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Govt starts with good fertiliser stock

Challenge is ensuring availability in market

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The new government has started its journey with a favourable stock of fertiliser to meet the demands of farmers in Boro season while experts have suggested making urea available in the market instead of distributing it through a controlled system.

"We have arrangement for over 13 lakh tonnes of urea against an estimated demand for 12 lakh tonnes in Boro season. We are hopeful that there will be no shortage of fertiliser," Mokhlesur Rahman, chairman of Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC),

told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said the current stock of urea is 5.13 lakh tonnes while about four lakh tonnes are to be produced in BCIC factories and five lakh tonnes are in import pipeline.

The remark of the officials of BCIC, the agency responsible for urea production and procurement, comes at a time when farmers have started cultivating rice for the Boro season and use of urea as well as other fertilisers remains high.

Of the total estimated demand of 28.50 lakh tonnes urea in the fiscal year 2008-09, the demand for urea has been fixed at about 12 lakh tonnes during January-March period, the peak time for Boro

cultivation.

The demand for non-urea fertiliser, mainly TSP and MoP, is also high during the Rabi and Boro crop season. In the FY 2009, the requirement of non-urea fertiliser such as TSP, MoP and DAP has been estimated at about 11 lakh tonnes.

Kafiluddin Ahmad, chairman of Bangladesh Fertiliser Association (BFA), said they have adequate stock of non-urea fertiliser to meet demand in the current season.

"The present stock position looks favourable to meet demand during Boro season. We may meet farmers' demand

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Bangladeshis rescued near Sumatra

Boat found drifting in sea with 200 on board

AFP, Banda Aceh, Indonesia

A wooden boat with nearly 200 people on board was found drifting off the northern tip of Indonesia's Sumatra island Wednesday, officials said.

The boat, with 174 people from Myanmar and 19 from Bangladesh on board, was found at sea by fishermen off Sabang island in Aceh province, local navy commander Yanuar Handwiyono told AFP.

Those on board the boat were weak after being adrift for around one week, Handwiyono said.

"Some 79 passengers are being treated in two separate

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina places a wreath at the National Memorial in Savar yesterday paying homage to the martyrs of the Liberation War.

PHOTO: STAR

Westmont chief Tajul removed

UNB, Dhaka

Kazi Tajul Islam Farooq, who sued Sheikh Hasina during the interim period on charge of extortion, has been removed from the post of chairman of Westmont Power (Bangladesh) Limited.

In a statement yesterday, company officials said he was "removed" on January 5 following a meeting of the company's board of directors.

The statement mentioned that Farooq had filed the case against Sheikh Hasina in defiance of company directive.

Westmont Power (Bangladesh) Limited was not

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Poll expense report a must by Jan 31

EC warns of stern action against JS election candidates for failure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) yesterday directed the returning officers (ROs) of the recently held national polls to take legal action against the candidates who would not submit their election expenditure reports by January 31.

The EC Secretariat will also send forms to the political parties soon seeking reports on their election expenditure within 90 days from publication of results in official gazette.

If any of the contesting candidates fails to submit election expenditure report within the stipulated time, they might be punished with

rigorous imprisonment for three to seven years as per the electoral laws.

The EC also asked the ROs, who are also the deputy commissioners, to report by February 7 specifying the action taken against the defaulters, EC Secretariat sources said.

As per the provisions of the Representation of the People Order (RPO), the candidates will have to submit reports on election expenditure within 30 days after publication of the election results in gazette. The EC published names of the winning candidates in official gazette on January 1.

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BNP ready to help govt if it practises democracy

Says Delwar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday said his party is ready to cooperate with Awami League (AL)-led new grand alliance if it goes along the path of democracy.

"But if it is otherwise and the new government fail to implement its polls pledges and do not stop repression on BNP men we will mobilize public support against it," Delwar warned.

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BNP to reshuffle associate bodies

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will soon bring changes to the committees of the party's associate bodies to make them more effective, party sources said.

There have been little activities of BNP's front organisations as their leaders and activists are still in distress following the party's debacle in the December 29 parliamentary election.

Party insiders said the BNP chairperson has already hinted that an announcement would come soon about formation of new committees of the party's front organisations including Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) and Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal.

Changes will be made first to the BNP's student wing JCD as the tenure of its committee had expired on January 1, last year, sources said.

"The chairperson might announce the new committee soon as the tenure of the present committee has already expired," JCD General Secretary Shafiq Bari Babu told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said, "The chairperson usually announce the new com

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Bangladesh on path of democracy

Says US-based think tank

UNB, Dhaka

The overwhelming vote in favour of a secular political party is a strong indicator that the world's fourth largest Muslim country will continue forging a path toward democratic development and the US government should support the newly elected democratic government in Bangladesh.

This was observed in an article titled "Bangladesh Election: Major Milestone for Democracy in South Asia"

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Muggers shoot contractor, loot Tk 6 lakh

Two shopkeepers also shot in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unidentified muggers shot a contractor and snatched Tk six lakh away from him in broad daylight near Mirpur Police Station in the city yesterday.

