

Subsidy to double for 13 types of farm industries

Vegetables, agro-based product exporters to get perk

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will increase subsidy to 13 types of agro-based industries by allowing 15 percent rebate on power tariff instead of the current 7.5 percent.

Besides, the government will provide 25 percent cash incentives to vegetables and agro-based product exporters instead of the present 15 percent. Fruits exporters will get 25 percent incentive instead of the current 20 percent.

The decisions were taken at a meeting chaired by Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman with

officials of the agriculture and energy ministries and other departments.

Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr Fakhrudin Ahmed, Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan, Energy Secretary SM Shamsul Alam and the chairmen of Dhaka Electric Supply Authority (Desa), Rural Electrification Board (REB) and Power Development Board (PDB) were present.

Sources said REB sought Tk 16.50 crore in subsidy to which the finance minister agreed.

The subsidies are to be spent on agro-based industries such as

fisheries, fruit processing factories, salt and pulse processing, seeds and silk, poultry and dairy.

REB officials said the commercial power tariff of REB ranges between Tk 3 and Tk 4 per kilowatt hour. With the new rebate, the agro-based industries will get the same between Tk 2.55 and Tk 3.4.

An additional Tk 20 crore will be made available to the Department of Agriculture Extension and various agriculture research organisations under the Ministry of Agriculture for the development of the farm sector.



A dredger works at the Paturia-Daulatdia ferry ghat to relieve the Padma river of silt and shoals to open a new channel yesterday. A slide in the water level has forced ferries to carry half the regular passengers and cargo, resulting in long lines of traffic waiting to cross the river.

Ferry service yet to get normal

Authorities struggling to open up new Paturia-Daulatdia channel

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Traffic jams at Paturia and Daulatdia ferry terminals somewhat improved yesterday but navigability of the main Paturia-Daulatdia channel in the Padma remains poor as authorities struggled to open up a new channel.

Two ferries ran aground on shoals near the Daulatdia ferry terminals yesterday morning and were stranded for hours before being rescued by a tugboat. BIWTC (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation) sources said.

Sources said the BIWTC (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority) carried out frantic efforts to remove sands deposited at the channel and is hopeful about opening up the new channel by today.

The BIWTC yesterday requested

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Hills people call off road strike on ration promise

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The Jumah Refugee Welfare Association (JRWA) yesterday withdrew its indefinite road strike after receiving an assurance from the government of regular rations.

The strike, which was to start today, was withdrawn following a fruitful discussion with Deputy Minister on Hill Tract Affairs Moni

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Manpower export to Malaysia set to resume

Human resources minister arrives Oct 22 to sign MoU

RAFIQ HASAN

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) is going to be signed with Malaysia next week, resuming manpower export there after seven years.

The MoU will be signed during the visit of Malaysia's Minister for Human Resources Fong Chang

Onn on October 22.

The Malaysian minister will arrive in Dhaka from Pakistan on a daylong visit. He will leave Dhaka the same day for Tashkent, said sources in the ministry of expatriate welfare and overseas employment.

On his return home after signing the agreement, the Malaysian minister is expected to issue an

order withdrawing the restriction on recruitment of workers from Bangladesh.

The manpower export will formally resume after the issuance of the order, the sources said.

Malaysia banned the official recruitment of manpower from Bangladesh in 1997, following a

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Conjoined babies born in B'Baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Two conjoined babies were born at Titas General Hospital in Brahmanbaria yesterday.

Hospital sources said Shaheda Khatun, wife of Sahirul Islam of Dattara Mahalla under Brahmanbaria Pourashava, gave birth to the baby girls by a Caesarean shortly after 5:00pm. Dr Rahima Khatun Shephali operated on the 23-year-old mother at the private healthcare facility.

The babies joined by the belly are now under the care of Dr Narayan Chandra Shaha, child specialist of Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital.

The physician said the twins would be sent to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital for separation. The children and their mother are keeping well, Dr Narayan said.

Police promotion on cards ignoring court ruling

Plan to promote departmental officers ahead of BCS cadre police officers draws flak

STAR REPORT

The home ministry is once again promoting departmental officers as superintendents of police (SPs), ignoring a Supreme Court verdict and superceding Bangladesh Civil Service cadre officers.

