

Access to FedEx, we believe you should have fast easy access to global business opportunities. With a worldwide delivery network, including 220,000 FedEx offices in over 220 countries and territories, we are committed to providing you with the best shipping experience possible. From the moment we receive your call to the moment we deliver to your customer.

By using FedEx, we will work behind the scenes to help your company access the opportunities of the global market, and experience faster growth or call 8555114.

FedEx Express  
Express. It's a world of possibilities.

Philips Domestic Appliances  
sense and simplicity

Model No.: GC 1710  
Model No.: FC 8344  
Model No.: HR 1799  
Model No.: HR 1456  
Model No.: HD 4728  
Model No.: HD 2384  
Model No.: HD 7448  
Model No.: HP 3621  
Model No.: HR 4840

Philips Domestic Appliances  
sense and simplicity

Philips Domestic Appliances  
sense and simplicity

## VoIP equipment worth Tk 20cr seized in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab-1) personnel recovered Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) equipment worth about Tk 20 crore at Gulshan and Mohammadpur in the city during separate drives Monday night.

They also arrested two people for carrying out illegal VoIP business. The arrestees are Mohammad Abed Ali and Ziaur Rahman of Gulshan.

According to Rab-1 official sources, they recovered 1,070 Subscriber Identity Modules (SIMs) of different cellphone service operators, 32 Quintum Gateways, 150 Tellur telephone sets, 13 Channel Banks, seven Power Cards, three Ethernet

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## Govt targets coastal lands for cultivation

Food crisis calls for best use of cultivable fallow lands

PORIMOL PALMA

The government is going to determine strategies for best use of cultivable fallow land, especially in seven coastal districts and Sylhet region, to increase production following shortage of food and high prices.

According to Bangladesh Agriculture Research Council, the country is losing 80,000 to 1 lakh hectares of arable land every year due to urbanisation and industrialisation.

Currently, 82.9 lakh hectares of

land is cultivated, while 3.23 lakh hectares of arable land lays fallow. On the other hand, only 10.27 lakh hectares of land produces three crops annually, 41.34 lakh hectares produces two crops and 28.73 lakh hectares produces only one crop a year.

Bangladesh is to import around six to ten lakh tonnes of rice, 15 lakh tonnes of wheat and good amounts of pulse, oil and fruits every year.

Agriculturists say good usage of cultivable land will not only meet the domestic demands but also lead to food surplus.

"We're trying to increase crop intensity... turning one-crop land into two-crop land and two-crop land into more," Agriculture Adviser Dr CS Karim told The Daily Star.

"We hope crops will grow round the year on the cultivable land," he said, adding that this is crucial for food security of the country.

It is a long-term process, but whatever technologies are available should be taken to farmers to make an enabling environment so that they are encouraged to cultivate, he added.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 4

## 5.74 lakh MT rice procured till June 9

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has procured 5.74 lakh metric tons (MT) of rice and 43,000 MT paddy till June 9 in its drive to scale up the country's food stock.

"In addition, we have signed contracts with millers to buy another 9.69 lakh tons of rice," Food Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman told reporters after a meeting of the Food Monitoring Committee at the ministry yesterday.

The government set a target to buy 12 lakh MT rice and 3 lakh MT paddy during the Boro season this year.

A total of Tk 9,772 crore has been

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## UP body system seen as anti-democracy

States BARD study

SHAKHAWAT LITON

The union parishad (UP) committee system cannot play a leading role in ensuring transparency and democratic practices in the UPs because of indifference to the system itself, reveals a study of Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD).

"Lack of accountability and transparency in the operation of union parishads is a serious obstacle to ensuring good governance at local levels," the study says.

The central government mech-

anisms to monitor the functions of these local government bodies are also ineffective, says the BARD, which is an autonomous body.

According to the UP ordinance, each of the 4,496 union parishads should have 13 standing committees on matters including finance, education, development, health, law and order, accounts and audits, social welfare and community centre to manage the local affairs.

The constitution also assigns these local government bodies responsibilities relating to administration and work of public offi-

cers, maintenance of public order, and preparation and implementation of plans for public services and economic development.

Consisted of elected members and community representatives, these committees are deemed essential for establishing good governance at local levels by boosting up the activities of the over-hundred-year-old local government bodies, the UPs.

"But in most cases, union parishads do not form these standing committees which is causing problems in managing various

SEE PAGE 15 COL 1

## Acceptability of election to depend on people

Says US envoy

UNB, Dhaka

US Ambassador James Moriarty yesterday said despite election monitoring by the international community, acceptability of the next polls would depend largely on the people of Bangladesh.