In another incident, a gang of muggers last night fired shots at two shopkeepers and looted around Tk 20,000 at a shop in old Dhaka.

The victim Kazi Foyez Ahmed, 45, a resident of Mirpur was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

He received bullet wound in his leg, DMCH sources said.

Foyez said that two muggers on a motorbike shot him

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Bangladesh Secretariat employees, under the banner of Bangladesh Shochibalay Karmochari Songjukto Parishad, welcome new cabinet members into the secretariat yesterday morning.

PHOTO: STAR

Mumbai killings ordered over phone: Documents

AFP, Mumbai

Militants who attacked Mumbai were urged to kill their hostages in cold blood and fight to the death in the name of Islam, according to transcripts of intercepted telephone calls made public yesterday.

In one exchange, one of the two attackers who stormed the luxury Oberoi-Trident hotel was told to "inflict the maximum damage" and to "kill all hostages, except the two Muslims" they were holding.

"We have three foreigners, including women," the attacker identified as Fahadullah said.

"Kill them. Keep your phone switched on so that we can hear the gunfire," he was told.

The transcript then said the two attackers were heard to tell the two Muslims to step aside and order the hostages to stand in a line. Gunfire was heard, then cheering.

Details of the attackers' conversations, allegedly with their six "Pakistan-based han-

dlers," are contained in a dossier of evidence that India says "unmistakenly" points to elements in Pakistan being behind the attacks.

The document, obtained by The Hindu, an English-language newspaper, puts the official death toll at 165 civilians and security personnel -- two more than previously -- plus nine of the 10 attackers.

It also lists items recovered after the attacks, including Pakistan-made weapons and global positioning systems with co-ordinates of a sea route from off southeast Pakistan, as well as Pakistani washing powder and shaving cream.

Much of the detail has emerged piecemeal since the 60-hour siege ended on November 29, including claims that the banned Pakistan-based Islamist group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) trained and equipped the militants and financed the operation.

Islamabad has angrily rejected allegations from Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh that the attacks had the support of some "offi

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পুনঃ সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

রাজউকের ওয়েবসাইটে ইতিপূর্বে প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে জানানো হয়েছে যে, রাজউকের প্রুটের তথ্য সম্পর্কিত বিষয়ে কোনো পরামর্শক নিয়োগ করা হয়নি। এতদসত্ত্বেও পুনরায় বিভিন্ন ব্যক্তি/কোম্পানী সম্মানিত Client-দের সাথে রাজউকের পরামর্শক পরিচয়ে ই-মেইলে যোগাযোগ করছেন মর্মে অভিযোগ পাওয়া যাচ্ছে। এতদ্বিষয়ে সকলের অবগতির জন্য পুনরায় জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, রাজউকের প্রুটের তথ্য প্রদান সম্পর্কিত বিষয়ে কোনো কনসালটেন্ট নিয়োগ করা হয়নি। রাজউকের প্রসপেক্টাসে বর্ণিত নির্দেশনা ব্যতীত অন্য কোন ব্যক্তি/কোম্পানীর সাথে যোগাযোগ না করার জন্য পুনরায় অনুরোধ করা হ'ল। আরো উল্লেখ্য যে, আবেদনপত্রের মূল্য ও জামানতের অর্থ-

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রাজধানী উন্নয়ন কর্তৃপক্ষ

জিডি-১১৭

BSF kills 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cnawabganj

Indian Border Security Force (BSF) shot dead a Bangladeshi and injured two others on Chouka border under Monakasha Union of Shibganj upazila on Tuesday night, BDR officials said.

The dead was identified as Md Hablu Mia, 21, son of Monju Mia of Araimari village under Shibganj upazila. The injured, Yousuf Ali, 30, of Bakher Ali village and Babul Mia, 28, of Araimari village, belong to the same upazila.

BDR and local sources said the BSF personnel of Sukdevpur camp opened fire on some Bangladeshis while they were trying to smuggle Indian phensidyl into

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Prayer Timing		
January 8		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-05
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-00	4-15
Maghrib	5-30	5-35
Esha	7-00	7-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Tiger rebels are 'near extinction'

Says Lankan govt

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger guerrillas are "near extinction" as troops press home their initiative after capturing the rebels' political capital, the defence ministry said yesterday.

Government forces have advanced towards the final remaining strongholds of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) since the Tigers' headquarters at Kilinochchi fell on Friday.

Troops were also close to taking a key land route to the northern peninsula of Jaffna, and have made progress in securing the strategic Elephant Pass, the ministry said.

Sri Lanka's government meanwhile has decided to formally ban its warring partner, the Tamil Tiger rebels, in a symbolic move that signals closing the prospect of early peace talks, an official said.

The government was bringing back the proscription as security forces moved to dismantle the remnants of a de facto rebel state in the north of the island after capturing the Tiger political capital on Friday, the official said.

"The government is bringing back the ban," the official said declining to be named. "Tigers failed to respond to a December 31 (2008) ultimatum to allow civilians the freedom to leave areas under their control."

The Tigers have vowed to hit back after suffering a series of major defeats in their vicious 37-year battle for a separate homeland.

The ministry said troops recovered three rebel bodies while

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