

HIGH YIELDING WHEAT, MAIZE

FAO to strengthen farm-level research

BSS, Dhaka

International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT), a research and extension arm of FAO, has renewed its commitment to expedite joint initiatives with Bangladesh to strengthen farm-level research to develop weather and cropping pattern friendly varieties of wheat and maize.

This was stated by a delegation of CIMMYT led by its Director Dr Rodomiro Ortiz when it called on the Agriculture Minister MK Anwar at his office here yesterday.

The CIMMYT, headquartered in Mexico, has been working with the Bangladesh Agriculture Research

Council and Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute since 1983 to develop and extend high yielding varieties of wheat and maize in the country.

The organisations also have collaborative efforts for germplasm exchange, research on arsenic contamination and food quality, agro-food nutrition programmes and knowledge sharing.

Welcoming the initiatives, MK Anwar said, against the backdrop of the growing local demand of maize and wheat, the country is progressing steadily in maize production. It was 0.24 million tons in 2003-04 and reached about 0.35 million tons in 2004-05.

Bangladesh has achieved tremendous progress in maize production in the last couple of years with an average yield of 5.7 tons per hectare against the global average of 4.2 tons and 3.8 tons in India, 1.9 tons in Pakistan and 1.8 tons in Nepal mainly because of irrigation and 100% hybrid seed cultivation.

In the neighbouring countries, a major portion of land is being cultivated in rain-fed condition and with local varieties. BADC has started hybrid maize seed production.

This year they are cultivating hybrid seed on 4 hectares of land on trial basis and next year on 60 hectares with a target of 120 tons of seed production against the country's present maize seed demand of about 1500 tons. Some private seed producers with the help of CIMMYT have also started maize seed production, the meeting was told.

BCL GS back home

DU CORRESPONDENT

Nazrul Islam Babu, general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), student wing of the main opposition Awami League, returned home yesterday after receiving treatment in the United Kingdom.

Babu arrived in Dhaka from London with AL President Sheikh Hasina on a British Airways flight at 6:00am.

Babu, who was severely injured in August 21 grenade attacks on AL rally at Bangabandhu Avenue, went to London on June 20 as around one hundred splinters were embedded in his body.

During his stay in London, Babu also met UK unit BCL and AL leaders and exchanged views with them.



PHOTO: STAR
Bangladesh Awami Juba League Chairman Jahangir Kabir Nanak addresses a public meeting at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday. Dhaka city Juba League organised the meeting protesting police action on Awami League leaders and activists during hartal hours on Thursday.

2 CHT Bangalee bodies merge

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Rangamati

Two organisations of Bangalees residing in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) merged at a rally on the local Shilpakala Academy premises yesterday.

The organisations are Adi O Shayee Bangalee Kalyan Parishad (ASBKP), a pro-CHT accord platform, and Somo Odhikar Andolon (SOA), a platform of anti-accord.

ASBKP President Farid Ahmad announced the merger at the rally presided over by SOA leader Abul Kashem.

The rally was addressed by central coordinator of SOA

Jahangeer Kamal, former coordinator Muniruzzaman, Rangamati district coordinator Moshil Alam Humayun, Parbatiya Bangalee Chhatra Parishad President Sabbeer Ahmad, SOA leader Shaheed Chowdhury and Payer Ahmad.

Later, a procession was brought out in the town chanting anti-Shanti Larma slogan and gathered in front of the office of Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Forum (CHTDF), a local project office of UNDP, and submitted a memorandum to the UNDP Resident Representative in Bangladesh through the CHTDF field manager.

The 9-point memo demanded

inclusion of an 'observer coordinator' to the CHTDF, equal rights for Bangalee and indigenous groups, selection of Bangalee NGOs to carry out the UNDP support programme and equal job opportunities for Bangalees and ethnic people.

Shawkat lodged an FIR the following day of July 20 with

Withdraw cases against Faridpur AL leaders: Jalil

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Awami League (AL) General Secretary Abdul Jalil yesterday condemned the government for filing cases against its leaders and workers in connection with the visit of Faridpur by Kazi Siraj, who recently resigned from the AL to join the BNP.

In a statement, he said people of Boalmari, Alfadanga and Madhukhali of Faridpur district elected Kazi Siraj

who insulted them by resigning from the AL for the sake of his personal interest.

"The resistance ahead of the visit of Kazi Siraj on June 29 was not any political vengeance, rather it was a mass people's protest against a political beneficiary," he added.

Jalil demanded of the government to withdraw all cases against the local AL leaders and workers immediately and stop their harassment.

The debaters of Rokeya Hall and Mukti Joddha Ziaur Rahman Hall of Dhaka University (DU) called on Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz at his office yesterday.

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SCHOOLBOY MURDER IN JESSORE

Eight get life

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A court in Khulna yesterday sentenced eight people to life imprisonment and fined Tk 50,000 each, in default, to suffer three more years rigorous imprisonment (RI) in the *senatal school boy Wahiduzzaman* murder case of Keshabpur upazila of Jessore.

Abdus Samad, Judge of Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal, pronounced the verdict in the case.

Three other accused were acquitted as charged brought against them were not proved.

Eight lifers are Atiar Rahman, Lutfur Rahman, Alamgir Hossain, Mansur Morol, Matiar Rahman, Parashullah Morol, Islam Molla and Iqbal Hossain. Of them, Atiar Rahman is absconding.

The acquitted are Noor Jahan, Lal Babu and Amena Khatoon. One of the accused Kombor Ali died during the trial.

The prosecution story in brief is that schoolboy Wahiduzzaman was beaten to death at 10:00pm on July 19 in 2002 at Fatepur village under Keshabpur upazila of Jessore.

The murder was committed when a group of armed miscreants attacked his father Shawkat Ali Khan. Wahiduzzaman, a student of class ten of Keshabpur High School met his tragic death when he came forward to rescue his father from the attackers.

Shawkat lodged an FIR the following day of July 20 with

Keshabpur thana accusing 12 people.

The investigation officer (IO) of the case, SI Nazir Ahmed submitted charge sheet against all the 12 FIR-named accused on August 9, 2002.

The case was transferred to Khulna Speedy Tribunal from the court of District and Sessions Judge, Jessore on January 15 this year. The trial began on January 19 in the Speedy Trial Tribunal.

DEBATE COMPETITION

DU Rokeya Hall champion

DU CORRESPONDENT

Rokeya Hall and Mukti Joddha Ziaur Rahman Hall of Dhaka University (DU) became champion and runners-up respectively in the 17th National Debate Competition held at Rampura Television Bhaban auditorium in the city recently.

Naima Anwar, Rumana Sharmin and Sejuti Rahman of Rokey Hall and Tanvir Salehin Emon, Kazi Sirifl Islam and Nazmul Huda Sujon of Ziaur Rahman Hall represented the DU in the competition.

Members of both the teams called on Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz at his office yesterday.

Prof Faiz congratulated them on their success and urged them to utilise their knowledge and merit in nation building activities.

He said, "Our debaters once again proved that they are the best not only in the academic field, but also in the cultural arena."

Pro-VC Prof AFM Yusuf Haider said the DU has been becoming champion for the last three years in the national debate competition.

He said the administration has given the debating practice an institutional shape by increasing allocation in its budget.

The debaters also paid a courtesy call on DU Treasurer Prof Syed Rashidul Hasan.

Provosts of both the halls Prof Tazmery Selima Akter Islam and Prof Borhan Uddin Khan and Chairman of the National Debate Federation Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiron were present on the occasion.