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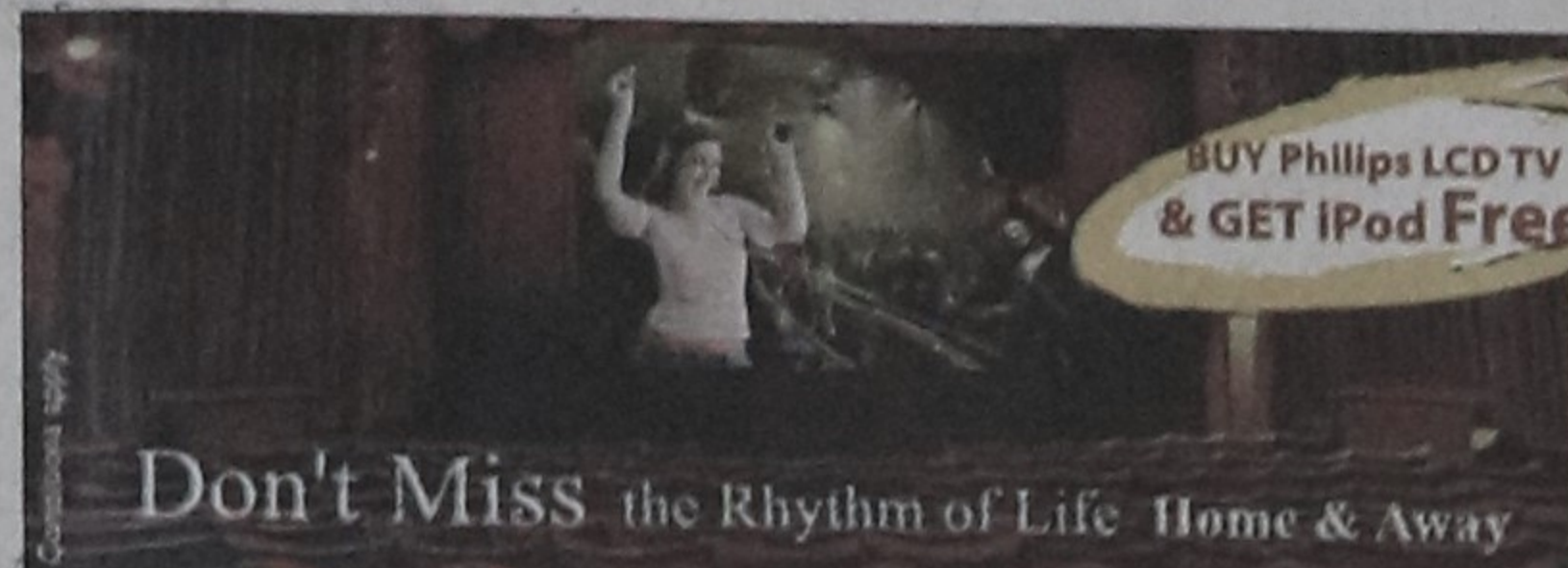
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Intel to provide 1,000 PCs for schools

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Intel Corporation has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the education ministry for supplying 1,000 personal computers to schools in the country's 64 districts as part of its plan to introduce information technology based education programme in Bangladesh.

Following its announcement made last September for introducing Intel World Ahead Programme in Bangladesh, Intel has also signed MoU with other agencies to ensure cost effective Internet connectivity at these schools.

Intel's World Ahead Programme General Manager John E Davies, who is spearheading the assignment, is currently visiting the country to give the programme a kick-start.

"Understanding a country takes six to 12 months. But when it gets

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Trade union debuts at 69 EPZ units

Workers at 22 other industries seek a year to introduce it

SHARIER KHAN and JASIM UDDIN KHAN

For the first time in the country, 69 industrial units in Dhaka and Chittagong export processing zones (EPZ) have introduced workers' associations on the basis of referendums by workers.

At the same time, workers of 22 industrial units have voted for not having any trade union body for themselves for yet another year.

The referendums on having workers' associations were held from January to the middle of this month.

There are 124 more "eligible" industrial units in these two EPZs which will have to hold their referendums by 2010 as per a decision of

Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza) on the basis of a 2004 act on allowing trade union activities.

This is in stark contrast to the trade union scenario prevailing in the industrial units outside the EPZs.

Sources said there are 6,000 garment and textiles related factories outside the EPZs that employ over two million workers and only 122 of them have trade unions.

Although referendums are supposed to be held without any external influence and spontaneously by the workers, Bepza is putting pressure on the industry owners to hold them as soon as possible, they said.

"All of us—investors, workers and the Bepza—need to educate

and prepare themselves for a healthy trade union practice. This needs gradual introduction of workers' associations," quipped a senior executive of an industry. "The mid-level management of each factory also needs vigorous understanding of the trade union issues. The Bepza is supposed to help us on these matters. But it has taken such a hard stance that makes the investors feel uncomfortable and friendless."

Sources added that an American labour group that has been pushing hard for implementing trade union rights at the EPZs has mounted pressure on the government to have the associations as soon as possible.

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Tamim ton completes whitewash

SPORTS REPORTER

Opener Tamim Iqbal slammed his maiden one-day hundred as Bangladesh completed a clean sweep against Ireland with a 79-run victory in the third and final match at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

The visitors' hope to finish the series with some solace all but evaporated when the Tigers piled up 293 for seven, their second highest score in the shorter-version after a 301-7 against Kenya, after deciding to bat.

In reply to the mammoth target, the Irish were never in the game and they lost wickets at regular intervals, interestingly four of them fell victims to run outs, before being bundled out for 214 in 45.3 overs.

