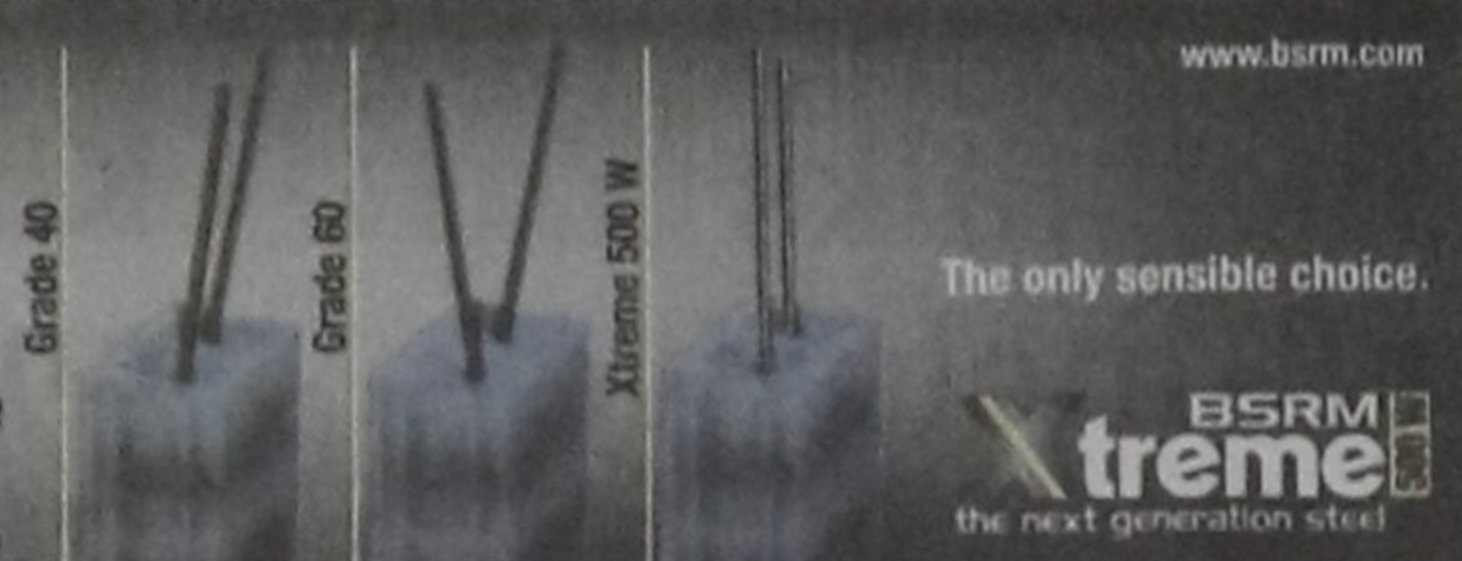


Why Xtreme?

De-sealed bar bonds better with concrete due to rust on the bar surface. As per ACI code, rust is good for bonding.



Govt to recast fertiliser distribution system

Retailers to be engaged at union level as per requirement

REJAUL KARIM BYRON and SOHEL PARVEZ

Farmers will have greater access to fertiliser in the next winter crops season as the government moves to engage retailers for distribution of fertilisers at grassroots level, officials said yesterday.

As per the existing system, only one dealer and his two sales agents are allowed to sell fertiliser at the union parishad level whereas the new policy will allow engagement of retailers as per requirement on recommendation of a selection committee.

There have been complaints that farmers don't get fertiliser according to their needs.

The move was made under the Fertiliser Dealer and Distribution Policy 2009, approved by the National Coordination and Consultation Committee on Fertiliser last month.

The new policy that aims to make union

parishad the centre of fertiliser distribution system will come into effect at the beginning of October this year when farmers make preparations for winter crops.

Analysts and dealers have lauded the government initiative. They however said its success would depend largely on adequate supply of fertiliser.

"The latest policy will help make fertiliser available to farmers as retailers at grassroots level will be engaged in the distribution system," a senior official of agriculture ministry told The Daily Star.

"But only the authorised ones will be allowed to sell fertilisers," he added.

In the wake of price hike of fertilisers on international market, the last caretaker government introduced the system of having limited sales points to check adulteration and

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SC upholds Khaleda's HC bail order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court upheld a High Court order yesterday that granted bail to BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the Zia Orphanage Trust embezzlement case.

The four-member bench of the Appellate Division, headed by Chief Justice MM Ruhul Amin, passed the order dismissing a petition by the government for permission to appeal against the HC order.

On August 26 last year, the HC granted an interim bail to the BNP chief in this case and issued a rule on the government to explain why she should not be granted regular bail.

Anti-Corruption Commission Deputy Director Harunur Rashid on July 3 last

SEE PAGE 15 COL 3

12,000 workers back from KL in 7 months

Finding no work permit, 30-50 cheated job seekers coming back every day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 12,000 Bangladeshi workers have returned home from Malaysia following various forms of exploitations and cheating by Malaysian employers or manpower brokers since January this year.

Only yesterday morning, 27 workers who were kept at different Malaysian jails because of their having no work permit returned home by a Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight, said an immigration official at Zia International Airport.

On Friday, the number of returnees from Malaysia was 41, he said adding, "Thirty to fifty workers regularly return home from Malaysia on special travel passes." He said such passes are issued for those who become illegal.

The return on such a scale is a recent phenomenon, which is a result of hiring surplus

workers by Malaysian employers in the last three years, officials at the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment said.

Last year, only around 1,000 Bangladeshi workers who became irregular either for over-staying or having no work permits returned home.

"Only in the last seven months, over 12,000 workers returned home. This is because employers hired surplus workers, but finally did not issue work permits against them. So, they are identified as illegal workers. Many of them were also put to jails," said an official at the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training.

Wishing anonymity, the official said there are also many workers who were not fit by medical test in Malaysia. If workers are not

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6

Village elders settle rape case with fine of Tk 40,000

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Influential village elders have settled a rape incident in Adarshagram under Matiranga upazila in Khagrachhari district yesterday by asking the rapist to pay Tk 40,000 to the nine-year old victim.

Matiranga Upazila chairman Mohammad Shamsul Hoq, vice chairman Mohammad Delwar Hossein and some other local influential leaders asked Abul Kalam Azad, the acting Mayor of Matiranga Municipality, to pay the money to the victim as compensation.

Azad allegedly violated his nine-year old housemaid at his own house on July 27.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 6



Rab-7 officials parade the arrested six accused members of Harkatul Jihad al Islam in front of journalists at its headquarters in Uttara yesterday. The six absconding men were arrested Saturday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Arrest of Huji men part of massive hunt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law enforcers arrested six members of Harkatul Jihad al Islam on Saturday as part of an initiative to track down all accused in different cases filed in connection with grenade and bomb attacks and militant activities in the last one decade.

Sources in Rapid Action Battalion said as its intelligence wing had started gathering information on the accused it learnt about the banned militant outfit's attempts to smuggle in arms through Naikhangchhari border in Bandarban. They also learnt that Harkatul Jihad (Huji) was recruiting members.

At a press briefing at the Rab headquarters yesterday the Rab officially disclosed the arrest of the six Huji activists during an overnight raid on areas in the capital and elsewhere in the country.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

Global meltdown, energy crisis affect investment

Tk 28,000cr excess liquidity lying with banking sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith said yesterday a slowdown in investment continues due to the global economic meltdown and energy crisis but the situation is likely to improve in the next few months.

"The investors are watching the situation," he told journalists at his office yesterday when asked about poor investment despite piling up of excess liquidity in the banks.

Muhith hoped the world economic recession would improve and foreign investment in the country would also increase after the annual meeting of the World Bank and the IMF in October.

The minister was talking to the media after a delegation from Bangladesh Ceramic Ware Manufacturers' Association met him.

According to Bangladesh Bank statistics, about Tk 28,000-crore excess liquidity is lying

with the banking sector. This means there is little domestic demand for investment funds. Also L/C opening for capital machinery and import of industrial raw materials has declined.

The finance minister said since energy crisis is an obstacle to investment, the government has prepared a mega plan to improve the situation. Implementation of the plan would increase investment not only in the power sector but also in the areas where it (investment) was not being attracted for lack of power.

The guidelines of the government's new initiative for Public-Private Partnership (PPP) would be finalised by next month. It would also increase investment, he said.

Meanwhile, the government has lowered corporate tax to 42.5 percent from 45 percent in the present budget.

Asked whether it would result in a fall in lending rates of the banks, Muhith said, "We are

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Shift houses from hill slopes to safer places

Orders Bandarban district admin after deaths in landslide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

The district administration yesterday ordered to shift all houses from the vulnerable slopes of the hills to safer places within the next 15 days.

The order was issued to the upazila nirbahi officers (UNOs) concerned from an emergency meeting of Bandarban District Disaster Management Committee yesterday morning.

The meeting also directed the UNOs to take steps to prevent setting up of any habitation by cutting the slopes of the hills.

It also decided to shift at least 1,000 families in phases from vulnerable areas of Aziznagar and adjoining areas to safer places.

The emergency meeting was held against the backdrop of death of 10 people in a landslide at Aziznagar in Lama upazila on Friday.

Councillor of Bandarban Hill District Council Kazi Mujibur Rahman demanded government steps to stop cultivation of tobacco anywhere of the district including Lama upazila.

Bandarban Divisional Forest Officer SM Monirul Islam said Lama has experienced the worst damage to its environment in the district. He said the situation is such that more disasters will follow if social forestation programme is not taken alongside the government's forestation programme.

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

Elements within Pak army back terrors

Say British MPs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE, London

A powerful group of British MPs expressed concern yesterday that elements within Pakistani Army and intelligence services do not share their civilian government's resolve to fight Islamic terrorists and continue to be fixated on India.

The concern expressed by the British parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee was echoed by Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, the minister of state for foreign affairs who quit his job last week citing personal and family reasons.

In a report published Sunday, the Foreign Affairs Committee also said that whereas Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari had pointed to terrorism as the main enemy of his country, "large parts of the security establishment" of Pakistan continue to be fixated on India.

The report on Afghanistan and Pakistan commended the civilian government in Islamabad for having taken some 'important steps' to counter-insurgency at a considerable cost in terms of military lives lost.

"We welcome the increasing recognition at senior levels within the Pakistani military of the need for a recalibrated approach to militancy but we remain concerned that this may

SEE PAGE 15 COL 8

OnlinePoll ✓

Do you think Awami League's anti-reformist approach in reforming the central committee will actually improve the leadership quality?

☐ Yes (64.6%)
☐ No (31.5%)
☐ No Comments (3.9%)

Total votes: 965

TODAY'S POLL

Do you support the government's move of increasing gas tariff for generating fund for gas development?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing
August 3

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-20	5-55
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	6-00	6-15
Maghrib	7-47	7-50
Esha	9-15	9-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

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Spotlight/Nokia/02.09