

South to get more agri attention

Says Matia Chowdhury

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is now paying attention to boosting agricultural production in the southern part of the country considering the possible production decline in the north, Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury said yesterday.

Falling groundwater level and gradual industrialisation will diminish farm potentials of the north eventually, and now "the government is laying emphasis on the southern region as a new horizon for agriculture", she told the launch of Krishi Sangbadikata, first Bangla book on agriculture journalism, in the capital.

Society for Media and Suitable Human Communication Techniques (SoMaSHTe), business development organisation Katalyst, and publishing house Chandrabaty Academy co-produced the book.

Lauding the publication of the book, Matia Chowdhury said it would help guide the new generation journalists report better on farm issues.

The minister also denounced donors' notion of subsidy cut in agriculture, saying farm subsidy helped boost Bangladesh's predominantly agro-based economy.

A little price increase in urea fertilisers and price cut in non-urea fertilisers by the government has helped farmers practice a balanced use of fertilisers and saved Tk 837 crore of subsidy this year, she added.

Dhaka University Supernumerary Professor Shakhawat Ali Khan presided over the ceremony at the office of Journalism Training and Research Initiative (JATRI), while SoMaSHTe Director Mir Masrur Zaman moderated it.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, eminent journalists Shykh Seraj and Ajay Dasgupta, DU journalism professor Golam Rahman, and Katalyst official Markus Kupper, among others, also spoke on the occasion.



Discussants at a roundtable "Too Young to Wed: End Child Marriage-the First-Ever International Day of the Girl Child", jointly organised by The Daily Star and United Nations Population Fund at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.



Hasina's birthday today

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina turns 66 today.

Hasina, the elder daughter of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was born at Tungipara in Gopalganj on this day in 1947.

She was elected AL president in February 1981 while she was in exile. She and her sister Rehana were abroad when Bangabandhu and most of his family were assassinated in August 1975. She returned home on May 17, 1981.

Hasina led the AL twice to power in 1996 and 2008.

The ruling Awami League and its associate bodies have chalked out elaborate programmes to mark the day.

NEWS IN brief

32nd BCS (special) written test results published

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Public Service Commission yesterday published the written test results of the 32nd (Special) Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations with a total of 2,788 candidates coming out successful.

The results are available on www.bpsc.gov.bd. The viva-voce of the candidates is likely to be held on October 31, said a press release on the website.

Around 24,556 applicants sat for the first-round exams at 18 centres across the country on March 9, vying for 1,489 vacant posts of various cadres.

The PSC has published the results provisionally and it has the right to modify the results, if necessary.

Creative math questions in schools and colleges from 2014

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to introduce creative questions in mathematics in JSC, JDC, SSC and HSC examinations in phases.

The education ministry issued a circular to this effect yesterday.

According to the circular, creative questions in Mathematics would be introduced in Junior School Certificate and Junior Dakhil Certificate examinations in 2014.

It would be introduced in Mathematics and Higher Mathematics at Secondary School Certificate and Dakhil examinations in 2015, and in Higher Maths in HSC and Alim examinations from 2017.

Under the method, each question has two parts. One part is being prepared following the existing

DoE fines Beximco Pharma Tk 20 lakh for air pollution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Department of Environment (DoE) yesterday fined a pharmaceutical factory of Beximco Group Tk 20 lakh for polluting the air in Gazipur.

An enforcement team of the DoE detected that the Pharmatech Chemical Ltd at Auchpara of Tongi had no air (exhaust) treatment device, said a DoE press release.

Collecting sample of air from near the factory, the DoE found that it contained 664 and 302 microgram suspended particles per cubic metre while permissible level is 200 microgram.

Contacted, Nazmul Hassan, managing director of Beximco Pharma, claimed that the factory has no toxic emission.

About air treatment device, he said he needed to

Ensure fair, speedy probe into Rangamati violence

Int'l CHT Commission urges PM

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission has called upon Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to act firmly and without any delay to ensure an unbiased investigation into the recent violence in Rangamati.

In a letter to the prime minister yesterday, the commission condemned what it said another round of unprovoked and unacceptable violence against members of indigenous communities by a section of settlers on Saturday.

Referring to media reports, it said around 60 persons, mostly from indigenous communities, had been injured in the attack.

The commission called upon the home and the CHT ministries to conduct an independent judicial inquiry into the violence, make its report public, and ensure exemplary punishment to those found responsible.

The letter said much of the violence in the

CHT was related to land disputes between Bangalees and Adivasis, but the CHT Land Commission had not been able to settle a single land dispute in three years of its existence.

"We call upon the government to take immediate steps to amend the Land Commission Act 2001, appoint a competent and credible chairman to the commission so that it can start work effectively to fulfill your government's commitment as a part of the CHT peace accord as well as your electoral pledge," reads the letter, signed by three Co-Chairs Eric Avebury, Sultana Kamal and Elsa Stamatopoulou.

The commission also demanded that military be barred from handling civil law and order situations and that the government takes immediate steps to dismantle all temporary military camps in line with the 1997 CHT accord.

Prof Abu Sayeed gets Farabi memorial award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Noted educationalist Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed was presented with Khan Muhammad Farabi Memorial Award yesterday.

The award was presented to the Bishwa Sahitya Kendra's founder at a programme organised by Sahitya Academy, a Brahmanbaria-based cultural organisation, in the capital's Central Public Library.

The award comes after cultural personality and poet Khan Muhammad Farabi. Born in 1952 in Brahmanbaria district and a student of Dhaka University's economics department, the young poet passed away in 1974 at the age of 22 due to cancer.

Eminent columnist Syed Abul Maksud addressed the programme.