The lone resistance came from Niall O'Brien who struck a 73-ball

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Firefighters try to douse flames on a bus at Dairy Farm gate of Jahangirnagar University yesterday. Students set fire to the vehicle protesting assault on their fellows at Gabtoli in the capital.

2 shot dead as villagers clash in Sunamganj

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two people were shot dead and 25 others injured during an armed clash over khas land at Jagonnathpur upazila in Sunamganj district yesterday.

The clash took place at around 11:30 am when two rival groups led by Sajjad Miah of Atpara and Jamal Miah of nearby Ghungirgaon clashed with arms over a plot of

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BIRD FLU 34,446 fowls culled in 2 districts

STAR REPORT

At least 34,446 fowls were culled and 34,623 eggs destroyed at six poultry farms and houses in Thakurgaon and Narayanganj on Thursday and Friday night.

Our Thakurgaon correspondent reports that at least 8,219 fowls were culled and 8,721 eggs were destroyed at three poultry farms and 46 houses at Rahimanpur village under Sadar upazila early Friday.

District livestock officer Bimol Chandra said samples of some dead chicken, collected from poultry farm Hazi Baiders of Rahimanpur village on March 18, were found to be infected with the avian influenza virus, commonly known as bird flu.

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Prayer Timing		
March 23		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fair	4-55	5-30
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-16	6-20
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation



Part of a brick structure believed to have been built in pre-Pala era at Paharpur. The archaeologists digging the world heritage site found it beneath the main temple there recently.

Cop close to criminal Emon held for quizzing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Criminal Investigation Department (CID) team yesterday hauled in a sub-inspector (SI) for questioning in the capital after his name cropped up in the statement of top criminal Sanjivul Islam Emon.

Earlier on Thursday, authorities suspended the police official named Sanwar Hossain. He was working as Bangladesh Rifles' liaison inspector for Rajshahi region.

In interrogations, Emon claimed that the SI while posted in Dhaka used to work as his second-in-command and take care of firearms after any operation by his gang, a CID official told The Daily Star in return for anonymity.

The son of physician parents told interrogators that Sanwar

Sanwar would have hefty sums for the job. Besides, he had a private car as a gift from Emon, added the official, quoting from the statements they have recorded.

Earlier on March 12, Netrakona police seized the car and detained his two brothers—Limun Hossain Bhuiyan, Kendua upazila correspondent of daily Amar Desh, and Farhad Hossain Bhuiyan.

Police sources said Sanwar would be arrested if a three-member team finds the allegations against him grounded in fact.

Both he and Emon hail from Netrakona, also the home district of former state minister for home affairs Lutfozzaman Babar.

The son of physician parents told interrogators that Sanwar

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27 vehicles damaged as transport workers clash with JU students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of Jahangirnagar University blockaded Dhaka-Aricha Highway near the university for an hour and a half after transport workers vandalised three university buses and assaulted students at Gabtoli Bus Terminal yesterday.

The students damaged around 25 vehicles and torched two others on the highway protesting against the attack on fellow students and the vandalising of university buses.

Twelve students including several female students were wounded in the transport workers' attack.

Witnesses said transport workers vandalised a Jahangirnagar

University bus after the bus and a light truck had a minor collision and the driver of the bus was involved in an altercation with the driver of the light truck on Mazar Road around 2:30pm.

When the students tried to resist the transport workers, the workers attacked the students and vandalised two other university buses.

The buses, however, managed to reach their destination after Mirpur police rushed to the spot and calmed the workers. The students tried to stage demonstrations by blocking the road at Gabtoli but police charged truncheons to disperse them, students claimed.

Hearing about the assault on

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Structure with artefacts found below Paharpur site temple

HASIBUR RAHMAN BILU, from Paharpur

Archaeologists have found another ancient brick-built structure with floor and artefacts under the basement of the main temple at world heritage site Paharpur.

Earlier, two brick-built structures of Gupta dynasty were found during an excavation, according to archaeologists of the Department of Archaeology.

Dr Md Shafiqul Alam, director, Department of Archaeology, said the recently excavated structures were built in pre-Pal period.

"Most probably the structure of temple was built by followers of Jain religion," Alam added.

Nahid Sultana, custodian, Rabindra Kacharibari, Sirajganj

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PRICE SPIRAL Rice allocation for OMS to be doubled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will double rice supply for open market sale (OMS) and consider introducing dearness allowance for its employees as part of short-term measures to alleviate public sufferings from price spiral of essentials.

Commerce Adviser Hossain Zillur Rahman yesterday said, "The process is already underway to supply every day an additional 1,200 to 1,500 tonnes of rice to the OMS outlets across the country until the end of April."

He was talking to reporters after a meeting with leading economists, NGO executives and government officials.

He said a portion of the rice given under VGF (vulnerable group

feeding) programmes would be replaced by potatoes since there is a bumper crop of the vegetable.

Referring to government efforts in response to continual price hike, Zillur said, "We are now working to have some short-term measures in place to continue till the budget for the next fiscal year comes in June."

The council of advisers at its weekly meeting today will discuss possible ways to mitigate public sufferings, he added.

The commerce adviser said OMS outlets sell on average 1,500 tonnes of rice every day, and of that, 350 tonnes are sold in Dhaka and the rest in other parts of the country.

But as the amount is not adequate, the government is going to

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Opposition wins presidential vote in Taiwan

AP, Taipei

Taiwan's opposition candidate cruised to victory in the presidential election yesterday, promising to expand economic ties with China while protecting the island from being 'swallowed up

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INDEPENDENCE CUP
Golf Tournament 2008

Kurmitola Golf Club, 27 and 28 March 2008