"We will observe the elections in the sense of just going around seeing whether the election is free, fair and credible. That is important, and, on the other hand, how acceptable it is will depend on the people of Bangladesh," he told reporters after a meeting with Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury.

The ambassador made the remarks responding to a question whether the forthcoming parliamentary elections will be acceptable to the international community if major parties boycott the polls.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



These pumps of Dhaka Wasa meant for draining out water seem inadequate as water-logging worsens in the city during monsoon. The photo was taken at Rampura yesterday.

## No salary for 765 Bangladeshis Non-payment issue embarrasses Kuwait

PORIMOL PALMA

Kuwait's Labour Relations Department said it was embarrassed over the non-payment of six months' salary to 765 Bangladeshi workers by their employers.

The department also assured Bangladesh Embassy of finding a solution to the issue soon.

Meanwhile, since the employers did not arrange renewal of residency permits for the unpaid workers, they, over 300 being women, have been practically living in captivity in camps provided by their employers in fear of being picked up by police.

"The director of Labour Relations Department said that they were embarrassed over the issue," said Shahriar Kader Siddiqui, labour councillor at the Bangladesh Embassy in Kuwait, during a telephone conversation with The Daily Star yesterday.

"Newspapers in Kuwait have

been running reports on the matter every day, creating pressure on the authorities," Siddiqui added.

On June 30, officials of the Bangladesh Embassy and the Labour Relations Department of Kuwait held a meeting to discuss the issue, he went on to say that the two janitorial firms -- Nibras Services and Top Services -- were scheduled to discuss the issue with Kuwait's Ministry of Social Welfare and Labour yesterday.

Siddiqui said following the expiration of their work contracts for particular projects with the government of Kuwait a few months ago, the two firms made their workers work for different projects, but failed to make any payment to the workers.

As the workers filed a complaint with the labour court, the court ordered the two firms to repatriate the workers to their home countries. The court also imposed large

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

## Release Nizami, Khaleda Jamaat submits to CA 1.5cr signatures

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami yesterday submitted a five-point demand along with the signatures of over 1.49 crore people before the Chief Adviser's Office.

They demanded immediate release of detained political leaders including its chief Matiur Rahman Nizami and BNP chief Khaleda Zia.

An official of the Chief Adviser's Office received the papers addressed to the chief adviser. Jamaat Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed led the 20-member delegation to the Chief Adviser's Office yesterday.

Jamaat started its signature collection campaign across the country on June 1 and continued till June 15 in a bid to get detained political leaders released.

Mojaheed alleged that the

SEE PAGE 15 COL 5

## 1,687 women fall victim to violence in 6 months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 1,687 women fell victim to violence including fatwa (religious edict) in the country from January to June this year, according to a Bangladesh Mahila Parishad report based on news published in 14 daily newspapers.

The report says 329 women experienced violent torture while

SEE PAGE 15 COL 2

## Nato, US troops kill 33 Taliban insurgents

AFP, Khost

Nato and US troops killed dozens of militants on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, officials said yesterday, after the foreign forces suffered their deadliest loss since the fall of the Taliban.

US-led helicopters and bombers killed 33 insurgents in eastern Khost province late Monday, while Nato soldiers in the same area cooperated with Pakistani troops across the frontier to kill several more rebels, they said.

But the violence came as the international troops passed a grim milestone, with the 49 soldiers who died in June making it their bloodiest month yet in Afghanistan and worse than Iraq for the second

month in a row.

The Taliban, whom western and Afghan officials say have sanctuaries in Pakistan's lawless tribal areas, have dramatically stepped up an insurgency they launched after being ousted from government in late 2001.

In Khost, the US-led coalition said it launched air strikes after spotting rebels armed with rockets and heavy weapons massing about eight kilometres (five miles) from the Pakistani border.

"After positively identifying the militants, Coalition forces engaged with them using attack helicopters and close air support bombers, killing approximately 33 militants," spokesman Lieutenant Nathan Perry told AFP.

Separately an outpost of Nato's International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) in troubled Khost came under attack late Monday from rebels using rockets and small arms, an Isaf statement said.

Isaf, co-ordinating with the Pakistan military, responded with air strikes, artillery and rocket fire, causing the militants to flee into Pakistan, it said.

The statement said a number were killed but did not specify how many. An Isaf source however said that 11 rebels were believed to have died.

The joint operation comes despite growing tensions between Pakistan and western nations with troops in Afghanistan, and less

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

## DCs asked to be ready to face possible floods

UNB, Dhaka

The government has directed the deputy commissioners (DCs) to take advance preparations to tackle any possible flood in the country.

