

BE SAFE BSRM



THE SAFEST STEEL IN BANGLADESH BUILT TO WITHSTAND
CYCLONIC FORCE AND EARTHQUAKES
The only steel that ensures Elongation at maximum force

Do consult a professional engineer if you decide to build a house

BSRM Xtreme
Feel safe with Xtreme Inside

Philips 47" LCD TV (47PFL3605) at Tk. 9,723* PHILIPS
Up to 18 Equal Monthly Installments available at 0% Interest

0% Interest 12 Months
Healthy Interest 12 Months
No Fee* 18 Months

For More Information:
8855366-8, 01712-665463

TRANSCOM
DIGITAL
think electronics... think DIGITAL

in Short

50MW power plant opens at Ashuganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited (APSC) launched a new 50 megawatt gas engine plant yesterday, taking the power generation capacity of the station to 774 MW.

The plant is passing a commissioning period and supplying power to the national

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4



IOM chief due today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

IOM Director General Lacy Swing is arriving in Dhaka today to attend the fourth ministerial meeting on overseas employment and contractual labour for the countries of origin in Asia.

The meeting, known as Colombo Process, is scheduled for April 20 to 21 at the

SEE PAGE 19 COL 3

1 to die for Manjurul Imam murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Additional District and Sessions Judge's Court yesterday sentenced a man to death for killing Awami League (AL) leader advocate Manjurul Imam eight years ago.

Inspector Md Shahjahan Howlader of the Detective Branch (DB) of

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

ONLINE POLL

What do you think of BNP leader Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir's blaming the government for kidnapping younger son of Fazlul Haque Amini, chairman of a faction of Islami Oikya Jote?

True (56.6%)
Unsubstantiated (13.9%)
Yet another political mud-slinging (29.5%)

TOTAL VOTES : 396

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with BNP that the prime minister is influencing the judiciary regarding the cases against BNP chief's sons?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT
www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING April 18

Azan Jamaat

Fajr 4:35 5:10
Zohr 12:45 1:15
Asr 4:45 5:00
Maghrib 6:24 6:28
Esha 7:45 8:15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Mismatch in salt prices

Tk 2 at field, Tk 18 at market

PINAKI ROY

"You eat that with everything every day. That is salt, nothing else," said the driver pointing at the pile of snow-white substance in a barren field on way to Cox's Bazar.

The salt farmers, seeming long deprived, in torn cloths, were working barefoot making piles of sun dried salt. They would sell the raw salt to the processing factories after drying the seawater in the sun for five days.

Consumers across the country pay over 10 times the price the farmers get for per kilogram of salt. They allege all stakeholders including factory owners and middlemen deprive them in the process.

Different factory owners purchase the salt at less than Tk 2 per kg from the field and sell the same volume to consumers at Tk 18-20.

During a recent visit to different salt farms in Teknaf in Cox's Bazar it was seen farmers were selling salt at Tk 70 per maund (37.5 kg). The price came down from last year's Tk 100 making many of them reluctant to continue with the business.

"Sometimes we cannot even recover the production costs as salt processing companies import cheap rated raw salt from India and Myanmar," said Amir Ali, a salt farmer in Teknaf.

Amir said they can produce up to 40-50 kg of salt in one decimal of land in two days. They have to bear all the costs, but the owner of the land takes half of the profit

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



A salt farmer scoops salt from the field in Teknaf of Cox's Bazar to take them to a refinery. Even though they are capable of producing enough salt for the country, they have always been underutilised and underpaid, as salt companies rely on cheap imports. A new government policy is likely to change this.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

DFID aid to rise

£1b for Bangladesh till 2015

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department for International Development (DFID) will spend £1 billion for Bangladesh until 2015 to encourage private investment, help the government deliver, finance social services and provide better schooling to more children.

The UK-based development organisation will raise its spending to £250 million from £150 million a year for the next four years in different areas that include family planning and reduction of maternal deaths in Bangladesh.

It was disclosed at the launch of DFID's operational plan for 2011-2015 at the Lakeshore Hotel in the capital yesterday.

Chris Austin, country representative of DFID Bangladesh, said, "The UK wants to change lives and deliver results in Bangladesh."

He said the DFID can claim some credit for Bangladesh's progress in reducing maternal deaths, increased enrolment of both boys and girls in pri-

mary schools, creation of jobs and many other areas.

"We have helped in these areas with the government's own objectives. Over the next four years, we want to work on all those areas and more on a bigger scale so that the majority of Bangladeshis, who are fairly on low level of income have best opportunities to improve their own lives," said Austin.

For Bangladesh, UK's bilateral aid programme areas include education, health, poverty, hunger and vulnerability, climate change, governance and security, wealth creation, and water and sanitation.

"Our central focus is on results, accountability and transparency. We will work coherently with Bangladesh's sixth Five Year Plan," said Diana Dalton, deputy country representative of DFID Bangladesh, in her presentation.

"We will continue to seek a range of modalities, to spread fiduciary risk and allow for innovation. We will work in

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2

Govt to import 1 lakh MT more rice from Vietnam

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will import 1 lakh metric tons (MT) of boiled rice from Vietnam very soon.

The two countries have signed an agreement to this effect, a food ministry source said yesterday.

Bangladesh has already imported 3 lakh MT atar rice and 52,000 MT boiled rice from Vietnam.

Vietnam will sign a 3-year-term memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh to export rice, the source said.

Vietnam will sign the MoU as government of Vietnam attaches priority to the requirements of Bangladesh, it said.

The MoU will be inked

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1

BNP to seek details from special body

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

After the parliament committee on constitution amendment invites the BNP chairperson to dialogue on constitution reforms, the party will send a letter back asking for details on the body's scope of activities.

BNP insiders said after getting the formal letter from the committee, BNP chief Khaleda Zia will sit with her party policymakers to finalise the letter.

Party standing committee member MK Anwar said the issue will be discussed in party forum if the chairperson gets any letter from the committee.

"I think the committee [the special committee] has no validity. If the government wants to bring any changes to the constitution they should form a commission or committee keeping everyone involved in the process. We will cooperate if something like that is formed," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Rafiqul Islam Mian, another member of the standing

SEE PAGE 19 COL 1



Rajapaksa arrives today

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa arrives in Dhaka today on a three-day visit to infuse fresh dynamism in the bilateral ties and chart new directions for the future relations.

This is his first official visit to Bangladesh.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 2



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday hoists the national flag and her party flag at the mango orchard in Mujibnagar of Meherpur to mark the 40th Mujibnagar Day. On this day in 1971, the Mujibnagar government of Bangladesh was formed.

PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Prosecution of doctors stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday stayed for four weeks a High Court order directing the government to prosecute four doctors of Shariatpur, including Civil Surgeon Golam Sarwar, for preparing a fallacious autopsy report of Hena Akter.

The three other doctors are Resident Medical Officer Nirmal Chandra Das and medical officers Rajesh Majumder and Hosne Ara of Shariatpur General

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

Hundreds flee as Gaddafi forces pound Ajdabiya

AFP, Ajdabiya

Libyan government forces pounded rebels with heavy artillery west of Ajdabiya yesterday, forcing hundreds of residents and some rebel fighters to flee the key crossroads town.

The intense shelling came a day after at least eight people were killed and 27 wounded as the forces loyal to

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8