

Tanneries to be relocated by Feb 28
Industries must set up ETP by June

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to relocate tannery industries from Hazaribagh to a place outside the capital by February 28.

It has also set a deadline of June 30 for the industries that dump liquid wastes into water bodies to install effluent treatment plant (ETP).

State Minister for Forest and Environment Hasan Mahmud disclosed it in parliament yesterday while

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New subsidy scheme to boost farming

Tk 149cr project to help farmers buy agricultural tools; Matia proposes additional Tk 1400cr farm subsidy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will give farmers a 25 percent subsidy on the cost of buying agricultural implements to boost crops production and minimise wastage.

An Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecne) meeting chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday approved a Tk 149 crore project to that end.

Titled "Enhancement of Crop Production through Farm Mechanisation", the project will primarily be introduced to 237 upazilas under 25 districts, said a planning ministry official.

Meanwhile, the agriculture ministry has proposed a Tk 1,400 crore increase in farm subsidies in the revised budget for the current fiscal year.

Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday told the House her

ministry has made the proposal in efforts to ensure maximum farm output.

She said the government is also planning to have a law requiring its permission to build any structure on farmland.

At yesterday's Ecne meeting, the prime minister directed the agriculture ministry to take up another project so that subsidy on farm tools can be given to farmers across all upazilas.

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Land grabbers' list placed in JS

Partial list of 100 acres out of 11,700 acres grabbed in Gazipur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

State Minister for Environment Hasan Mahmud yesterday unveiled in parliament a partial list of individuals and organisations who have grabbed around 100 acres of forestland in Gazipur.

The actual amount of land grabbed in the district however is over 11,700 acres, he said.

The list includes 47 individuals including Nurul Islam Babul of Jamuna Group and 22 organisations including Cocola Food Products Ltd.

The state minister said the government has taken various steps including filing of cases to recover the land.

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Biswa Ijtema begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Biswa Ijtema, the largest congregation of Muslims after hajj, begins today on the bank of Turag in Tongi with participation of around two million devotees including over one lakh women from home and abroad.

Tens of thousands of devotees with winter clothes and blankets and cooking apparatus from across the country have gathered at the Ijtema venue, some 20km north of Dhaka city, to seek divine blessings of Allah.

Around 9,000 devotees from different countries have also arrived while many are on their way to participate in the three-day congregation, said organisers.

Citing Benapole immigration officials, a correspondent from Benapole reports that about 3,700 devotees from different countries entered

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Mushfiq's maiden ton

India win first Test comfortably

BISHWAJIT ROY from Ctg

Mushfiqur Rahim smashed his maiden hundred to entertain the crowd on the fifth and final day of the first Test but the Tigers still suffered a 113-run defeat against India at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium yesterday.

Hot on the heels of a top-order collapse, the wicketkeeper-batsman took charge to salvage some pride in the defeat thanks to three tailenders who provided ample support to help the right-hander complete the three-digit score in front of a cheering crowd in the port city.

Mushfiq's previous best score was 80 against Sri Lanka in Colombo in July 2007.

The hosts resumed the day on 67 for two and their chances of enforcing any positive result was all but over when they lost three quick

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A joyful Mushfiqur Rahim kisses the helmet after reaching his maiden century on the final day of the first Test against India in Chittagong yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Robbery at DC's house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A gang of armed robbers looted two water pumps worth about Tk 20,000 from the house of Bogra Deputy Commissioner after taking the night guards hostage yesterday.

Bogra police sources said seven to eight robbers entered the house at around 3:30am, threatened night guard Shafiqur Rahman to keep silence, disconnected the

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BNP places charter to EC

Convicts allowed to be party members, war criminals barred; JCD, Sramik Dal to have own constitution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP yesterday submitted its amended constitution to the Election Commission to have its registration confirmed under the Representation of People Order (RPO).

The amended constitution provides that 'convicted' persons will be allowed to become members of the party.

It however retained the provision to bar identified war criminals from getting member-

ship of BNP.

The main opposition party's fifth national council held on December 8 last year had scrapped the provision.

BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan, who led a three-member team that submitted the constitution, told journalists later that the party chairperson has the authority to make amendments to its constitution, and the standing committee can approve those.

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Notice

From today we rebrand our technology page 'StarTech' as 'IT and Telecom' putting more focus on the two fastest growing segments of the country -- telecommunication and ICT. The page will come out every Friday on the back page of Star Business.

JS body holds closed-door meeting on defence policy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

'The culture of secrecy' in running the country's armed forces should come to an end, as the citizens have the right to know how the forces are being run, suggested a number of members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence Ministry yesterday.

They made the suggestion during a closed door meeting of the committee that opened a scrutinising discussion on a draft of the country's first defence policy prepared by the Armed Forces Division.

After the meeting, some of the committee members talked to The Daily Star about some of their discussions.

"We will seek opinions of ministries concerned and the army, navy and air force once

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Gas rationing in RMG units from Wednesday

Starts with factories in Narsingdi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's main export earning apparel sector is being brought under gas rationing system from Wednesday with a view to increasing pressure of gas for industrial and household use.

The decision was made yesterday at a follow-up meeting between the leaders of the RMG and textile sectors and Petrobangla Chairman Hossain Mansur at the latter's office.

Gas rationing was supposed to be implemented a lot earlier.

The rationing of gas supply will start with RMG and textile units in Narsingdi and Ghorashal.

At yesterday's meeting, the RMG and textile businessmen came down hard on the Petrobangla chairman for failing to improve gas pressure even in two weeks in spite of their request, a business leader who attended the meeting told The Daily Star, asking not to be named.

One businessman said he would probably have to shut his factory because of the ongoing severe gas crisis.

Both industrial and household users have been suffering from the low gas pressure caused by a mismatch between supply and demand.

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