorrow at 5:17am.

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker. PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Flowerpeckers

At eight centimetres and much smaller than a sparrow it is the smallest bird seen in Bangladesh. Chances are, if you have a large tree near you with a parasitic plant (for example, *dhaira*, orchid or mistletoe) growing on it, this bird may have been near you. But you probably did not notice it because it is tiny, moves around endlessly and prefers to stay high up near those parasitic plants. It is the Pale-billed Flowerpecker. The Bengali name is Metethot Fuljhuri. Flowerpeckers come from the Dicaidae family of songbirds. There are forty-four species of Flowerpeckers in the world. In Bangladesh we can see six of them, although two are very hard to come by. The family Dicaidae is divided into two genera: Dicaeum and Prionochilus. All our flowerpeckers are from the Dicaeum genera. Flowerpeckers belonging to the other genera, Prionochilus, are found in Southeast Asia and Australia.

It was another two years before I saw the Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker in Rema-Kalenga Wildlife Sanctuary. The male has a wide scarlet stripe running down its black back, looking like the stroke of a paintbrush. Since then I have seen this bird many times. In addition to being extremely vocal it is restless. The female is grey with a smaller, less impressive red bar running down the back of its tail. I photographed the Orange-bellied Flowerpecker in Sundarban, although at first I mistook it for the chick of some other birds - it was so small. It was in a mixed flock of birds, all feeding off the flowers in an area of ora plants.

The Yellow-bellied Flowerpecker as well as our two rare species, Thick-billed Flowerpecker and Plain Flowerpecker, have eluded me until now. Flowerpeckers are interesting. They provide a crucial service to the parasitological plants they normally associate with. Eating the flowers and berries of plants such as *dhaira* and mistletoe, they excrete the seeds on other tall branches so the parasitological plants can grow there.

But what is amazing is this: they excrete within minutes of eating the fruits. Their digestive system allows the seeds to pass through quickly while covering them in a sticky gum. Thus, a seed which is passed as bird dropping does not fall to the ground but sticks to the branch from where a new parasitological plant sprouts and grows. Such are the mysterious ways of nature.

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Current 'political crisis' deeper than ever before: Prof Riaz

UNB, Dhaka

The current 'political crisis' Bangladesh is now going through is deeper than that of past 46 years, said Professor Ali Riaz yesterday.

"To understand the reason behind the crisis and identify the future pathway of the country's politics, four things are needed to be looked at -- the current face of governance, reaction from the new class of social stratification, influence of Islamists on society and politics; and the role of India," the noted international political analyst said.

Speaking at the 23rd monthly public lecture titled 'Future Trends of Politics in Bangladesh' organised by Reading Club Trust and Gyantapas

Abdur Razzaq Foundation at the Sirajul Islam Lecture Hall in Dhaka University, he said a hybrid 'regime' is going on in the country, where ensuring everyone's participation and right to vote is a 'matter of big concern'.

Prof Riaz, who teaches at the Department of Politics and Government in Illinois State University, USA, called the current government a 'regime' because he said 'regime lasts longer than any government'.

Claiming election as the only legal base to be in power, Ali Riaz said: "After the 2008 election and the 15th amendment to the constitution, a new type of political system has come into the scene where election has been turned into a tool of authority, rather

being a tool of democracy."

After the cancellation of the caretaker government system, now it has become impossible to defeat the ruling party, he said, adding that once there was a vibrant civil society in the country which is now missing.

In his lecture, Prof Ali Riaz also said Islamisation of society has increased to a great extent in the last one decade, and the need of Islamists will be seen in the future to validate lopsided election and mobilise grassroots voters.

Presiding over the public lecture, political scientist Rounaq Jahan condemned the ongoing violence over the quota reformation movement, and urged the youth to find a way out of this unstable situation.

6 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

At least six people were killed and 42 others injured in road accidents across the country yesterday, report our correspondents.

In Dinajpur, a woman was killed and 30 others were injured in a head-on collision between a bus and truck in Phulbari upazila.

The deceased is Gulzara Begum, 38, of Joypurhat. The injured were admitted to hospitals.

The incident took place on Dinajpur-Gobindaganj road in Bejaimor area around 2:00pm, said Sheikh Nasim Habib, officer-in-charge of Phulbari Police Station. The overcrowded bus of Arija Paribahan was going to Dinajpur from Phulbari.

In Thakurgaon, a covered van driver was killed and 12 others were injured after the vehicle collided head-on with a bus on Thakurgaon-Dhaka highway in Untrishmile area.

The deceased is Sajjad Hossain, 50, of Magura. Police seized the vehicles and filed a case.

In Narayanganj, a biker was killed when a covered van hit his motorbike on Narayanganj-Shimrail road in Godanial area. The deceased is Shahriar Bulbul, 30, of Joypurhat, said police. He was marketing representative of a pharmaceutical company.

Locals caught the driver and handed him over to police.

In Habiganj, a 10-year-old boy was killed as a battery-run easy-bike hit him at Richi village in Sadar upazila, reports UNB. The deceased is Joy, son of Akbar Miah.

The easy-bike ran him over while he was playing in front of his house in the morning.

In Savar, two people were killed when a bus rammed their motorbike on Dhaka-Aricha highway in Aminbazar Truck Stand area, UNB adds. The deceased are Sujat, 25 and Shafiq Ahmed, 26, of Pabna.



Sagar, a student of Tejgaon College, is apparently outside the largely divided traditional Bangladeshi football fandom. An ardent sports lover, this youth wants to see Bangladesh in the FIFA World Cup by 2050. Holding a placard inscribed with this call and urging initiatives in this regard, he stood in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday. Currently, Bangladesh ranks 194th out of 211 FIFA member countries. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

5 Rohingya refugees try to cross into India

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Five Rohingyas from Balukhali camp in Cox's Bazar were detained at Darshana immigration checkpoint in Chuadanga yesterday when they were trying to cross the border into India with Bangladeshi passports.

Sub-inspector Abdul Alim, in-charge of Darshana immigration checkpoint, said the five aged between 18 and 30 appeared

around 11:30am, and submitted their passports for completion of the procedure to travel into India.

"After we questioned them about the information in passports, two of them spoke inconsistently, raising suspicion," said the SI, adding, "They also could not speak either Bangla, Hindi or English."

The five later admitted that they are

First death anniversary of Fayza Haq

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today marks the first death anniversary of noted art critic, journalist and teacher Fayza Haq. She is remembered for her reviews of fine art, classical music, dance and literature.

About her writing on art, she once said, "I don't critique or analyse. I just depict what artists are exhibiting."

Fayza Haq began writing for The Daily Sun (Pakistan) in 1970 while teaching at Karachi University. She later worked at The Bangladesh Observer and The Bangladesh Times, until joining The Daily Star at its inception, where she wrote for over 25 years.



Divers recover bodies of missing teens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rescue divers of Fire Service and Civil Defence have recovered bodies of two schoolboys, who went missing on Thursday afternoon while taking a dip in a canal in Rajendrapur area of Keraniganj, on the outskirts of Dhaka city.

Divers recovered body of Sifat around 6:00pm on Thursday, and that of Jihad around 9:00am yesterday, said Mozammel Haque, a sub-inspector of South Keraniganj Police Station.

The bodies were found 150 yards away from the spot, from where the boys jumped into the canal, he added.

The deceased were identified as sixth-grader Sifat Hossain, 13, and eighth-grader Jihad, 14.

They both hailed from Baghoirnar village of south Keraniganj, SI Mozammel Haque told The Daily Star.

Quoting witnesses, police said the boys went for swimming in the canal with some other friends on Thursday, when they were pulled away by strong

current of the canal, which is connected to the Dhaleshwari river.

Although the others friends managed to come out of the canal, the two remained missing.

Immediately after their missing was reported, divers of Fire Service and Civil Defence started their search and rescue operation, said police.

An unnatural death case was filed with the South Keraniganj Police Station. Bodies of both schoolboys were handed over to their family, police added.

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