

TWO RECEIVE CHANNEL i AGRICULTURE AWARDS

# Govt mulls stimulus package for agri researchers

Says Matia Chowdhury

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will offer stimulus package, including special salary structure and extension of retirement age, to stem brain drain of agricultural researchers and scientists, said Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury yesterday.

"Most of our agricultural scientists and researchers are going to developed countries for a better professional atmosphere and high standards of living. Our salary structure and other facilities do not hold them back. Now it is time to bring up the issue," she said at the 'Channel i Agriculture Award-2010' giving ceremony.

"The government will extend retirement age and offer a special salary structure for those who will conduct researches in the agriculture sector and develop new innovations. The agriculturists with creativity and those who have dedicated their life to the development of agriculture will be rated differently," Matia Chowdhury added.

This was the seventh time the Channel i gave the award to farmers for their outstanding contribution to the agriculture sector. Besides, the Channel i introduced 'lifetime achievement award' this year for contribution to agricultural research, invention and its utilisation at field level.

Abdul Aziz, a resident of Shariya Boho at Ghatail in Tangail, received this year's Channel i award for his contribution to popularising fruit cultivation without the use of fertilisers.

The 'lifetime achievement award' went to Kazi M Badruddoza.

The awards were given at a colourful ceremony at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre.

Speaking on the occasion, Shykh Seraj, director and head of news of Channel i, said, "Farmers will not get the fair price of their produces unless the prices are fixed. The fact should be realised by all, including the government. The present situation over the price of produces would not have been created, if the agro-based indus-

try had been developed in the country."

He also stressed the need to ensure rural development for the balanced development in all sectors.

Award winner Abdul Aziz, a natural scientist, said, "If we can grow fruits without using fertilisers and pesticides, the fruits will also work as medicine for us and prevent many diseases. We will be able to build a golden Bangladesh by exporting such fruits."

He also suggested ensuring proper use of every inch of land through cultivating fruit.

"We have to help protect birds. Birds are the friends of farmers. Birds eat insects that attack fruit varieties," said Aziz, who popularised fruit cultivation in his area by supplying fruits and fruit plants to locals for free over the years.

Kazi M Badruddoza, who received the lifetime achievement award, said, "Bangladesh means the land of agriculture and farmers. It is the farmers who make it sure that such a large population of our country get food everyday."

Besides, six people were also awarded in two categories in an essay competition on agriculture, climate change challenges, and efforts taken by the governments since independence for the development of agriculture sectors.

The awardees are Prof Begum Saidunnesa Laila, Anisur Rahman, Selina Sayeda Sultana Akter, Aleya Rahat, ANM Ashrafuddin and Ismail Hossain.

A total of 1470 entries were submitted for the essay competition.

A book titled 'Peoples Voice-5' containing 100 selected essays was also launched at the programme.

Industries Minister Dilip Barua, Food and Disaster Management Minister Abdur Razzaque, former agriculture adviser CS Karim, Prof Serajul Islam Chowdhury, Channel i Managing Director Faridur Reza Sagar, cultural personality Mamunur Rashid and litterateur Selina Hossain were present at the ceremony.



Abdul Aziz, a resident of Shariya Boho at Ghatail in Tangail, receives 'Channel i Agriculture Award-2010' from Faridur Reza Sagar, left, and Shykh Seraj, right, at the award giving ceremony at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre yesterday.

## Body to probe allegations against AL MP Rony

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Patuakhali Four-member committee to investigate the allegations against local ruling party lawmaker Golam Maula Rony.

The district unit of AL formed the committee in its extended meeting at Patuakhali Circuit House auditorium on Thursday night after Galachipa upazila AL president and secretary jointly submitted a written complaint against the lawmaker.

The committee was headed by Advocate Shahjahan Mia, state minister for religious affairs and president of Patuakhali AL.

In the written complaint, Galachipa AL president Harun-or-Rashid and secretary Golam Mostafa Tito alleged that Golam Maula Rony is harassing party men by filling false cases. He took bribes from various development projects through his brother-in-law who was a BNP leader during the previous BNP-led 4-party alliance government. He also did not properly observe the National Mourning Day on August 15.

When contacted, Rony said, "Anybody can submit allegations against me. The probe body formed by the district AL will find out whether the allegations are true or not."

## Family members demand release of Abdus Salam Pintu

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members of BNP vice-chairman Abdus Salam Pintu, an accused in the August 21 grenade attack case, yesterday demanded his unconditional release.

Two daughters of Pintu placed the demand at a press conference at the National Press Club yesterday.

In a written statement, Pintu's daughter Noor Dida Binte Salam said her father is a victim of political vengeance. The government is torturing him in remand ignoring the High Court directive, she added.

The two daughters also urged the government to arrange proper treatment of their father and interrogate him at the jail gate, if necessary.

## 'Bhola by-polls to be neutral'

BSS, Bhola

Election Commission M Sakhawat Hossain yesterday said the present election will be conducted all the elections neutrally and fairly.

The coming by-election of Bhola-3 constituency will also be held in a complete neutral and fair atmosphere, he told the election and law enforcing officers including police, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), Coastguard, DGFI at deputy commissioner's office here.

Bangladesh's politics should have qualitative change and politicians should modify their mindset, Sakhawat said adding that it would bring no result extensively blaming administration and the election commission.



Communist Party of Bangladesh stages a demonstration in front of the National Press Club in the city yesterday with a call to resist stalkers.

## Burimari customs station now full-fledged land port

UNB, Lalmonirhat

Burimari customs station has been turned into a full-fledged land port with modernisation, clearing the way for increased trade on land route with India, China, Nepal and Bhutan.

Under the modernisation scheme, a warehouse for goods-laden vehicles has been erected and the customs station expanded fulfilling the longstanding demand of the business community.

Shipping Minister Shajahan Khan formally inaugurated the land port yesterday.

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Motahar Hossain, acting Shipping Secretary Abdul Mannan Hawlader, chair-

man of Bangladesh Land Port Authority AKM Yahya Chowdhury and former lawmaker Moshirur Rahman Ranga were present on the occasion.

Speaking briefly at the function, the shipping minister said the government would meet all its electoral pledges in phases.

He, however, alleged that the opposition is hatching conspiracies to impede the government's development activities. After the execution of the verdict in Bangabandhu murder case, the opposition has become more desperate, he said.

Shajahan called upon all to work unitedly to expedite the war crimes trial and implement the Vision-2021 of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

## One killed in wall collapse

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A pedestrian was killed when a boundary wall of a building collapsed on him at Boro Moghbazar in the city yesterday.

The dead was identified as Mohammad Selim, 35, a labourer and resident of Payrabagh.

Ramna police told The Daily Star that Selim was returning home at Moghbazar at around 6:30pm. When he was passing the building, the dilapidated boundary wall collapsed on him.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital at around 7:30pm where the doctors declared him dead.

## RAPE OF BABY GIRL Arrest of prime suspect demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's rights activists and locals laid a siege to Uttarkhan Police Station and staged demonstrations at Atipara in the city yesterday demanding arrest and punishment of the culprit responsible for the rape of a baby girl.

Locals and police said over 200 people led by Karmajibi Nari took out a procession that paraded through different roads in Atipara at around 11:30am and later besieged the police station.

The police calmed the situation by assuring the demonstrators that prime suspect Nayan would be arrested.

An unknown youth raped the three-year-old girl on April 6 taking her into an abandoned house while her domestic help mother was busy with her work at a house.

Earlier, the police arrested main suspect Nayan's elder brother Shahin and friend Rubel who were taken on a one-day police remand yesterday.

## DEFAMATION CASE

# CCC female councillor alleges threat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) woman Councillor Ferdous Begum Munni at a press conference in the port city yesterday alleged that she was facing threats while witnesses were forced to leave their locality.

Munni filed a defamation case against Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury on Thursday on charge of misbehaviour with her.

Munni, councillor of ward-1, 2 and 3, urged Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's intervention in ensuring justice in the case.

Rehena Begum Ranu, also a ward councillor and president of Fight for Women's Rights, read out the written statement at the press conference held under the banner of Sammilito Nari Samaj. Ward Councillor Rekha Alam Chowdhury and Fight for Women's Rights General Secretary Bibi Joynab were present at the conference.

Ranu said as an elected people's representative the Mayor Mohiuddin should show respect to women in the society. "But it is unfortunate that the

mayor's (Mohiuddin) behaviour and attitude towards his female colleagues are a threat to safety and tantamount to showing disrespect for women," she said.

Expressing concern over harassment of Munni by the mayor, Ranu said safety of general women would be at stake if a female people's representative was harassed in public.

Munni, also women affairs secretary of Bayezid thana Awami League (AL), said the mayor earlier misbehaved with her on different occasions. She alleged that local AL leaders and ward councillors loyal to the mayor already started threatening the witnesses of the Tuesday's incident.

Ward councillors Abdul Malek, Niaz Md Khan, Jahar Lal Hazari and Abul Bashir went to her Jalalabad residence on Thursday evening to take her to meet the mayor to discuss the case, she said.

Seeking cooperation from all, Munni said the mayor being an influential person can influence the investigation into the case.

## Transport workers clash with police, Rab

Rab microbus vandalised in Bagerhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Transport workers yesterday clashed with the police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) after Rab members beat up and injured a bus driver for hitting a microbus of Rab in Bagerhat.

The workers also surrounded the Rab-8 members for about one hour and vandalised their microbus at the Bagerhat Bus Terminal in the morning, disrupting the traffic movement on Bagerhat-Khulna-Pirojpur road from 8:15am to 9:30am.

The clash erupted after police from Bagerhat and Rab-6 members from Khulna reached there to bring the situation under control.

Police constable Matiar Rahman was injured during the clash.

Later, bus owners and workers' leaders and district administration officials stepped in and calmed the protests.

Bus driver Alamgir Hossain who was beaten up by Rab members, and the injured police constable were admitted to the

Bagerhat Sadar Hospital. No case was filed in this regard.

Sheikh Anwar Hossain, a union leader, said a Bagerhat-bound passenger bus hit the microbus of Rab at Badamtala while overtaking it.

The Rab men then signalled the bus driver, Alamgir Hossain, 38, to stop, but he did not heed and sped to the bus terminal.

The Rab men also followed him. At the bus terminal, they caught Alamgir and beat him.

When the Rab men tried to take Alamgir into their microbus, agitated transport workers staged a protest and attacked the Rab men.

After the clash, bus owners, workers, district administration and Rab men held a joint meeting. The meeting decided that the microbus of Rab will be repaired under the supervision of Bagerhat Bus Owners' Association and legal action will be taken against the attackers.

Bagerhat Sadar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shahidul Islam Shaheen said the situation is now under control.



Dhakabasi, an organisation of city residents, organised a henna design competition at the Teacher-Student Centre on the Dhaka University campus yesterday to mark the Bangla New Year.

### WEATHER TODAY

#### Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Sylhet division and the region of Mymensingh in the next 12 hours till 6:00pm today.

Weather may remain dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country, Met Office said.

Severe heat wave sweeping over the regions of Rajshahi, Ishwardi, Mongla, Jessore and Chuadanga and mild to moderate heat wave over Dhaka, Tangail, Faridpur, Majidi Court, Mirmongal, Khulna, Satkhira, Barisal and Patuakhali may continue.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, it said.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:18pm today and rises at 5:41am tomorrow.

Country's highest temperature 41.2 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Rajshahi and lowest 24.0 degrees Celsius at Cox's Bazar.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	37.3	26.5	73	54
Chittagong	31.1	25.2	77	80
Rajshahi	41.2	26.3	86	38
Khulna	38.7	26.0	69	45
Barisal	36.6	26.0	81	66
Sylhet	33.4	25.2	73	79
Cox's Bazar	34.4	24.0	80	80