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FOOD SECURITY

# Technology holds answer for Asia's future challenge

REAZ AHMAD, back from Bangkok

With India importing rice for the first time in over two decades this year, Thailand and other rice producing and exporting countries in Asia are rethinking food security, as experts say further output growth has to come from technology rather than lands that have already become sparse.

Given the scenario where the world's third largest rice exporting country India has gone to the international market for importing the staple to offset an expected production shortfall owing to the driest monsoon in four decades, Thailand last month announced an ambitious 50 billion US dollars stimulus package 'Strong Thailand', setting aside almost a quarter of the amount for boosting its agriculture by 2012.

Top agriculture officials of Thailand, the world's number one rice exporting country, revealed the country's plan for securing food not only for the kingdom but also for other countries of the world, to a gathering of jour-

nalists from different countries of the Asia-Pacific region in Bangkok over the weekend.

The media workshop was organised by Syngenta, a multinational also a world leader in the business of crop protection. The event was also attended by agricultural experts, industry leaders, host country officials, and representatives from the Philippines based International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

Apichart Jongsakul, secretary general of the Office of Agricultural Economics under the Thai Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, told the workshop that his government will pump in a huge amount of money over the next three years through the 'Strong Thailand' stimulus package to turn the kingdom into the 'Kitchen of the World'.

Thailand has been the world's top rice exporting country since 1970 with its export volume hitting 10 million metric tons (MT) last year, accounting for over 33 percent of the year's total 29.6 million MT global rice trade.

Referring to the moratorium that Thailand



This photo taken at 7:40am yesterday on Dhanmondi 8/A road in the capital shows that vehicles carrying mostly school goers are facing trouble due to on going installation of Wasa pipelines. PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

# Hand killers just punishment

State pleads with SC

ASHUTOSH SARKAR



Four special state counsels of Bangabandhu murder case yesterday urged the Supreme Court to deliver a verdict giving exemplary punishment to the killers of president Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members.

The nation has been waiting for trial of the killers of Bangabandhu for 34 years and now wants to become free from a black spot through the trial and punishment of the killers, they told the court.

Barrister Ajmalul Hossain, Dr Tawfique Nawaz, former law minister Abdul Matin Khasru and Supreme Court Bar Association President AFM Mesbahuddin yesterday pleaded

# FOOD SECURITY Bangladesh to get a share of \$20b G-8 fund

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh will receive a portion of \$20 billion fund pledged by G-8 countries for global food security, said a US delegation yesterday.

The delegation led by Director of United States Assistance for International Development (USAID) for Agriculture in Washington Josette Lewis assured Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdul Razzaque of the assistance for food security when they called on the minister at his office.

US Ambassador to

# Ringleader of carjackers held

Tk 1cr stolen parts seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detectives recovered stolen car parts worth around Tk 1 crore and arrested the ringleader and two members of a gang of carjackers in Fatulla on Wednesday night.

Shafiqul Islam and his two accomplices, Mohammad Rafiqul Islam and Imran, are residents of Fatulla in Narayanganj.

Car parts belonging to 20 different vehicles were recovered from a workshop around 9:30pm, using information extracted from Shafiqul and Rafiqul.

The second accomplice was arrested during the raid.

Shafiqul told The Daily Star that his gang stole parts from eight private cars parked on the ground floor of the Eastern Tower behind Karnaphuli Garden City in Shantinagar, an area of the capital, on October 26.

He said that four or five gang members scaled the wall of the car park and broke the locks of the main gate to let others in.

# PM'S INDIA VISIT NEXT MONTH Dhaka to propose rail link, second submarine cable

UNB, Dhaka

Building Agartala-Akhaura railway line and a submarine cable linking Khulna and Chennai are among the priority projects to be placed with the Indian government during Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's upcoming India visit.

The PM, who is going to visit India next month, directed the ministries concerned yesterday to finalise strategy papers on the bilateral and regional development projects in time for her tour.

She gave the directive while chairing the second meeting of the regional and sub-regional cooperation committee at the Prime Minister's Office, Deputy Press Secretary to the PM Nazrul Islam told newsmen.

He said the premier asked for finalising, "on priority basis," the paper documents of the projects on Agartala-Akhaura rail link, establishment of open alternative submarine cable link between Khulna and Chennai, construction of rail-cum-road bridge over Karnaphuli river at Kalurghat, support for post-harvest technology and agro-processing, and value addition to fruits and vegetables.

The meeting discussed in detail the probable agenda from Bangladesh side to be discussed during the India tour.

