



Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Robert McDougall pays a courtesy call on President Zillur Rahman at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

Invest more in Bangladesh

President urges Canadian entrepreneurs

UNB, Dhaka

President Zillur Rahman yesterday urged the Canadian entrepreneurs to invest more in the country's potential sectors, including power, energy, textile, garments and food processing, and avail the investment facilities offered the two countries would by the government. "In this regard, the envoy coming days.

can play a great role in providing comprehensive information about the Bangladesh's incentives, including tax exemption and full repatriation of capital and profit," he said while Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh structure and social develop-Robert McDougall paid a ment. courtesy call on the president at Bangabhaban.

and the government of Canadian projects. Canada for their assistance in

December 29 last year.

important development partner of the country, he said Bangladesh attaches great importance to her relations with Canada and hopes that the bilateral relations between strengthen further in the

Zillur mentioned Canada's laudable contributions to Bangladesh through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), particularly in rural electrification, communication infra-

He proposed that the two countries could cooperate in a Welcoming the envoy, the variety of fields including president thanked him for his technology transfer, scientific, supportive role at different cultural and educational times and expressed his great exchanges, and poverty alleviappreciation for the people ation through establishing Alam, Military Secretary to the

strengthening democracy in Commissioner Robert President's Press Secretary Bangladesh providing 240,000 McDougall, who presented his Abdul Awal Howlader were

general elections held on year, expressed his happiness over seeing the last general Terming Canada as an election held in a free, fair credible manner.

> Terming Bangladesh as a country with immense potential, he said this country would be able to reach the zenith of development in coming days as Bangladeshis are both hard working and courageous enough to face any problems. Referring to the recent

carnage at BDR headquarters, the High Commissioner expressed his great sorrow and deep sympathy to the bereaved families and the government. He also assured the presi-

dent that his government would extend more cooperation in strengthening the existing bilateral relations.

Secretary to the President's Office Mohammad Shafiul President Brig Gen Md Canadian High Ehtesham Ul Haque and transparent ballot boxes for credentials on October 20 last present during the meeting.



The newly elected executives of the fourth class employees' union of Dhaka University pose for photograph with Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique at an installation ceremony at TSC auditorium on Saturday. Pro-VC Prof Harun-or-Rashid and Treasurer Prof Mizanur Rahman were also present.

35 houses gutted in Thakurgaon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

At least 35 houses were gutted in a fire at Sarcarpara village under Sadar upazila in Thakurgaon yesterday.

Fire Service and Civil Defense sources said the fire originated from an oven of a kitchen at about 10:15am and soon engulfed the adjacent houses.

On information, fire fighters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control after hectic efforts with the help of local people.

Local people claimed the fire destroyed properties worth around Tk 20 lakh. But Fire Service and Civil Defense officials told that estimation of loss yet to be completed.

Make by-polls free, fair

EC Sohul tells officials at Bogra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,

The Election Commission has sent a letter to the speaker so that lawmakers do not visit the constituencies where byelections for a total of seven vacated seats will be held on April 2.

Election Commissioner Muhammad Sohul Hossain yesterday said this at a views exchange meeting with the election and administrative officials involved in the by-

polls at Bogra Circuit House. The meeting was organised with an aim to hold the byelections to Bogra-6 (Sadar) and Bogra-7 (Gabtoli-Sajahanpur) constituencies in the free and fair manner.

Sohul advised the officials to keep a keen eye so that nobody can become biased during the elections. He also called on them to make people aware so that all abide by the electoral code of conduct.

Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan, DIG Moklesur Rahman, Deputy Commissioner of Bogra Humayun Kabir, District Returning Officer Syed Mohammad Musa, Rab-12 Bogra camp Deputy Director Maj Abu Naser Md Mostafa, Police Super Akram Hossain, District Adjutant Shah Ahmed Fazle Rabbi, Upazila Nirbahi

Officer of Sajahanpur Dewan

Abdus Samad also spoke.



GRAFT CASES Salauddin, Naser Rahman granted bail

NEWS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yester-day granted bail to former state minister for communications Salauddin Ahmed and former BNP lawmaker Naser Rahman in three separate cases.

Salauddin secured bail for one year in two separate cases -- one for amassing wealth illegally and concealing information to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and another for extor-

He was sentenced for 13 years for amassing wealth illegally and concealing information to ACC and seven years for extortion by separate special courts during the emergency

former finance minister Saifur Rahman, got bail for six months in a case for amassing wealth illegally and concealing information about it.

He was convicted for 13 years in the case filed by the ACC by a special court.

The HC bench of Justice MA Wahhab Miah and Justice Delwar Hossain granted them bail after hearing on separate appeals.

Their counsel Barrister Moudud Ahmed yesterday told newsmen that there was no legal bar left for his clients to get released from jail following the HC orders.

BCSIR science fair prize giving ceremony held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prize giving ceremony of the four-day science fair organised by Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) was held on its campus yesterday.

Forty-seven schools and colleges across the country took part in the fair with their innovative projects. The students displayed 152 projects in three groups.

In the higher secondary group, the first three prizes were taken respectively by Holy Cross College (remedying natural calamites), Notre Dame College (cheap microscope) and Chittagong Cantonment Public School and College (eliminating waterlogging in Chittagong city).

In the secondary group, the first three prizes were taken by Government Laboratory High School, Rajshahi (trustworthy gatekeeper), BCSIR High School (producing electricity from tree leaves) and Siroil Government High School, Rajshahi (cheap IPS).

In the lower secondary group, first three prizes were taken by Dhaka Residential Model School and College (Azoles: substitute of urea fertiliser), Rajshahi University School (producing electricity from cycle) and Dhaka Residential Model School and College (producing high quality oil from the seed of mahogany).

The winners received cash (first Tk 30,000; second Tk 20,000 and third Tk 10,000), crests and certificates. All the participants also received certificates.

Yafes Osman, state minister for science, information and communication technology, was the chief guest at the ceremony and Md Nazmul Huda Khan NDC, secretary of the ministry, was the special guest. BCSIR Chairman Dr Akram Hossain presided over the ceremony.

Produce salinity-tolerant variety of rice

Matia urges agri scientists

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday underscored the need for cultivating salinity-tolerant variety

The minister said the main obstacle in cultivation of paddy in the southern region during the dry season is salinity.

She was speaking as the sheadded. chief guest at the annual research review 2007-08 of Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI).

started yesterday would continue till March 18 where Meanwhile, Naser, son of | nine keynote papers and 27 of hybrid seed. reports would be presented.

The agriculture minister said the main crop of the farmers of southern areas is aman paddy. But due to different natural disasters, including cyclone and tidal surge, the farmers fail to harvest. So, the cultivation of winter is the safe season for

paddy in these fields during crops. More crops have to be the dry season has to be

increased. Matia Chowdhury said paddy has to be cultivated in the land, which remains after shrimp farming during the

dry season. the demand of time. But it is sad that we could not yet formulate bio-safety rule," ingly.

She urged the agricultural scientists to take initiative in this regard. The minister said, "We

The review meeting that have to be careful about using hybrid variety." She also advised cutting import

said the main problem in north Bengal is brown grasshopper. She urged the scientists to do research on the gene of brown grasshopper to stop its menace.

Matia Chowdhury said

produced in this season. She said, "We are going to expand cultivation of salinitytolerant variety of rice (BR-47) quickly."

The minister criticised the irrigation system in the "Bio-technology is now northern area using deep tube-wells. She said it depletes water level alarm-

> The government is trying to take necessary steps for excavation of the Gorai, she added.

"We are speaking against use of chemical fertilisers, but we are not taking the reality into consideration," she said, adding that the The agriculture minister Awami League government in its stint from 1996 to 2001 took a number of steps in this

regard.

She said the immediate past caretaker government also gave emphasis on the use of bio-fertiliser but the project money was misused.

Director General of BRRI Dr Mohammad Firoz Shah Sikder presided over the programme while Awami League lawmakers from Gazipur-1 and 2 constituencies AKM Mozammel Haque and Zahid Ahsan Russell and Agriculture Secretary Dr CQK Mustaq Ahmed also

BRRI invents four varieties of rice

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BRRI) last year invented four new varieties of rice -- BRRI Dhan-48, BRRI Dhan-49, BRRI Dhan-50 (Bangla Moti) and BRRI Hybrid Dhan-2.

With these the number of rice varieties invented by the organisation stood at 51, scientists at the BRRI informed.

Scientists said BRRI-48 is medium in size and can be transplanted in 'Aus season'. Yield per hector is 5 metric

BRRI-49 is similar to 'Nazirshail' rice. It can be transplanted in 'Aman season'. The variety has higher disease resistance power. Rain and storm cannot damage the rice much.

