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facebook remark brings trouble

UNB, Gazipur

A student of Dhaka University of Engineering and Technology was suspended for one year for making objectionable remark against the family of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the social networking website facebook.

The disciplinary
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Potato prices creeping up

Farmers still not out of loss

SOHEL PARVEZ and FARHANA BARNA

Prices of potato have begun to rebound due to a supply dearth from farmers, after a bulk quantity went to cold storage for domestic consumption during the off-season.

An increased export demand has been another catalyst for the price uptrend, traders said.

The rising trend comes after thousands of farmers suffered losses due to slump in the prices of their produce in the wake of a production glut this year.

Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) data shows retail prices of potato edged up to 11 percent to Tk 9-11 a kilogram, which was selling at Tk 8-10 in the capital a month ago. Prices also marked a rise at growers' level.

Farmers, however, said the gains in prices would not help them recover their losses.

"Even after the rise in prices, I am in loss. I spent Tk 8 to produce a kg of potato, whereas the prices now stand between Tk 7-7.25," said Abul Hossain, a farmer in Munshiganj.

Hossain, who rented one acre of land to grow potato, linked the production cost to high rent of land. "The cost of production is higher in our region than the north because of higher rentals," he added.

Agriculture officials and cold storage owners said production has exceeded last years' total of 81 lakh tonnes due to favourable weather and low prices of non-urea fertilisers.

Cold storage across the country have preserved 35
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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

High incentive for export and high volume of storage have slightly boost potato prices in the market but farmers are still suffering from the loss due to a price slump. The photos were taken from Munshiganj.

WAR-TORN LIBYA IOM takes 26 Bangladeshis to Egypt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) yesterday evacuated 26 more Bangladeshis along with some 1,000 other nationals from Libya's besieged city of Misrata to Egypt.

"This was the latest group arriving at the Egypt border of Salloum where nearly 800 Bangladeshis are waiting for
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Unused aid piles up

Muhith worries over govt's failure to utilise those

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister AMA Muhith has voiced concern over the huge foreign aid remaining unused for slow implementation of projects by ministries.

"Foreign aid has increased a lot but we are failing to spend it," Muhith told a pre-budget views-exchange meeting with Economic Reporters' Forum (ERF) members at his ministry's conference room yesterday.

Muhith said at the end of this year, unused foreign aid might add up to \$11 billion from \$9 billion, which usually remains between \$6 billion and \$7 billion.

To journalists, the minister said, "You keep on referring to the shrinking foreign aid but I do not agree with you."

"We are not utilising the foreign assistance we have received. The commitments will stand at \$3 billion this year but our utilisation will be less than previous year's," Muhith said.

He said full implementation of this year's budget will not be possible for failure to use foreign aid.

Muhith said agriculture, energy and food sectors have seen a rise in subsidies this year. But the government will cut down subsidies in those sectors next year as it is not possible for it to give so much subsidies.

The finance minister said the overall economic situation of the country is good. It also enjoys an increase in investments. But the economy is likely to see a further
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2,300 more bags of OMS rice seized

A CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Rapid Action Battalion seized 2,300 bags of rice meant for open market sale (OMS) from two local rice mills and arrested five people for hoarding the rice in Kaliakoir upazila of Gazipur yesterday.

Capt Mohammad Sohel, assistant director of Rab-1, said Rab members raided Aliza Rice Mill at Latifpur and seized 1,500 sacks of OMS rice around 1:00am.

They arrested three
SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Fake drug factory busted, owner jailed

Mobile court destroys 17 lakh substandard capsules, tablets

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mobile court of Rab yesterday busted a fake drug factory at Pallabi Eastern Housing in the capital and destroyed more than 17 lakh sub-standard tablets and capsules.

The market price of the drugs was about Tk 1 crore, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) said.

Rab Executive Magistrate Anwar Pasha, who led the drive, awarded two years' jail term to Munirul Alam, owner of the factory F M Medi-royal Overseas (Bangla-
SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

desh), and fined him Tk 2 lakh in default of which he will have to serve three more months in prison.

Magistrate Pasha told The Daily Star that a detective team of Rab had come to know that the factory was producing sub-standard drugs in collusion with some doctors.

During the raid, Rab found three employees of the factory manufacturing sub-standard drugs at the ground floor of a six-storey building in an unhygienic condition.

Bus torched for hitting student

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mob set a bus ablaze at Farmgate in the capital and blocked the busy intersection for a quarter of an hour after it ran over an HSC examinee yesterday.

Sheikh Abdullah, 19, a student of Dhaka Commerce College and an HSC examinee was rushed to Al-Razi Hospital in the area and later shifted to
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PHOTO: STAR

A mob sets a bus on fire at Farmgate in the capital yesterday after it ran over an HSC examinee.

WAR CRIMES

Bail denied to 4 Jamaat leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal yesterday rejected a bail petition filed by detained four top Jamaat leaders in connection with crimes against humanity during the 1971 Liberation War.

The leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami-- Ameer Motiur Rahman Nizami, Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, assistant secretaries general Muhammad Kamaruzzaman and Abdul Quader Molla-- were produced before the court yesterday morning.

The court also rejected another petition filed by Nizami and Mojaheed seeking review of its April 13 order which allowed investigators to quiz them at a "safe home" in the capital instead of Dhaka Central Jail about their links with war crimes.

The three-member tribunal headed by its Chairman Justice Nizamul Huq passed the orders after hearing arguments from the defence counsel and the prosecution on the petitions.

The jail authorities were asked to arrange proper
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JOINT EXERCISE US firearms face hurdles at airport

2 ministries' lack of coordination causes embarrassment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A lack of co-ordination between the defence and home ministries caused a rather embarrassing situation for the Bangladesh government on Tuesday evening over 12 boxes full of firearms from the US at Shahjalal International Airport.

Five US army personnel brought the cache of arms into Bangladesh on a special flight from the US, for a joint exercise with the Bangladesh Army in
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ONLINE POLL

Do you think parliamentary committee's initiative to have talks with the chiefs of political parties and experts on constitution amendment will bring positive result?

Yes (31.1%)
No (66.1%)
No Comments (2.8%)

TOTAL VOTES : 351

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think the government's decision to relocate all chemical warehouses and factories from Old Dhaka to Keraniganj or Kamrangirchar is justified?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT
www.thedailystar.net

PRAYER TIMING April 22

Azan Jamaat
Fajr 4-25 5-00
Juma 12-30 1-15
Asr 4-45 5-00
Maghrib 6-27 6-31
Esha 8-00 8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

Save forests, fight global warming

Recommends first Forestry Congress

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Conservation of forest is necessary not only for its resources but also to fight global warming, said speakers at a discussion in the capital yesterday.

The Department of Forest organised the three-day conference on the slogan "Forestry for Better Living". Named "The First Bangladesh Forestry Congress, 2011", this was the first such conference arranged by the
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CONSTITUTION TALKS BNP discusses invitation Decision Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP's National Standing Committee discussed last night the invitation sent to the party chairperson to attend a meeting of the parliamentary special committee on constitution amendment.
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Dhaka WASA has taken emergency measures to reduce temporary water shortage during dry season

There might be temporary water shortage in some areas in this period. Please don't waste water unnecessarily. Your waste may slake others' thirst.

Do not use suction pumps. Inform WASA if you see leaks in the pipe. Dhaka WASA expects your sincere cooperation

WASA-P-I-206/2011 GD-1886