The agenda include regional and bilateral cooperation on maritime boundary issues, trade and economy, road and rail link, power sector, media and telecommunications, environment and climate change, agriculture, education and use of common rivers.

"Prepare outlines on the agenda," Hasina said in her instructions.

# AUG 21 CASE Suspected Huji cadre shown held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Criminal Investigation Department (CID) yesterday showed arrested an alleged member of Harkatul Jihad al Islami (Huji) in connection with the August 21 grenade attack case.

CID officials said they came to know about Abdul Majid's connection with Huji

# Victim nations must get grant, not loan

Dipu Moni on climate change impact

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said the upcoming Copenhagen conference must agree on funding the victim countries grants, not loans, so that they can cope with the impacts of climate change.

"The Copenhagen conference must agree on an adaptation fund with adequate

# DIARRHOEA 484 more hospitalised in 24 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts blamed contaminated sources of water as well as the climate change for the sudden outbreak of diarrhoea in different areas of Dhaka and Pabna district recently.

A total of 484 diarrhoeal patients were admitted to the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research in Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) hospital yesterday, according to the authorities.

To tackle the outbreak, the ICDDR,B has already established a makeshift treatment corner at the premise and discussed with the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and Dhaka City Corporation to find a place for



An attendant is cooling prepared rice saline to feed this child infected with diarrhoea at a makeshift camp at ICDDR,B in Mohakhali. The camp has been set up as the water-borne disease breaks out in the city alarmingly. PHOTO: SHAWKAT JAMIL

# Online Poll

Do you think political influence is the main reason behind the sluggishness in government machinery?

Yes (89.6%)  
 No (7.6%)  
 No Comments (2.8%)

Total votes: 1171

**TODAY'S POLL**

Do you agree with BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain that the government is making a 'heinous attempt to destroy BNP' by using the August 21 bomb blast incident?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

# ATTACK PLOTTER US refuses to allow Indian intelligence to quiz Headley

PTI, Washington

A team of Indian intelligence officials left the US disappointed after a week-long stay here as they could not question American national David Coleman Headley, arrested by the FBI on charges of plotting a major terror attack in India at the behest of Pakistan-based LeT.

Sources familiar with the visit of the Intelligence Bureau

# Suicide blast kills 30 in Pak market

AFP, Peshawar

A suicide car bomb ripped through a packed shopping street in Pakistan's northwest town of Charsadda yesterday, killing at least 30 people and wounding around 55, officials said.

The suicide bomber detonated a vehicle in the heart of the small market town, on a road lined with juice shops and women's clothing stores, the third bomb attack in three consecutive days in northwest Pakistan, police said.

"We have received 18 dead bodies, three of them are children, more than 25 were injured," Doctor Zulfiqar Ahmad told AFP by

# Navies of 2 Koreas trade fire

AP, SEOUL, South Korea

A badly damaged North Korean patrol ship retreated in flames yesterday after a skirmish with a South Korean naval vessel along their disputed western coast, South Korean officials said.

The first naval clash in seven years broke out just a week before President Barack Obama is due to visit Seoul, raising suspicions the North's communist regime is trying to ratchet up tensions to gain a negotiating advantage.

There were no South Korean casualties, the country's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement, and it was not immediately clear if there were any casualties on the North Korean side. Each side blamed the other for violating the sea border.

SEE FULL STORY ON PAGE 6

Prayer Timing		
November 11		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	6-00	6-35
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-22	6-25
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

# NAMAZE JANAZA & QUL KHANI



Dead body of Engr. Mir Zahir Hossain, Managing Director of Mir Akhter Hossain Ltd. who passed away in the USA on 7th November 2009 (Innah Lillahe .....Razeun) is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka Inshallah by Emirates Airline on Thursday, 12th November 2009, at 9 a.m.

His Namaze Janaza will be held after the Asr Prayers on Thursday, 12th November 2009 at Baitul Aman Masjid located at Road # 7, Dhanmondi Residential Area, Dhaka, after which he will be buried at Banani Graveyard.

Doa Mahfil (Qul Khani) seeking Magferat of his departed soul will be held at Taqwa Masjid Road No.12/A, Dhanmondi after Asr Prayers on Friday, 13th November 2009.

Family Members, friends and well wishers are requested to kindly attend Namaze Janaza & Doa Mahfil and pray for salvation of the departed soul.

**MIR NASIR HOSSAIN**  
 Former President, FBCCI  
 On behalf of the Members of Family