Moti rice. This aromatic rice is suitable for 'Boro season'. The size of the variety is better than Indian and Pakistani 'basmati BRRI Hybrid Dhan-2 is

BRRI-50 is known as Bangla

suitable for 'boro season'. It is medium fine and tasty and yield is 8.5 metric tons per hectare.

JICA's EPI kits for field workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the JOCV ((Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers) activities/contribution in (Expanded Programme on Immunisation) EPI, a commemorative gift handing over ceremony was held at Director General of Health Services (DGHS) office in the city yesterday.

Nobuko Suzuki Kayashima, chief representative of JICA Bangladesh, handed over 4000 carrying bags for EPI kits to Dr AKF Mujibur Rahman, deputy director, EPI and surveillance. The kits will be distributed

among the filed workers in seven districts -- Sylhet, Brahmanbaria, Comilla, Feni, Noakhali, Chittagong and Cox's Bazar -- where JOCV volunteers are working. At present 43 volunteers

are working in different organisations in Bangladesh.



Yunus, Nobel laureate and managing director of Grameen Bank, sign an agreement to establish a joint venture social business company called BASF Grameen Ltd on March 5 in Ludwigshafen, Germany. PHOTO: GRAMEEN BANK

BASF Grameen Ltd launched

BASF SE Chairman Hambrecht, Grameen Bank Managing Director Dr Yunus sign agreement

METRO DESK

BASF SE and Grameen Healthcare Trust announced the establishment of a joint venture social business company 'BASF Grameen Ltd' in Ludwigshafen, Germany on March 5 as part of a social commitment with an entrepreneurial twist.

Dr Jürgen Hambrecht, chairman of the board of executive directors of BASF SE, and Dr Muhammad Yunus, Nobel laureate and managing director of Grameen Bank, signed an agreement in Ludwigshafen to establish the joint venture.

The purpose of the company is to improve health and business opportunities of the Bangladeshi poor. BASF Grameen will start by utilising two products from BASF's portfolio -- dietary supplement sachets containing vitamins and micronutrients and impregnated mosquito nets that offer protection

against insect-borne disease. Given the substantial need for dietary supplements and mosquito nets, BASF and Grameen have decided to locate their joint venture with these two products in Bangladesh.

"Our social business joint venture is intended to empower people to take part

successfully in business life,' said Hambrecht, adding, "The more people who do so -- be they business partners, customers or employees -- the better the economic and social development of a country and its population. Investing in people's entrepreneurial skills is, therefore, part of corporate responsibil-

Social business is a new business model for BASF. The idea is for a business venture to serve a social purpose, cover its own costs and recoup the partners' initial investment. Any additional profits are reinvested fully in the company.

Dr Yunus said, "BASF Grameen Ltd is not a charity. It combines business sense with social needs."

According to the WHO World Malaria Report 2008, Bangladesh hàd an estimated 2.9 million cases of malaria in 2006 and 72 percent of the population is at risk of the disease. Bangladesh also has some of the highest child and maternal malnutrition rates according to the UNICEF State of the World's Children Report 2008. Approximately eight million children under the age

of five years are malnourished. "In the long term, we can better help these people

joint venture. Grameen's contribution includes its knowledge of the market, distribution structures and networks in Bangladesh. এখন স্মৃতির ফ্রেমে উবৰ অলোশনার ও শার্পবাতিক্রিরা ছাড়াই মাত্র 🔰 ঘন্টায়

through a business model that

offers them beneficial prod-

ucts and services at affordable

prices rather than through

charitable donations," said

initially operate from the

BASF's site in Dhaka.

Alongside an initial invest-

ment of 200,000, it will con-

tribute the funds for one

million sachets of vitamins

100,000 mosquito nets to the

and micronutrients and

The joint venture will

the Nobel laureate.

টাক সমস্যার তাক লাগানো সমাধান वनानी :01977 800 900 উডরা :01730 046 755 কশকাতা: 25544325, ব্যাদালোৱ: 9845570506 विक्षित बारत SMS रूम GP शहर HL send रूम 7464 व प्रशास शहर HL send रूम 789

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PHOTO STAR Employees of the Bangladesh Observer and Weekly Chitrali form a human chain in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday demanding arrear salaries of 72 months.