



PHOTO: PID

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir presides over a preparatory meeting for Saarc Tourism Ministers' Meeting at the secretariat in the city yesterday. The tourism ministers' meeting will be held in Cox's Bazar in May.

## World's oldest ice block unveiled

REUTERS, Tokyo

A million-year-old ice sample drilled from three kilometres under the Antarctic and unveiled in Tokyo on Tuesday could yield vital clues on climate change, Japanese scientists said.

Researchers, showing off the cylindrical samples of what they said was the oldest ice ever to be retrieved, said studying air trapped inside "core" samples taken from various depths under ground could also help predict how the Earth's weather patterns will change in the future.

"The ice core is made up of snow that fell in the distant past," said project leader Hideaki Motoyama of the National Institute of Polar Research, dressed snugly in a parka after unveiling the gleaming ice in a room kept at minus 20 degrees Celsius (minus 4 Fahrenheit).

"You can use it to examine changes in temperature, levels of carbon dioxide and methane over time, information that is only available from the core," he said.

Researchers at the Dome Fuji base in the eastern Antarctic spent more than two years on the delicate operation of drilling into the ice sheet, coming up with the million-year-old samples in January and shipping them to Japan on an ice-breaker.

Research based on a previous study of Antarctic ice and published by Nature magazine last year said concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane were far higher now than at any time in the last 650,000 years.

The Japanese team will look farther into the past and are also hoping the ice samples will yield opportunities to study the evolution of tiny organisms trapped in the ice.

"The environment there is very harsh, with temperatures about minus 45 degrees, so we don't know if life can be sustained," Motoyama said. "But we believe we will find organisms."

The researchers believe they can dig about another 20 metres into the ice at the Antarctic site before reaching base rock.

## Factory accident kills female worker in Jessore

BDNEWS, Jessore

A female worker was killed yesterday when she got entangled with the belt of a machine of Janata Krishi Machineries in Jessore town.

The deceased was identified as Shahanara, 32, wife of Pannu Miah. She hailed from Chachra in the town. After the accident Omar Faruq, owner of the mill, has been absconding.

Witnesses said the accident occurred when she was making rope with the cover of coconut. She died on the spot.