



Lafarge regional boss due today

STAR BUSINESS DESK
Martin Krieger, regional president for Asia Region of Lafarge and chairman of Lafarge Surma Cement Ltd, will arrive in Dhaka today, says the company in a statement yesterday.
During this official visit, he will review business and strategies of Lafarge Surma Cement in Bangladesh and meet senior government officials.

He also plans to interact with the board members as well as the staff of Lafarge Surma.

Krieger, graduated with a Doctorate of Law from University of Vienna and an MBA from University of Economics in Vienna, joined the Lafarge in 1990 as assistant to the chief executive officer of Lafarge Permooser AG in Austria and became the chief financial officer in 1995. In 1998, he was appointed as the chief executive officer.



New CFO for Siemens Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS DESK
Siemens Bangladesh Ltd appointed Bul Hassan as its chief financial officer, the company said in a statement.

With this new assignment, he will be responsible for all financial matters of Siemens Bangladesh including his earlier duties as the commercial head of the company's healthcare sector.

Hassan, a postgraduate in accounting from Dhaka University and an associate member of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries of Bangladesh, began his career with Siemens in 1997 as commercial executive.

During his fourteen-year career in Siemens, he served the company in various capacities including commercial, audit, organisation and information.



New execs for ICMAB Dhaka

STAR BUSINESS DESK
The Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Bangladesh (ICMAB) recently elected Md Rashad Kamal and Md Muniur Islam as its chairman and vice chairman for its Dhaka branch council for 2010, said a statement released yesterday.

Kamal is the vice president of Mercantile Bank while Islam is the human resources manager of Aristopharma Ltd.

GM Omar Faruque Chowdhury, country representative of ABS-Quality Evaluation, was elected secretary and Md Bakhtiar Alam, deputy manager (finance) of Perfettivan Melle Bangladesh, treasurer.

Policy to tighten for microfinance institutes

BSS, Dhaka

The authorities are finalising a fresh policy for microfinance institutes (MFIs) to streamline their activities.

The new policy will have some stricter rules and regulations, ensuring greater public interest, an official said yesterday.

It will also bring some changes to the existing rules for running MFIs in more transparency, the official added.

A finance ministry official told the news agency that the new policy would see major changes in appointing executives, receiving deposit and credit recovery.

Presently, a person can hold both the posts of chairman and chief executive of an NGO that runs microfinance. The new policy will scrap the system, segregating the responsibilities for separate persons.

The policy will not allow MFIs to take deposit if they do not have experience of less

than five years in the same field. Besides, they should have a three-year track record of profitability, 90 percent recovery rate for current loan and 95 percent for overall recovery performance in the immediate past five years.

For receiving term deposit, the MFIs need relevant experience for at least 10 years with a five-year track record for profitable operations. In addition to that, their success record in loan recovery should be 95 percent for current loan and 98 percent for cumulative credit recovery in the past decade.

There will also be ceiling for interest rates and receiving deposits.

Khondakar Mazharul Haq, executive vice-chairman of Microcredit Regulatory Authority (MRA), told the news agency yesterday that they would issue a circular soon, making effective the new policy.

The MRA is preparing the policy to regulate the activities of around 536 NGOs.

Thai rice farmers fret about free trade

AFP, PATHUM THANI, Thailand

For many farmers in Thailand's rice belt, agreements between Asian countries to reduce trade barriers have not brought all the benefits that national leaders promised.

"We are afraid of the free trade area," says Chatree Radomlek, a 37-year-old farmer in Pathum Thani, about an hour's drive north of Bangkok but a world away from the capital's glitzy hotels and restaurants.

A rural community where local people boast of the nutritional benefits of eating field mice, its green paddies help make Thailand the world's biggest rice exporter.

But where humid weather and new farming technologies used to dominate local farmers' conversations, free trade is now the hot topic.

A free trade area between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), of which Thailand is a member, and China took full effect on January 1, liberalising billions of dollars in trade and investments in a market of 1.7 billion consumers.

It is the world's largest free trade area by population, eliminating barriers to investment and tariffs on 90 percent of products.

Shipbuilders get permission for association

STAR BUSINESS DESK

The commerce ministry gave permission to shipbuilders to form an association, Ananda Shipyard and Slipways Ltd (ASSL) said in a statement yesterday.

The body will be named Association of Export Oriented Shipbuilding Industries of Bangladesh.

Abdullah Bari, chairman of ASSL, terming the move "excellent" and said: "It'll let Bangladeshi shipbuilders achieve the international standards to a great extent."

All shipyard owners will be brought under the association soon, ASSL added.

Malaysia Airlines flying high after sweeping reforms

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

Not long ago, Malaysia Airlines was on life support, forced to sell off its headquarters and firing thousands of staff to avoid bankruptcy, but analysts are now bullish about its prospects.

The Malaysian flag carrier sank to its lowest ebb in 2005 when it racked up losses of 1.3 billion ringgit (386 million dollars) over nine months.

The dismal performance forced the introduction of sweeping reforms which saw the airline slash staff and unprofitable routes and sell non-core assets. Malaysia Airlines finally swung into the black in 2007.

Despite the global financial crisis that then hit, grounding many weak airlines, analysts are upbeat on the Malaysian carrier's fortunes, especially after it posted net profits of 490 million ringgit last year.

"We are optimistic," Hafiz Hezy Harihodin, an aviation analyst from AmResearch, told AFP, saying an extensive fleet renewal was expected to have a positive impact on yields from 2011.

The turnaround plan has been a success, "especially

in terms of bringing down unit costs, improving efficiency and strengthening balance sheets," he said.

Under the revamp, the airline launched low-fare campaigns to fill up empty seats, imposed a recruitment freeze and embarked on efforts to boost passenger loads and expand its network more strategically.

It has ordered 35 medium-range B737-800s, with the first to be delivered this year, as well as six Airbus A380s and 25 fuel-efficient A330-300s -- giving Malaysia Airlines one of the youngest fleet of any Asian carrier.

It expects to make annual savings of 300 million ringgit after receiving the first 15 A330-300s wide-body aircraft, which are scheduled for delivery between 2011 and 2016.

"They will save quite a lot of money because of the low maintenance and low fuel consumption," said Angeline Chin, an aviation analyst from TA Securities.

"We believe Malaysia Airlines has already reached its trough and is on its recovery path despite the flat yield growth," she said.

Other analysts however warned there was still a risk of

more hiccups in the carrier's journey to financial health.

"We believe the airline sector is poised for improvement prospects in 2010, in line with the recovery in the global economy, but not without some speed bumps along the way," Joshua Ng, from RHB Research, said in a report.

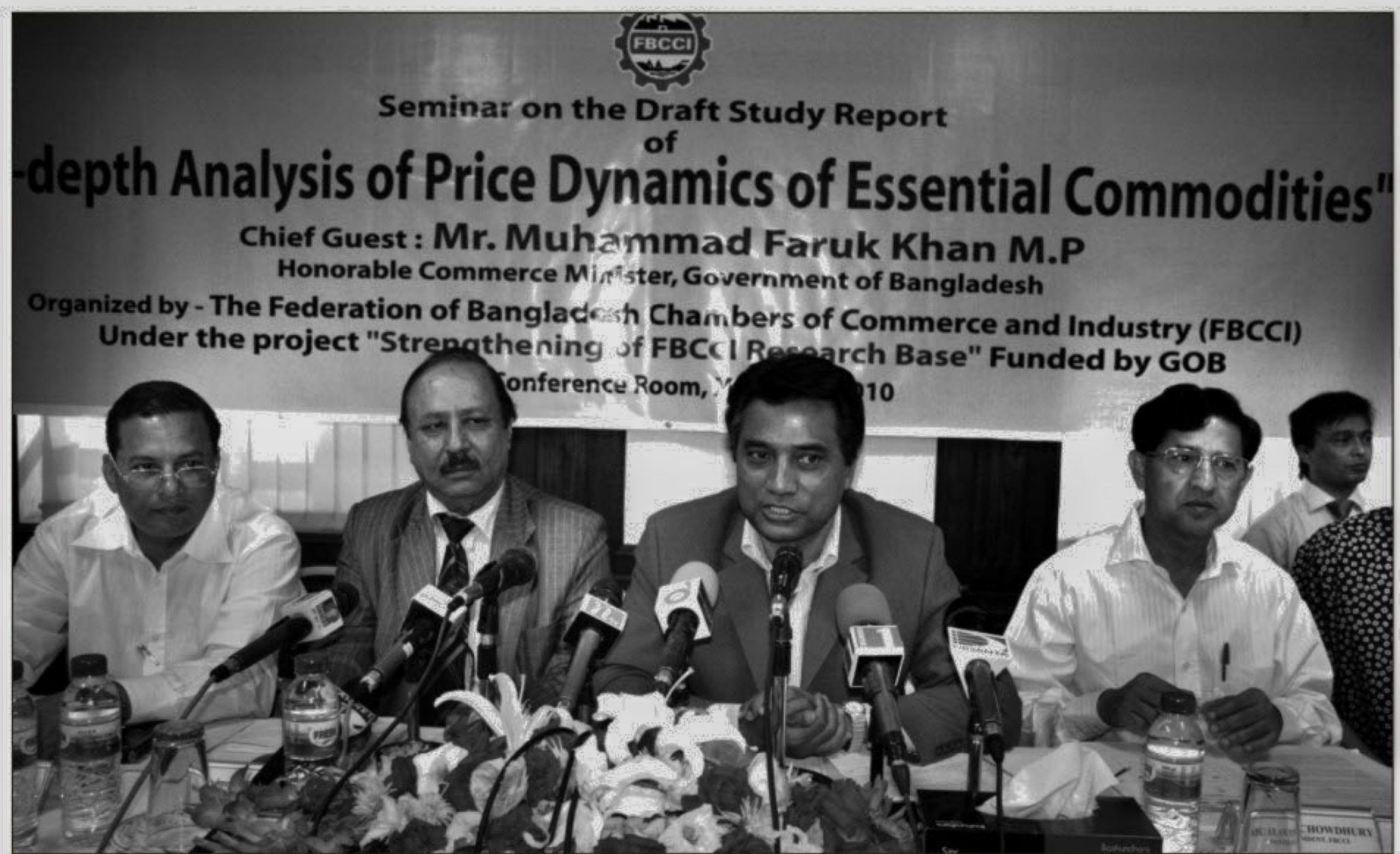
"A mild rebound in the global economy will not materially stimulate demand for air travel.

"Over the short term, new capacity will continue to hit the market, intensify competition and capping yields," he added.

Juliana Ramli, of Hwang DBS Vickers, said that despite a brighter long-term outlook for the carrier, 2010 will remain a challenging year for Malaysia Airlines.

"Although demand is likely to be on uptrend, yields also need to improve to pass on rising jet fuel prices," the aviation analyst said in a report.

"We do not expect dramatic improvement in yield this year considering that growth may be partly dampened by additional capacity coming into the market, which could further intensify price war."



Annisul Huq, president of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, speaks at a seminar on the draft study report of In-depth Analysis of Price Dynamics of Essential Commodities, in Dhaka yesterday.

Research paper on commodity prices comes under fire

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

A draft research paper highlighted the major reasons behind escalating prices of basic commodities in the local market.

The findings include supply shortage, syndication, rising global prices and high transportation costs as the major causes behind the hike.

Natural calamities, lack of government policy, bribery or extortion and interrupted utilities were also found as factors that led to the surge in commodity prices.

Professor Feroz Iqbal Faruque, resource person of MIDAS (Micro Industries Development Assistance and Service), presented the findings of the draft research, 'In-depth analysis on price dynamics of essential commodities', at a programme at the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

FBCCI President Annisul Huq moderated the programme.

FBCCI sponsored the research conducted by MIDAS. In the draft paper, which came under fire from different stakeholders for its shortcomings and misleading figures, said the annual demand for rice in the country is 334.58

lakh tonnes, while the supply from local production is 289.31 lakh tonnes.

Demand for chilli has been shown 5.71 lakh tonnes a year against the local supply of 1.18 lakh tonnes.

However, the draft findings were bitterly criticised by participants when Faruque mentioned that the annual demand for salt in the country is 9.52 lakh tonnes with a supply of 13.56 lakh tonnes and the demand for onions is 10.85 lakh tonnes with a supply of 8.89 lakh tonnes. These figures do not match the real scenario.

Similarly, he incorrectly said the demand for soybean oil is 7.42 lakh tonnes against a supply from local sources standing at 0.59 lakh tonnes and the demand for pulses is 6.03 lakh tonnes against the supply of 2.04 lakh tonnes.

Expressing his opinions on the keynote presentation, City Group Chairman Fazlur Rahman said there is controversy between the findings and the matter in practice.

"We cannot just accept such wrong findings. The paper requires correction before it is made public," he said.

Dissemination of such incorrect

information will make the market volatile rather than stabilising it, as demand and supply determine the market price of basic commodities, he added.

Criticising the findings, Ferdous Ara, an additional secretary to the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), said the objectives of the findings were not set rightly as the research objectives contradict the practical findings.

The researcher tried to establish a link between statistical data from Bangladesh Bank, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and market price, but the he only emphasised the dynamics of basic commodity prices in the local markets, she said.

AK Azad, managing director of Ha-Meem Group, asked FBCCI and MIDAS to conduct the research again to depict the real picture of the dynamics of basic commodity prices, now a burning issue.

In response to queries made by programme participants, Faruque said he conducted the research based on the data by BB and BBS.



RAKUB gets new GM

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Md Dilwar Hossain Bhuiyan has joined the Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) recently as general manager.

Prior to the new assignment, he was the general manager for Karma-sangthan Bank. Bhuiyan did his MA in English from Dhaka University and MBA from Bangladesh Open University.

He also obtained a post-graduate diploma in personnel management and a diploma in banking.

Women's Shopping Festival of Bangla New Year
The Women's Fest
An Exclusive Exhibition on Anything & Everything for The Women
Date: 11-14 April 2010
Venue: Dhaka Sheraton Hotel
01191616803, 01191616805, 01191616806

SUNCO Solar Irrigation Pump Presents
AgriTECH Bangladesh
International Exhibition on Agriculture, Horticulture, Dairy, Poultry, Live Stock and Agriculture Products & Technology Trade Show of Bangladesh.
Date: 4-6 April 2010
Venue: Dhaka Sheraton Hotel
Organized by: ExpoNet Exhibition (Pvt) Ltd.

শাহজালাল বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
পিসিটি-৩১১৪, বালাঙ্গাল
পিসিবিএসঃ ০৮২১-৭১০৪৯১/৭১৪৪৯৮/৭১৬১২৩
৭১০৮৫০/৭১৭৮৫০/৭১৫০৯৩
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Invitation for Tenders

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Education.
2	Agency	Shahjalal University of Science & Technology, Sylhet.
3	Procuring entity name	Registrar, SUST.
4	Procuring entity code	N/A
5	Procuring entity district	Sylhet.
6	Invitation for	Tender to Print & Supply Syllabus-2009.
7	Invitation Ref No.	SUST/Reg/PR/20.
8	Date	04-03-2010.

KEY INFORMATION
9 Procurement method Open tendering method (OTM).

FUNDING INFORMATION
10 Budget & source of funds University (REV).

PARTICULAR INFORMATION

11	Tender package No.	01 (one).
12	Tender package name	Printing & Supply of Syllabus-2009.
	Date	
13	Tender publication date	07 days from issuance of the notice.
14	Tender last selling date	29-3-2010 up to 3pm.
	Date	Time
15	Tender closing date & time	30-3-2010 2:30
16	Tender opening date & time	30-3-2010 2:45pm
17	Name & address of the office(s)	Address
	Selling tender document	Sonali Bank, University Campus Br, Sylhet.
	Receiving tender document	Registrars Office.
	Opening tender document	Registrars Office.

INFORMATION FOR TENDER

18	Eligibility of tenderer	Well reputed & financially solvent, having office & press establishment, good performance, qualification & previous experience of similar books or works from gov't/public/private office within the assigned time.			
19	Brief description of goods or works	Printing & Supply of Syllabus-2009 Total - copy 1500			
20	Brief description of related services	Described in the Standard Tender Document (STD).			
21	Price of tender document (Tk)	Tk 300 (three hundred).			
22	Lot No	Identification of lot	Location	Tender security	Completion time weeks/months
	1	Printing & Supply of Syllabus-2009	Sylhet	Amount-Tk 3500.00	01 month

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS

23	Name of official inviting tender	Mohd. Ishfaqul Hussain.
24	Designation of official inviting tender	Registrar.
25	Address of official inviting tender	Registrars Office, SUST, Sylhet-3114.
26	Contact details of official inviting tender	Ph: 0821-712784 Fax: 088-821-715257, E-mail: registrar@sust.edu
27	The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.	



Mollah Mohammed Majnu, chairman, and Khair Uddin Mollah, managing director of Mollah Salt (Triple Refined) Industry Ltd, launch the company's latest product -- Super Salt -- at a ceremony in Dhaka on Saturday.