

WEATHER FORECAST

YESTERDAY'S TEMPERATURES

DHAKA 30.2 | L 16.0 | MYMENSINGH 29.0 | L 14.0 | CHITTAGONG 29.3 | L 15.7 | SYLHET 29.9 | L 15.5 | RAJSHAHI 27.0 | L 13.7 | RANGPUR 26.0 | L 13.0 | KHULNA 30.0 | L 14.0 | BARISHAL 30.5 | L 12.4 | COX'S BAZAR 31.0 | L 15.2

Light rain is likely to occur at one or two places over Rajshahi and Rangpur till 6pm today. Weather may remain mainly dry with temporary partly cloudy sky elsewhere, reports UNB quoting Met Office. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:40pm and

Child among 3 killed in road accidents

STAR REPORT

A six-year-old girl and two others were killed in separate road accidents on Thursday in Gopalganj, Madaripur and Thakurgaon.

Labiba Khanum, 6, was run over by a picnic bus in Borshapara area of Kotalipara under Gopalganj around 5:30pm, reports our correspondent in Faridpur.

Her father is Arif Sikder from Saraidanga village in Tungipara upazila.

Muhammad Kamrul Faruk, officer-in-charge of Kotalipara Police Station, said quoting locals, "The accident took place when a Barishal-bound picnic bus of Azmi Paribahan ran Labiba over... while she was collecting dry leaves with her grandmother. She died on the spot."

Locals later stopped the bus and caught its driver. Both the bus and the driver were handed over to police, he added.

In Madaripur, a motorcyclist was killed after he was hit by a truck on Dhaka-Barishal highway in Kalibari area under Sadar upazila around 10:00pm, our Faridpur correspondent reports.

The deceased is Greek expatriate Rabiul Fakir, 35, from Ghotokchar area in the same upazila.

Quoting locals, Muhammad Sirajul Haque, sub-inspector of Madaripur Sadar Police Station, said, "A truck loaded with sand hit Rabiul's motorbike while he was going to Kandua bazar. Locals rushed the seriously injured man to Madaripur General Hospital where the doctors declared him dead."

The truck was later seized by police, but the driver was on

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

Physical education limping at RU

Launched 4 years back, dept still runs with guest teachers; no classroom in academic buildings

ARAFAT RAHMAN, RU

Academic activities of Physical Education and Sports Science (PESS) department at Rajshahi University (RU) are limping along on limited resources although it has been four years since the department opened.

RU authorities still have not appointed any teacher, nor has it allocated any designated classroom in any academic building for the department.

According to sources at the university, the PESS department was launched in 2015-16 academic year, under science faculty, with 30 seats. Over the past three years, around 90 students enrolled in the department under different academic sessions.

Classes of the department had been conducted by guest teachers and currently 19 such teachers have been conducting courses for three academic sessions, the sources said.

Students of the department said aca-

demic activities of a department cannot function properly with guest teachers.

Hanif, a first-year PESS student, said they were having difficulties attending classes due to irregular timetable of the guest teachers.

"On many occasions, our classes were delayed as they [guest teachers] showed up late. Many of our classes had to be postponed as they could not show up."

"There had been numerous instances when we had to locate the teacher and run around between different buildings for their convenience to attend a class," he said, adding that in order to improve this situation, the authorities need to recruit permanent teachers for the department as soon as possible.

Aside from the teaching staff issue, the department is also suffering from a lack of proper classroom facilities. Currently, the PESS department does not have any designated classroom in any academic building

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Women encouraged to engage in business

Training held for 30 entrepreneurs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Speakers at a ceremony in Rajshahi city yesterday called upon women to engage in economic activities and lead business enterprises.

They said the country's development would not complete without gender equality -- and that has to be done by empowering women in businesses, said a press release.

They were speaking at the inauguration ceremony of a training programme of 30 women entrepreneurs of the city at the training room of Foundation for Women and Child Assistance (FWCA), who arranged the programme for 30 women in beautification courses.

Shahin Akhter Rainy, wife of Rajshahi Mayor AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, inaugurated the programme while former caretaker government adviser and president of Bangladesh Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Rokia Afzal Rahman attended as the chief guest.

In her speech, Rainy said the government has initiated many projects to empower women in the country and they are becoming active in businesses not only in the towns, but also in villages.

Rokia Afzal Rahman in her speech said empowering women is essential for achievement of economic stability and development of the country. She hailed the activities of FWCA in training women entrepreneurs.

FWCA Executive Director Wahida Khanam chaired the programme.

No initiative yet to hold Cucusu election

MD ABBAS, CU

The Chittagong University authorities are yet to take any step to hold CU Central Students Union (Cucusu) election, taking no heed of the student organisations' demand.

On Wednesday, Bangladesh Chhatra Union formed a human chain at the university's Central Shaheed Minar, demanding that Cucusu election be held immediately.

Earlier on January 14, a faction of the CU unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) did the same on the campus. They gave the university authorities a one-month ultimatum to meet the demand.

Elections to the student unions are a much-talked-about issue at different public universities in the country now-a-days.

When Ducusu election is scheduled to be held on March 11, the CU authorities are trying to nullify the valid demands of the student organisations with the excuse of violence on the campus, alleged student leaders.

The university authorities wanted the student organisations to sign on paper that they would not carry out violence centring the election. The student bodies termed the decision "unrealistic and funny".

CU Chhatra Union President Drishon Pradip Chakma said they are ready to sign. "If anyone analyses the previous violent incidents on the campus, they will find that pro-ruling party student bodies are responsible for those," he alleged.

"The authorities do not want Cucusu as operative," he said, adding, "They fear that they would not be able to impose their whimsical decisions on students with an elected student body being effective."