The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management gave the directive yesterday in apprehension of possible flood onslaught as monsoon set in causing heavy rainfall and onrush of water from across the border.

The ministry directed the DCs to take advance preparations, monitor flood situation round the clock and utilise the GR (government relief) food grain and cash in reserve, if necessary, to tackle the situation.

It said the DCs have adequate

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8



Village women who used to fish in the Kumira Canal in Sitakunda, Chittagong, now collect stones from it as pollution left the canal devoid of fish.

## Angry job seekers beat up recruiting agency staffers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Angry job seekers, most of who had to return to Bangladesh after being imprisoned in Malaysia, beat up five staffers of the recruiting agency through which they went abroad and ransacked the agency office at Malibagh in the capital yesterday.

Abdul Hai, owner of Celebrity Tours and Travels, filed a case last night with Paltan Police Station accusing over 25 people of looting valuables of his office and

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

## Israel bars UN rights team from Palestine

AFP, Amman

Israel has barred a UN human rights committee from visiting the Palestinian areas on a fact-finding mission, the leader of the group said yesterday.

"Israeli authorities did not allow us to visit the Palestinian territories," said Prasad Kariyawasam, head of the UN panel, adding that "no reasons were given by Israel because they do not recognise our mandate."

Kariyawasam told a news conference in the Jordanian capital Amman that despite the ban by the Jewish state, the committee has interviewed Palestinians from the Gaza Strip, the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Some were interviewed by telephone as several witnesses were prevented from travelling to Amman or Cairo, he said.

"The international community has a moral and legal obligation to ensure that all international human rights and humanitarian law standards are fully implemented at all times," Kariyawasam said.

The three-member panel,

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

সরকারী ট্রেজারী বিল ও বন্ড-এ বিনিয়োগ করুন, ভাবনাহীন জীবন গড়ুন।

বিল / বন্ড ক্রয়-বিক্রয়ের যোগ্যতা।

যে কোন বাংলাদেশী নাগরিক, প্রতিষ্ঠান, ভবিষ্যৎ তহবিল, পেনশন তহবিল, ব্যাংক, বীমা ও কর্পোরেট প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ প্রাইমারী ডিলারদের মাধ্যমে এ সকল বিল / বন্ড ক্রয়-বিক্রয় করতে পারবে।

প্রবাসে বসবাসরত যে কোন বাংলাদেশী নাগরিক এবং প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ এ সকল বিল / বন্ড ক্রয়-বিক্রয় করতে পারবে। বাংলাদেশী ব্যক্তি এবং প্রতিষ্ঠান সমূহ এ সকল বন্ড ক্রয় / বিক্রয় করতে পারবে।

মেয়াদ।

ট্রেজারী বিল - ৯৯, ১৮২ ও ৩৬৪ দিন মেয়াদি।

ট্রেজারী বন্ড - ৫, ১০, ১৫ ও ২০ বছর মেয়াদি।

ক্রয় নীতিমালা।

মূল্যমান : ১ লক্ষ টাকা বা এর গুণিতক পরিমাণ।

কুপন (সুদ) : ট্রেজারী বিল - মেয়াদপূর্তিতে প্রদেয়।

ট্রেজারী বন্ড - ইস্যু তারিখ থেকে প্রতি ৬(ছয়) মাস অন্তর প্রদেয়। নিলামভিত্তিক কুপনের হার নির্ধারিত হয়।

ট্রেজারী বিল ও বন্ড এ বিনিয়োগের সুবিধা সমূহ।

এ সকল বিল ও বন্ড আপনার বিনিয়োগ সম্পূর্ণ নিরাপদ ও ঝুঁকিহীন। বিনিয়োগকৃত আয় উৎসে করমুক্ত। প্রয়োজনে ক্রেতা প্রাইমারী ডিলার ব্যাংক ও আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে ক্রয়কৃত বিল / বন্ড যেকোন সময় বিক্রয় করতে পারবেন।

বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য নিম্নোক্ত প্রাইমারী ডিলার ব্যাংক ও আর্থিক প্রতিষ্ঠান সমূহের সাথে যোগাযোগের জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

অগ্রহী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড ইন্টারন্যাশনাল লিজিং এন্ড ফিন্যান্সিয়াল সার্ভিসেস লিমিটেড জনতা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড যমুনা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড

ন্যাশনাল ক্রেডিট এন্ড কমার্স ব্যাংক লিমিটেড প্রাইম ব্যাংক লিমিটেড সোনালী ব্যাংক লিমিটেড সাউথ ইস্ট ব্যাংক লিমিটেড উত্তরা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড