

WEATHER
FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES	DHAKA	MYMENSINGH	CHATTOGRAM	SYLHET	RAJSHAHI	RANGPUR	KHULNA	BARISHAL	COX'S BAZAR
	H 26.2 L 23.7	H 25.8 L 23.3	H 25.0 L 23.5	H 27.0 L 23.2	H 25.7 L 22.8	H 25.0 L 21.6	H 28.6 L 24.5	H 28.2 L 24.0	H 22.2 L 23.0

Light to moderate rain/thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at most places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram & Sylhet and at a few places over Rangpur till 6:00pm today, reports UNB quoting Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:35pm and rises tomorrow at 5:55am.

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Sunset in Hail Haor. PHOTO: IHTISHAM KABIR

Haor Sunset

I have been here in Hail Haor, Molvi Bazar, since early afternoon. The hot sun bears down on this cloudless and breezeless day. The muddy road is cracked and parched. It is the wrong time of year to look for birds, for I see only drongos, shaliks, pond herons, egrets and a few kites overhead. The more interesting and colourful birds are not here. They are en route on their long flight from northern lands and will arrive in two more months.

Still, the haor never fails to surprise. As I am standing on the bank of a fishpond, I see a mongoose scurry along the adjacent bank, its coat shining golden in the sun's rays. From about twenty feet, he sees me, freezes, fixes me with a stare of his blood-red eyes, and turns around, disappearing into a thick mess of dhol kolmi plants. He returns after a few minutes, sees me again, and bolts again. What is he up to? Perhaps he aims to enter the tinshed of the caretaker, with its door ajar. After a third attempt he disappears into the vegetation and does not reappear.

I walk to another fishpond and stand facing east. There are miles and miles of wetlands - fishponds and rice paddies - stretching across the horizon, bounded by blue hills in the distance. Finally a breeze breaks the still air, but strangely it is almost a hot breeze, the warm exhalation of the life around me.

It is still an hour before sunset but the haor starts shutting down for the day. Birds fly home for the evening. In sudden bursts, chorui and babui, flocks of pond herons, and noisy shaliks cut across the sky. Several kites make slow circles high over a fishpond while playing with each other. Bee-eaters and swifts make a last-ditch attempt over water to catch some insects on the wing before heading for the trees. Water buffaloes gather on the roadside, satisfied with another day spent cavorting in the mud.

I wander over to one of my favourite spots, a large field facing west. The sun is now a giant red circle descending rapidly. A mile away, on a path lined by koros trees that cuts the haor north-south, farmers and workers trudge homeward, one weary step at a time. Some carry tools or baskets on their head. Guards who sleep in makeshift camps watching the fishponds start setting up for the night.

A shirtless, jeans-clad boy comes to the field and starts gathering the cows grazing there. His name is Abdus Samad. His house is on the left of my field.

I ask him about jackals. Yes, you can see them, at night or early mornings. And what about jungle cats and fishing cats? They come out late at night and catch the big fish.

By now horizon has swallowed half the sun. I turn around, negotiating my way through a wide band of water hyacinth at the field's edge. When I reach the road, the world has taken on magical colours. The sun's orange and the sky's blue reflect off the water and colours everything in shades of pink. The colours are saturated in the heat, different from winter when fog and mist mutes them. I say goodbye to the haor and start on my return journey.

(For those unfamiliar with the term, a haor is a wetland - a large, saucer-shaped depression in the land that fills up with water in monsoon and dries out in winter. Most of our larger haors are in the Sylhet region.)

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DU 'GHA' UNIT ADMISSION TEST Question paper leaked, claim students

DU CORRESPONDENT

The question paper of Dhaka University's (DU) "Gha" Unit admission test for 2018-2019 session was allegedly leaked before the exam started.

A number of students claimed that some admission seekers got the question paper via WhatsApp and other instant messaging apps at around 9:17am yesterday -- 43 minutes prior to the exam.

However, authorities denied the allegation saying that they neither received such complaint from any admission seeker nor any proof to back up the allegation.

"The entry test was completed under strict supervision; there was no way anyone could've leaked the question. We will look into the allegation to verify whether it was a question leak or digital forgery," DU Proctor Prof AKM Golam Rabbani told reporters at his office.

The Daily Star obtained a total

of 14 images of a handwritten script containing multiple-choice questions (MCQ) with answers at around 10:31am.

After scrutinising the images and the original question paper given at the exam halls, this correspondent found that 72 MCQs in the leaked images matched the original script.

A screenshot also validated that the images were supplied to some admission seekers at around 9:17am via Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp.

After getting the leaked question paper, a campus-based journalist informed an assistant proctor of the university midway through the exam, asking him to take immediate steps.

This correspondent also spoke to a person who received the handwritten script before the exam.

"An admission seeker came to stay at my dormitory the night before the exam. The applicant received a set of question papers at around 7:30am on the day of the exam. But after a while, we learnt that the script is not the 'original one'. At around 9:17am, some images containing a handwritten script and its answers were delivered to him," said a DU student, wishing to remain anonymous.

He also said the messages were sent from the number of said applicants' guardian.

"Then I informed a journalist. The admission seeker told me that his father got the question paper from a private coaching centre in Bogura," he added.

Of the total 100 MCQs, 19 MCQs of the Bangla part, 17 from English and 36 from general knowledge matched with the leaked question paper.

Allegations of question paper leak in "Gha" Unit admission test also surfaced last year.

E-mails containing questions

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Court has proved BNP is a terrorist party: Quader

UNB, Shariatpur

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said it has now been proved in the country's court that BNP is a terrorist party.

"It's been proved in the courts of Canada and Bangladesh that BNP is a terrorist party," he said.

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, made the remarks while talking to reporters at Naodoba toll plaza in Janjira upazila, during a visit to inspect the under-construction Padma Bridge.

He made the remarks referring to the verdict in the August 21 grenade attack cases sentencing a number of BNP leaders, including acting Chairman Tarique Rahman.

Describing Tarique Rahman as the mastermind of the grenade attack, he said the BNP leader should have been handed death penalty in the cases.

The AL leader also claimed that BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia was involved in the attack, saying she should have been brought under trial.

On Wednesday, a speedy trial tribunal sentenced 19 people to death, 19 others, including Tarique Rahman, to life imprisonment and eight

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Department of Livestock Services and Bangladesh Poultry Industries Central Council staged a rally and procession marking World Egg Day in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka yesterday. They also distributed eggs among underprivileged people in different parts of the city.

Bangladeshis not eating enough eggs Experts say on World Egg Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Per capita consumption of eggs in Bangladesh should be increased to address protein deficiency and malnutrition, especially among low-income people, experts said at a roundtable discussion yesterday.

The Department of Livestock Services (DLS) and Bangladesh Poultry Industries Central Council (BPICC) jointly organised the discussion at Cirdap auditorium in Dhaka marking World Egg Day.

Currently, each Bangladeshi on average consumes around 95 eggs annually, as per recent government statistics. Egg consumption should increase to at least 104 per year to fulfil protein needs as well as to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), speakers said.

Eggs are a better source of protein for low-income people as it is cheaper than fish and

meat, they added.

Shamsul Arefin Khaled, president of World's Poultry Science Association in Bangladesh, said egg consumption in the country has increased significantly in recent years.

"But it is still lower than that prescribed by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations -- 104 eggs per person annually," he said.

Speaking as chief guest at the programme, Hires Ranjan Bhowmik, director general of the livestock department, said the country's protein demands could have been better fulfilled if the per capita egg consumption doubled.

"We should try to increase egg consumption as much as possible," he said, expressing hope that the country would be sufficient in egg production within 2021.

Bhowmik also said the country has to achieve the financial means to allow each citizen to have at least one egg a day.

Moshiur Rahman, president of BPICC, urged the government to take an initiative so that every school student across the country can have at least two eggs per week.

About the recent price hike of eggs, he said the production of eggs has decreased by around 30 percent recently, as earlier this year many poultry farms had shut down for not being able to make profit.

Virus outbreak in poultry farms is another reason behind reduced egg production, added Moshiur. He also assured that they would try their best to overcome the current situation.

Earlier, the organisers brought out a colourful procession which marched a number of roads in the city, to mark World Egg Day.

The organisers also distributed free boiled eggs among underprivileged people in several areas of Dhaka, according to a BPICC press release.



Naripokkho Executive Member Rehana Samdani speaks at the opening of a two-day conference, at the capital's Bangla Academy auditorium yesterday.

Economic progress hasn't eliminated gender discrimination: Speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a discussion yesterday said alongside government initiatives, changes in the social structure are required to eliminate gender gap in the country.

Women's rights organisation Naripokkho arranged the discussion at Bangla Academy in the capital. It was part of a two-day conference which began yesterday to celebrate the organisation's 35th anniversary.

Despite economic progress, women in Bangladesh still face discrimination. Women's opinions are seldom considered with importance in the family while they also face discrimination in terms of wages, they said.

Rina Roy, a member of the organisation, said social discrimination is instrumental behind gender gap. The state is also an accomplice in such discrimination, she said.

Women often become subject to sexual

violence, Rina said, adding, "They have to create their own space in society."

To establish women's rights, ensuring democratic practices in the family, organisations, and the state is essential, Naripokkho Executive Member Rehana Samdani said at the inaugural ceremony.

At the inaugural session, the organisation honoured its former chairperson Shamsunnessa for her contributions to ensuring women's rights.

Naripokkho Chairperson Archana Biswas said one of the organisation's core activities towards ensuring women's rights is "Mongolbarer Shabha" (Tuesday's meeting), which has been held regularly since 1983. Beside members, rights activists and victims of violence often attend the meeting, she said.

The two-day conference has been divided into various sessions. Representatives from different rights and donor organisations attended yesterday's sessions.

JOURNO FARHAD MURDER HC to deliver verdict on October 16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court will deliver its verdict on October 16 in the sensational case of journalist Farhad Khan murder, in which two persons were sentenced to death.

The HC bench of Justice Md Ruhul Quddus and Justice ASM Abdul Mobin fixed the date for delivering the judgement, after concluding the hearing on the death reference and appeals in the case on Thursday.

Farhad Khan, 60, senior assistant editor of Bangla daily Janata, and his wife Rahima Khanam, 55, were killed in their rented flat in Nayapaltan area in the capital on January 28, 2011.

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JOY IS WHAT YOU FIND WITHIN: A girl pulls a discarded luggage with a child sitting inside, enjoying the ride. The photo was taken recently from Tejkhuni Para.

Quota for physically challenged should stay: economists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two noted economists yesterday underscored the need for keeping quota in both government and private job sectors for physically challenged people.

"Quota is not a permanent system, but in the present context, quota should be kept for physically challenged people," said eminent economist and scholar Dr Akbar Ali Khan.

"Instead of considering it [job opportunities for physically challenged people] a mercy, it should be considered their right," he said while speaking at a debate programme participated by visually impaired students at Dhaka's Brac Centre.

Debate for Democracy and Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh jointly organised the event, says a press release. Visually impaired students of Dhaka University and Eden Mohila College took part in the debate.

Center for Policy Dialogue's (CPD) Distinguished Fellow Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya said there is a necessity of quota in civil service. "The society should be friendly to physically challenged people," he added.

Chairperson of Debate for Democracy, Hassan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron demanded reservation of three to five percent quota in government jobs, at least two reserve seats in parliament and increasing allowance and age limit for the physically challenged in government jobs.