Echoing the same, CU Chhatra Front former president Fazla Rabbi said the authorities have to create an atmosphere for the Cucusu election. If they fear violence, they will have to enforce all-out security measures, he added.

Shahidul Islam, general secretary of CU unit of Bangladesh Chhatra Dal, said they also want Cucusu election. In this regard, he demanded change in the present university administration, terming it "biased".

About the signing, he said, "If the authorities provide security to protect our activists from BCL goons, we are ready to sign."

Fazla Rabbi Sujon, former general

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Record number of birds at Tanguar Haor

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A record count of winter birds flocked Tanguar Haor in Sunamganj this January, around three times higher than last year, according to a census.

Moreover, one globally endangered species, Baer's Pochard, was spotted at the haor after six years.

In a census conducted by Bangladesh unit of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Bangladesh Bird Club and Bangladesh Forest Department on January 21, some 1,50,000 birds of around 40 species were counted in different beels of Tanguar Haor.

This is the highest number of birds in the last six years.

The census was a part of Asian Waterbird Census under Wildbird Monitoring Programme.

According to IUCN Bangladesh, the count was 59,542 in January last year; while the number of birds was 91,236 in 2017, 42,558 in 2016 and 52,299 in 2015.

ABM Sarowar Alam, senior programme officer of IUCN



Migratory ducks resting in a beel (large waterbody) in Tanguar Haor.

PHOTO: IUCN BANGLADESH

Bangladesh, said the water depth of the beels of the haor is very low, which has caused better availability of food for the birds.

"The water depth is low this January, and will probably go lower in February. If it gets too low, the

winter birds may leave earlier than usual," he said, adding that they will do another survey next month.

Meanwhile, Sunamganj District Administration has taken several strict initiatives to stop bird poaching in the haor.

The administration is also working on raising awareness among people."

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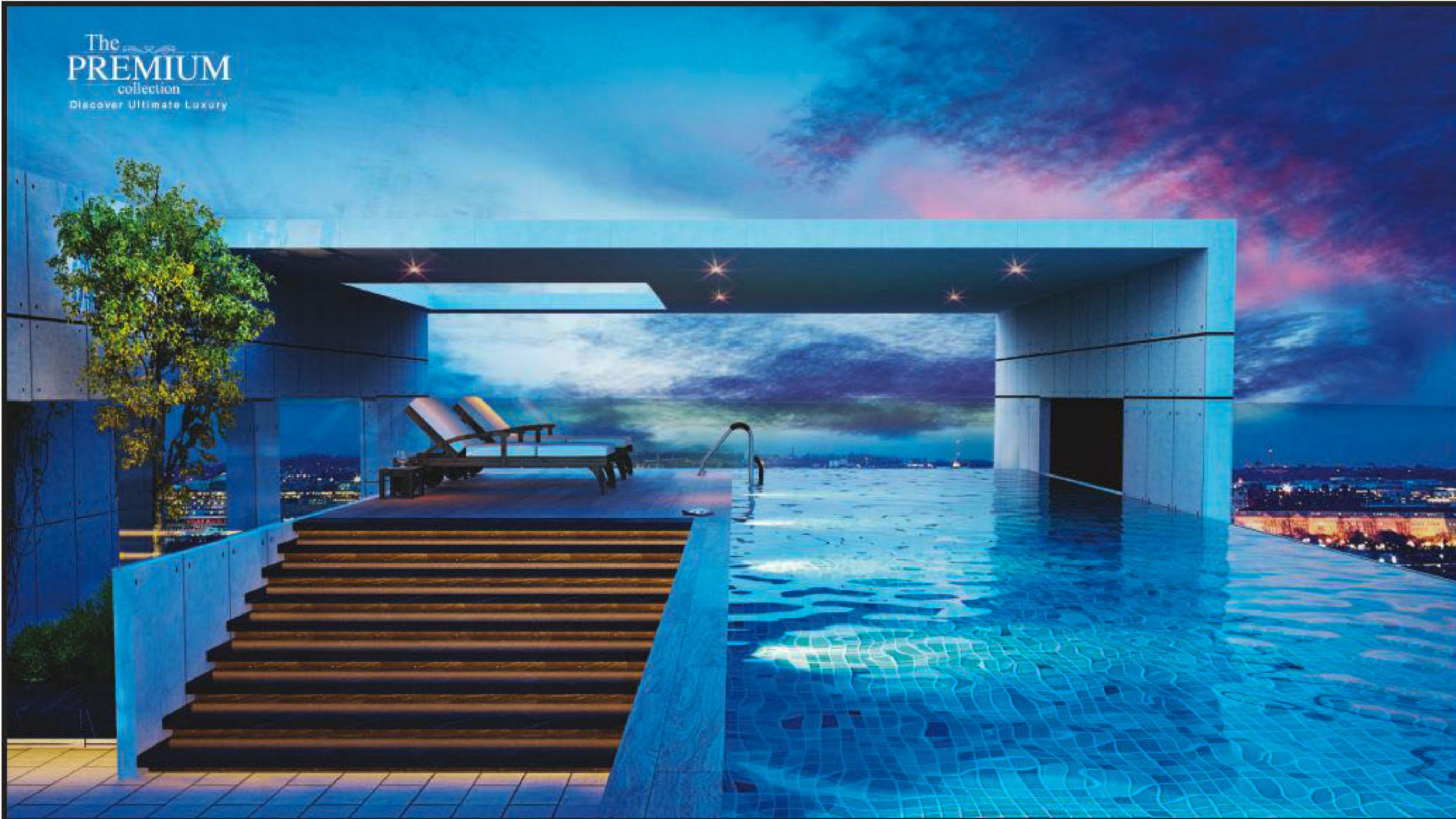
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