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SHITALAKKHYA BANKS
HC rejects pleas for staying jetty removal notice

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday rejected petitions filed by five companies seeking stay order on a government notice issued for removing their jetties from river Shitalakkhya.

The five companies--City Group of Industries, Heidelberg Cement Bangladesh Limited, Kamal Vegetables, Akij Cement and Molla Salt Industries-- have set up seven jetties on the river.

The HC, however, directed the government not to demolish the seven jetties for a month, as an appeal by the City Group against the eviction of jetties is pending with the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

The HC bench of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice ATM Fazle Kabir also observed that the petitions are not acceptable since the HC in a verdict in last June directed the government to demarcate boundaries of four rivers--Shitalakkhya, Balu, Turag and Buriganga--and remove all structures within.

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Failing to get space in cold storages, traders anchor potato-laden boats in open air in the Dhaleshwari at Muktarpur, Munshiganj, so the vegetable does not rot. PHOTO: AMIRAN HOSSAIN

OMS DEALERSHIP IN KHULNA
Ruling party men get permit, real traders deprived

QUAZI AMANULLAH, Khulna

Twenty-five dealers out of 31 have been appointed allegedly on political consideration for open market sale (OMS) of rice in Khulna city.

The dealers who were appointed politically has little experience in business or in dealing with rice and even they do not have registered shop in the city, said a reliable source in the office of District Controller of Food.

Sources said 24 dealers are from ruling AL and its front organisations while a leader of Jatiya Party also gets dealership for selling rice. Only six genuine dealers were recruited on March 7 for the OMS programme in the city.

Khulna Regional Controller of Food Niranjana Kumar Mandol who is a member of the three-member dealer's appointment committee however declined to make any comment on the

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BUDGET PREPARATION, IMPLEMENTATION
Ministry slated for not involving MPs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some members of the parliament yesterday criticised the finance ministry for not involving MPs in the process of preparing and implementing the national budget.

Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali however sharply differed with their view, saying it is true that bureaucrats prepare and implement the budget, not the MPs, and rightly so.

The debate arose at a time when the finance minister had embarked on preparing the budget for the financial year of 2010-11, to be placed in the parliament in June this year.

The MPs made the observation at a discussion on the state of the country's economy, organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) in Sonargaon Hotel of the capital.

Director General of BIDS Mustafa K Mujeri

chaired the discussion launched yesterday as a part of its series of programmes ahead of the next fiscal year's budget.

The MPs said the preparation and implementation of the national budget lack direct involvement of lawmakers who are elected public representatives, but Shawkat Ali said it is not true.

The finance ministry sits with all MPs as a group before preparing the budget, and take their recommendations into consideration, he said.

Prof Ali Ashraf, a lawmaker of ruling Awami League, said there is no involvement of MPs in the budget preparation. He also said no discussion regarding the budget took place even in the parliamentary standing committees.

"Those who prepare budget lack experience," he alleged adding, "Public representatives should be involved in the process."

Two other ruling party lawmakers

SEE PAGE 15 COL 7

4 power plants get go-ahead

Purchase body okays contracts to produce 230MW

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet purchase committee yesterday approved awarding contracts of four public sector dual fuel peaking power projects totalling 270 megawatt to two companies.

The projects are Shantahar 50 MW (Tk 364 crore), Rajshahi Katakhal 50 MW (Tk 350 crore), Gopalganj 100 MW (Tk 683 crore) and Pabna Bera 70 MW (Tk 484 crore).

The first three projects will be awarded to local company Energypac and the last one to Korean Hyundai.

These are four of the 10 power projects totalling 820 MW capacity for which the Power Development Board (PDB) floated tenders in September.

The cabinet committee had earlier cleared awarding contracts of four projects in February. One of them, a 50 MW plant in Faridpur, was awarded to Energypac.

This means Energypac, which had gathered experience by building smaller power projects for other contractors in the country in the past, will be given the task to set up four power projects totalling 200 MW.

The PDB had earlier followed a policy of awarding a maximum of two contracts per bidder, even if they are found lowest bidders in multiple tenders.

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Govt asked to explain RanksTel action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued a rule on the government to explain within seven days why its action suspending operations of RanksTel, cancelling its licence and disconnecting its network should not be declared illegal.

An HC bench comprised of Justice Syed Mahmud Hossain and Justice ATM Fazle Kabir came up with the rule upon a writ petition filed on the day by RanksTel Director Aman Ullah Chowdhury.

The post and telecommunication secretary and chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) have been made respondents to the rule.

The writ petition stated

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Eat, export more to tackle potato boom

Govt to launch campaign amid storage crisis

REAZ AHMAD

With a potato glut sending thousands of farmers across the country in the red, the Potato Advisory Board has come up with a bailout package to save them from incurring heavy losses.

The board at a meeting yesterday suggested launching a countrywide campaign for adding potato to daily food menu, expediting potato export with 20 percent cash incentives, reopening all the four potato flake factories, setting up more cold storages and training farmers on potato storage techniques arranged by the agriculture extension service.

Farmers, cold storage owners and representatives of ministries concerned attended the meeting held in the capital. The agriculture secretary chaired the meeting in the absence of Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury, who is also chairman of the Potato Advisory Board.

"The meeting discussed the possibility of increasing the storage capacity, popularising use of indigenous storage techniques at farm-

ers' level, setting up more potato-based factories and encouraging people to consume more potato by changing their food habit," Additional Agriculture Secretary Anwar Faruque told The Daily Star after the meeting.

Coming out of the meeting, Bangladesh Cold Storage Association (BCSA) Chairman Jasim Uddin told this correspondent that the association would convene a meeting with owners of the four shut down potato flake factories today for resuming production.

The advisory board met at a time when the country's 300 cold storages with a total preservation capacity of 2.2 million tonnes of potato are fully packed. And consequently farmers are compelled to either sell their produce at throwaway prices or pile it up in the field or on roadside, exposing it to sun and rain.

Primary official estimates show this year's net potato output is over eight million tonnes. But the BCSA says the output reached a new record of 10 million tonnes, and only a quarter of this could be accommodated in the cold storages.

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Over 7.32 lakh to take HSC exams from April 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 732,457 examinees from 7,181 educational institutions across the country are about to take part in the Higher Secondary Certificate and its equivalent examinations which are scheduled to begin on April 1.

This year the number of Secondary School Certificate examinees is around 1.14 lakh more than last year.

Some 397,418 male and 335,418 female students will sit the examinations at 2,018 centres under 10 education boards.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid yesterday said the exams will be cancelled if the centres fail to ensure a fair, peaceful and copy-free atmosphere.

He said, "We will not allow students to use unfair means during the examinations."

"We are committed to ensuring 100 percent copy-free examinations."

The minister also said that any teacher involved in cheating would have their monthly pay order cancelled.

The minister issued the warnings during Dhaka Education Board's final meeting before the exams.

Nahid added, "Copying is a menace and we have taken

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OnlinePoll ✓

Do you support BTRC's move to shut down operations of telecom companies for alleged involvement in illegal VoIP business?

Yes (62.0%)
 No (36.7%)
 No Comments (1.3%)

Total votes: 930
TODAY'S POLL

Do you think some progress has been made regarding Teesta water sharing in the India-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission meeting?

Please cast your vote at www.thedailystar.net

Prayer Timing

March 22		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-55	5-30
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-16	6-20
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Statement & Apology

This is to inform that Grameen CyberNet Ltd. was never involved in any type of illegal activities especially VoIP, since its inception 1996.

Our service was interrupted on the 21st March, 2010 and was restored at 3:00 pm on the same day. We apologise for the inconvenience caused to our valued users.

Grameen CyberNet Ltd.
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Ranks Telecom Regrets

Ranks Telecom Limited has been providing Telecommunication services in accordance with the established policy of the Government. There has been a sudden dislocation of services to our valued customers because of unexpected action of The Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Authority which we consider unfortunate.

We deeply regret this inconvenience to our esteemed customer's & we offer our sincerest apology for this dislocation of services.

We are in the midst of seeking legal redress. We hope our customers bear this in convenience with patience & compassion.

Management
Ranks Telecom Limited

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