The ministry has finalised its plan to fill out 19 vacant SP posts, mostly with departmental officials, ministry sources said, adding an order was likely this week.

The news of the move has angered the cadre officers and their lawyers have sent a notice to the ministry saying the court verdict should be upheld.

Many promotion hopefuls allege that a section of the officials backed by some powerful new-generation ruling BNP leaders are pocketing hefty amounts for the elevation.

An official alleged that some of the politicians were taking Tk 10

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Battle on at Ctg Port to keep sinking ship afloat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Port authority is battling to keep a sinking foreign ship, brought for scrapping, afloat at outer anchorage due to a leak in its hatch since Sunday morning.

MV Ocean Breeze, a St Vincent flagged vessel with a capacity of 50,000 tonne and 25 Indian crew on board, is tilted to an angle and the port authority has sent two tugboats to pump water out of the vessel, officials said yesterday.

"The vessel appears to be out of danger and rescue boats have restored power to the ship", said Captain Amirul Huq, a member (operation) of Chittagong Port, adding that if the ship sinks it may block movement of ship at outer anchorage.

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UN to hear fresh Iraq resolution

US draft now sets target for power transfer timeline

BBC ONLINE/ REUTERS, United Nations

An amended US draft resolution on Iraq is to be presented to the United Nations Security Council late last night, diplomats have said.

The US resolution has been redrafted to win international support for peacekeeping and reconstruction in Iraq after an earlier text failed to draw broad backing.

The new text -- which has not yet been released -- will be co-sponsored by the UK and Spain, who both contributed to the resolution.

UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw told a meeting of EU foreign ministers in Luxembourg that he hoped there would be a vote on the resolution this week, a diplomat attending the meeting said.

The revised draft would also call on Iraq's Governing Council to fix a timeline by December 15 for the transfer of power to Iraqis, council diplomats said yesterday.

Washington informally submitted the latest draft to the council's 14 other members over the weekend, but no date has been set for a vote on the new text or even for its formal introduction, the diplomats said.

A previous version of the resolution set no deadline and no timeline for a return to self-government for Iraq, which has been under US and British control since London and Washington invaded the Middle Eastern nation seven months ago, accusing Baghdad of concealing weapons of mass destruction.

France, Russia and Germany

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Saudi Arabia to hold first ever polls

REUTERS, Riyadh

Saudi Arabia, an absolute monarchy, announced yesterday it would hold its first elections to choose municipal councils, in what is widely seen as the first concrete political reform in the Gulf Arab state.

The announcement by the cabinet followed increased demands by reformists, intellectuals and academics on de facto ruler Crown Prince Abdullah to allow

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Man 'beats' wife to death

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man Sunday night allegedly beat his wife to death at Shahjahanpur Railway Colony, Motijheel.

Mohammad Shaheen, a rickshaw puller, started beating Khorsheida Begum, 45, following an altercation Sunday night. At one stage, she collapsed on the ground.

Shaheen took her to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and left her at the emergency department. She succumbed to her injuries at around 10:00pm. The victim's two sons and her brother

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Energy ministry ponders frugal florescent option

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The energy ministry has drafted a proposal to popularise compact florescent lamps (CFLs) by withdrawing import duty what it believes will cut power consumption by 345 megawatts.

"All government offices will have to switch to the low-power-consuming CFLs instead of conventional bulbs and contribute to energy saving," a Power Development Board official said.

The reduction in power consumption will ease brownouts by saving electricity worth about Tk 417 crore. The 'saved' power can be supplied to half a million new consumers.

The proposal will be placed at the

cabinet committee for economic affairs in a few weeks for approval.

About 6.5 million users presently consume 3,500 megawatts of power. Of them, 5.97 million commercial and domestic users consume 1,217 megawatts and use an estimated 550 megawatts to light bulbs.

Another 1.7 lakh industrial consumers use 1,032 megawatts, 50 megawatts of them on electrical bulbs.

Others, including bulk users, consume the rest.

The CFLs can replace the use of conventional bulbs burning 600 megawatts and will produce the same level of light consuming only

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	Sun Rises	Sun Sets
Oct 14		5-35 pm
Oct 15	5-56 am	

Prayer Timings		
October 14		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-00	5-25
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-15	4-30
Maghrib	5-46	5-51
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation