

# Procurement of 30 lakh MT food grains recommended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of high food prices at global and local markets, the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management recommended procurement of 30 lakh tonnes of food grains, mainly for safety-net programmes in the next fiscal year.

At a meeting of Food Planning and Monitoring Committee held at the planning ministry yesterday, the food ministry said 24 lakh tonnes of food should be kept for various safety-net programmes including open market sales and vulnerable group feeding.

Food and Disaster Management Adviser Shaukat Ali presided over the meeting while Finance Adviser Mirza Azizul Islam and Agriculture Adviser CS Karim were also present.

The food ministry's recommendations include procurement of 14 lakh tonnes of rice from domestic market and the import of five lakh

tonnes of rice. The ministry said donor countries would provide another 50,000 tonnes of rice.

The ministry also recommended the import of eight lakh tonnes of wheat and the procurement of 50,000 tonnes from local market. It said donor countries would provide two lakh tonnes of wheat.

"We want to make a good stock as prices of food are high in local and global markets," Food Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman told journalists after the meeting.

Asked about the status of the import of five lakh tonnes of rice from India, he said one lakh tonnes have already been supplied while the other four lakh will arrive by June 6.

"We have asked the foreign ministry to contact the Indian side so that the rest of the rice is supplied on time," Mollah Waheeduzzaman said.

On the procurement of 15 lakh

tonnes of Boro this season, the food secretary said contracts with rice-mill owners have already been signed to buy 4.5 lakh tonnes of rice, which was 2.35 lakh around this time last year.

A total of 1.4 lakh tonnes of Boro have already been stock piled. The amount was 39,000 tonnes around this time last year. The government also bought 17,099 tonnes of paddy, he noted.

"Procurement of Boro this season is so far satisfactory and we hope that the target of procuring 15 lakh tonnes of Boro will be successful," Mollah Waheeduzzaman said.

## Mohsin Hall wins debate competition

DU CORRESPONDENT

Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall of Dhaka University (DU) has become champion at the Viyellatex Haji Muhammad Mohsin Memorial Speech and Debate Competition that ended on Saturday.

A total of 30 teams from different parts of the country participated at the four-day debate competition at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Building on DU campus.

DU Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof AFM Yusuf Haider and Hasan Ahmed Chowdhury Kiran, chairman of Debate for Democracy, received lifetime achievement award for their outstanding contribution to the debate movement of the country on the occasion, says a press release.

## 2 held with arms in Khulna

UNB, Khulna

The joint forces in a drive yesterday arrested two people and recovered a gun and six bullets from a medicine shop at Hatiyadanga in Koira upazila.

The joint troops raided Apu Pharmacy at about 4:00pm and recovered the gun and ammunition kept in the medicine box.

They arrested pharmacy owners Krishnapada Mondol and Rajendra Boiragi for possessing the arms.

The joint force sources said Krishnapada and Rajendra have been involved with terrorist activities.

# 'Bangladesh wants meaningful Saarc-Asean relations'

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed yesterday said Bangladesh as a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) would like to develop meaningful close linkages between Saarc and Asean countries.

He made the remarks when outgoing Indonesian Ambassador Warmas Hasan Saputra made a farewell call on the CA at his office.

The chief adviser thanked the Indonesian government for its support to Bangladesh for becoming

member of ARF (Asean Regional Forum).

He thanked the outgoing ambassador for successfully completing his tenure and his contribution to strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.

He expressed satisfaction over the

good ties between the two countries which is "deeply rooted in common faith, history and culture".

He stressed further boosting bilateral economic and trade relations as well as Indonesian investment in Bangladesh taking attractive investment incentives.

Fakhruddin also suggested that Indonesia import world-class medicine from Bangladesh with competitive and cheaper prices.

The envoy said pharmaceutical industry has been set up in Indonesia under joint venture with Bangladesh in private sector.

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ডানো DANO

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