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Rice export banned to keep price stable

Lifting to depend on aman output

REAZ AHMAD

Unsure about this year's aman output, the government has re-imposed ban on rice export to keep the rising domestic rice price under control.

The commerce ministry issued a statutory regulation order (SRO) late last month prohibiting export of both aromatic and non-aromatic rice till the year-end (December 31, 2009) to stabilise rice prices and ensure availability of the staple in the domestic market.

However, unlike three previous occasions when export bans were slapped for six-months at a stretch -- since May last year -- this time government put the embargo only for a brief period with the hope of lifting the ban once it gets a positive aman output report from the field.

The decision came in tandem with

India, one of the major rice-exporting nations that also kept in force a ban on rice export amidst widespread crop failures this year due to one of the worst monsoons in two decades.

India aside, the Philippines is also depending heavily on rice import this year because of crop failures due to back-to-back typhoons.

Justifying the government decision of rice export ban, Food Minister Abdur Razzaque told The Daily Star yesterday that reports were being gathered from the fields to ascertain the prospect of aman output for the sake of domestic food security.

Like India farmers in Bangladesh too failed to transplant rain-fed aman seedlings in time due to late arrival of monsoon this year.

A very late monsoon in September-

October gave them, however, a slim chance to redeem aman prospect with the government stepping timely to provide the rice growers with free supply of power to irrigate lands.

Sources at the ministry of commerce, food and agriculture confirmed that wholesale ban was imposed -- irrespective of rice being aromatic or non-aromatic -- because, by taking advantage of permission to export aromatic rice, a section of dishonest exporters tend to export non-aromatic finer quality rice too.

"We've a stock of a little over one million metric tonne (MT) of rice in hand but to further consolidate the food security position we need to know the aman position. Teams are out in the field to make an estimate of aman output," said Razzaque.

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Nepalese ministers hold a high-altitude cabinet meeting at Kalapattar Plateau (5,262 metres above seas level) near Mount Everest yesterday to highlight the impact of global warming on the Himalayas.

PHOTO: AFP

2010 WC battle lines drawn

AFP, Cape Town

Brazil and Portugal were sent on a World Cup collision course when the final draw was made in Cape Town yesterday while Lady Luck smiled on England.

The Brazilians and Portuguese will clash in Group G and will be joined by top African side Ivory Coast and unknown quantities North Korea in what will inevitably be dubbed the "group of death".

England coach Fabio

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DEATH IN FIRE

Nurul Islam's family blames CID for slow investigation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of former Ganotantri Party President Nurul Islam yesterday complained that the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is not giving proper attention to the investigation into Nurul Islam and his son murder case.

Addressing a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity before the 1st death anniversary of Nurul Islam, they termed the incident sabotage and demanded transparent investigation into the case.

A fire broke out at the

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2 workers die in accident at steel mill

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

Two workers were killed as melted iron seeped down upon them at a steel mill of the port city yesterday morning.

The victims, identified as Jafar Ahmed, 35, of Kopinathpur in Rajbari, and Amjad Hossain, 34, of Kumardanga in Narail, were workers at Bayezid Steel Mill in the city's Sholoshahar area.

Police quoted witnesses as saying that the workers were working near a furnace of the mill and melted iron fell on them around 8:30am.

They were rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital after the incident and

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Prayer Timing		
December 5		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	6-15	6-50
Zohr	1-45	2-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-19	6-22
Esha	8-00	8-30

EU strongly supports new climate funds for vulnerable nations

100b Euros estimated for mitigation, adaptation by 2020

UNB, Brussels

The European Union (EU) has estimated total incremental costs of mitigation and adaptation to climate change in developing countries, including Bangladesh, at around 100 billion Euros annually by 2020 under a global agreement expected to emerge at the UN climate change conference in Copenhagen.

Officials at the EU headquarters told a group of visiting Bangladesh journalists on Thursday that a big debate ahead of the Copenhagen conference is on how to arrange the money for establishing a dedicated fund for the countries like Bangladesh that are extremely exposed to the global warming.

They said many developed countries are proposing different figures of money for mitigation and adaptation. British Prime Minister Gordon Brown proposed 800 million Pounds for 2010-12. Japan also proposed a substantial fund of \$9 billion.

Barbara Helfferich, a spokesperson for the EU Commission on Environment, said the EU contribution to the international public finance will be between 2 billion and 15 billion Euros per year by 2020 for adaptation in developing countries.

She said the EU stresses the need for a deal in Copenhagen on "fast start" international public financial support for developing countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries as

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PM returns home from Trinidad

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina returned home yesterday morning ending her six-day official visit to Port of Spain, the capital of Trinidad and Tobago.

An Emirates flight carrying the prime minister and the members of her entourage landed at Dhaka International Airport at 9:45 am.

Hasina earlier left Dhaka for Port of Spain on November 25 to attend the three-day Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held on November 27-29.

On her arrival at the airport, the prime minister was received by Deputy Leader of

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Three women killed, 25 hurt in road crash

UNB, Rajshahi

Three women of a family were killed and 25 people injured as a bus rammed a human hauler near Biralidaha mazar in Puthia upazila yesterday noon.

The dead were identified as Swadhina, 30, wife of Jahangir of Jhaluka village in Durgapur upazila, her sister Rita, 18, and mother-in-law Hawa Begum, 50.

Witnesses said the Natore-bound bus from Rajshahi smashed the human hauler at 12 noon, killing two on the

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US Marines launch large offensive in Afghanistan

AP, Kabul

US Marines and Afghan troops yesterday launched the first offensive since President Barack Obama announced an American troop surge, striking against Taliban communications and supply lines in a southern insurgent stronghold, a military spokesman said.

Hundreds of troops from the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines and the Marine reconnaissance unit Task Force Raider were dropped by helicopter and MV-22 Osprey aircraft behind Taliban lines in the northern end of the Now Zad Valley of Helmand province, scene of heavy fighting last summer, according to Marine spokesman Maj. William Pelletier.

A second, larger force pushed northward from the Marines' Forward Operating

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Nepal holds cabinet meet at Mt Everest

Talks danger of global warming

AP, Syangboche

Nepal's top politicians strapped on oxygen tanks yesterday and held a Cabinet meeting amid the frigid, thin air of Mount Everest to highlight the danger global warming poses to glaciers, ahead of next week's international climate change talks.

The government billed the stunt as the world's highest Cabinet meeting. The ministers posed for pictures, signed a commitment to tighten environmental regulations and expand the nation's protected areas, and then quickly flew away.

"The Everest declaration was a message to the world to minimize the negative impact of climate change on Mount Everest and other Himalayan mountains," Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal later said.

Scientists say the Himalayan glaciers are melting at an alarming rate, creating lakes with walls that could burst and flood villages below. Melting ice and snow also make the routes for mountaineers less stable and more difficult to follow.

Getting the ministers to the mountain safely required extensive planning.

The prime minister, his two deputy prime ministers and the 20 Cabinet ministers were examined by doctors before boarding helicopters to Kalapattar, a flat area at an altitude of 17,192 feet (5,250 meters) next to Everest base camp, the jumping point for climbers seeking to scale the peak.

The Himalayan Rescue Association's Bikram Neupane said the politicians bunched in thick jackets, windproof gear and woolen

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DCC starts marking road lanes in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka City Corporation started demarcating lanes on important thoroughfares of the capital under the supervision of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (traffic) late Thursday night.

The demarcation of lanes started on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue at Shahbagh and would eventually move on to other important streets of the capital.

Officials concerned said the fast lane of these streets will be for cars, minibuses, jeeps and similar vehicles, the middle lane for minibuses, buses, covered vans, trucks and such automobiles while the slow lane will be for CNG-run auto rickshaws, pickup vans, taxis, motorbikes and similar vehicles.

From December 8, motorists failing to maintain lanes while using these streets will be fined. Changing lanes illegally would cost a motorist Tk 1,000 in fine and suspension of the driving licence.

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OnlinePoll

Do you think the High Court's recent wholesale granting of bail to many people including 40 convicts sentenced for life in 90 criminal cases is justifiable?

Yes (85.3%)
No (11.6%)
No Comments (3.1%)

Total votes: 847

TODAY'S POLL

Would you support if BNP creates a whole new post of co-chairperson or senior vice president for Tarique Rahman?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

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