5 JMB activists get 10 years' jail term

Bangla Bhai's aide arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Five activists of banned militant outfit Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) were sentenced to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment yesterday in connection with a case filed for a series of bomb blasts in Rajshahi in 2005.

The convicted are Jakir Hossain, Liakot Hossain alias Harez, Amanullah alias Aman, Abdur Rahim alias Nasim and Zillur Rahman Shaheen.

Judge of the Speedy Trial Tribunal Ekramul Haque Chowdhury delivered the verdict in a crowded court in Shaheen's presence.

The court also fined Tk 20,000 each, in default, to suffer a further year in jail.

On August 17, 2005, a series of bomb blasts took place in six spots in Boalia area.

Meanwhile on Wednesday, Rab arrested an aide to the executed leader of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh Siddiquil Islam alias Bangla Bhai from Bagmara upazila in Rajshahi.

Abdul Kuddus, 44, an alleged collaborator of the Pakistani occupation forces during the country's Liberation War, was arrested from his home, said Rab sources.

Kuddus is a charge sheeted accused in five cases.

Two held with arms in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two alleged arms traders were arrested with three illegal pistols and around 250 rounds of bullet from the capital's Sabujbagh area yesterday.

The arrestees are Md Bashir Ahmed alias Rana alias Salim, 55, and Tanvir Islam, 42.

Detective Branch (DB) of police raided the house of Bashir at Moddho Basabo and arrested the duo with the arms and ammunition and Tk 2 lakh.

Obituary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Mohammad Ismail Miyan, former joint labour director, died of

cardiac arrest in the capital yesterday. He was 60.

He left behind his wife, a daughter and a son.

He was buried in Mirpur martyred intellectuals' graveyard.

Dr Munirul Huq

METRO DESK

Dr Munirul Huq, former director of Soil Resource Development Institute (SRDI), died in the capital's Square Hospital on Sunday. He was 85.

He is survived by his wife, two sons, and a host of relatives and admirers.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held at Khejur Bagan Jame Masjid on Monday, and the second namaz-e-janaza was held on the SRDI premises in the capital's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Later, he was buried at Azimpur old graveyard on the same day.

First magazine on War of Liberation launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Publication ceremony of the country's first Liberation War based quarterly, Swapno'71, was held at Liberation War Museum in the capital yesterday.

Memories of freedom fighters and their families' conditions, stories, poems and essays based on the Liberation War will be published in the journal.

Mukto Asor, a youth organisation working on the Liberation War and publisher of the magazine, organised the ceremony.

Freedom fighters, in the ceremony, said although they participated in the war to attain all forms of independence, their achievement is limited to geographic independence only.

Masudur Rahman Bir Pratik said they fought in the Liberation War to establish a country where resources would be distributed equally and everyone could live there happily.

AKM Jainul Abedin Khan Bir Pratik and Delwar Hossain Bir Pratik, among others, spoke at the ceremony.

Pvt educational coaching ban challenged in court

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A lawyer of the Supreme Court yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court challenging the legality of the government's policy that stopped providing of private coaching by teachers at educational institutions.

On June 20 this year, the government announced the policy titled "Policy-2012 to stop teachers from doing coaching business in educational institutions", which prevents teachers at schools and college levels from providing private tuition to students of their own institutions.

Advocate Eunos Ali Akond yesterday submitted the petition praying that the HC stays the effectuation of the policy and issues a rule upon the government to

explain why the policy should not be declared illegal and void.

In the petition, the lawyer said the Service Regulation 1979 allows the teachers, provided with monthly payment order (MPO), to provide private tuition to students upon prior permission from the governing bodies of their institutions.

While, the teachers, who are not provided with MPO, can provide private tuition without any permission from the governing body, as per the service regulation, he stated.

Around 90 percent of the teachers do not get their salaries from the government. So they should be allowed to provide private coaching, he added.

Hearing of the petition might be held on September 30, Eunos Ali said.

Japan gives grant to Islamia eye hospital

METRO DESK

The Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh will provide US \$122,093 grant to Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital to ensure better surgeries.

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Shiro Sadoshima and the hospital's Chief Executive Officer Dr Steven P Roy signed the grant contract on behalf of their respective sides at the embassy yesterday.

The hospital, operating on over 100 patients each day, will use the grant to purchase up-to-date sterilisation equipment for ten new state-of-the-art operation theatres.

The hospital is one of Bangladesh's largest and leading institutes for sight-restoration surgeries, says a press release signed by M Nurun Nabi, project coordinator, Dhaka Urban Comprehensive Eye Care Project.



Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital Chief Executive Officer Dr Steven P Roy, left, and Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Shiro Sadoshima sign a contract in the Japanese embassy yesterday. Under the contract, the embassy will provide US \$122,093 grant to the hospital.

PHOTO: COURTESY

DHAKA TODAY

Rally
Tathyo Odhikar Andolon will stage a rally; Venue: before National Museum; Time: 10:00am.

Seminar
Channel-I will organise a seminar; Venue: Channel-I Bhaban, Tejgaon; Time: 4:00pm.

Discussion
Bangabandhu Parishad will hold a discussion; Venue: the parishad central office, Kalabagan; Time: 10:00am.

Human chain
Khadye Bish Protirodh Andolon will form a human chain; Venue: Asadgate-Satmosjid Road via Mohammadpur bus stoppage; Time: 11:00am to 12:00noon.

Discussion
Swadesh Jagoron Parishad will hold a discussion; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Rally
Nagorik Sanghati and Bhatibangla Sangskriti Parishad will arrange a rally; Venue: Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University; Time: 10:30am.

Discussion
Muktijuddho o Swadhinatar Itihas Gabeshona Foundation will hold a discussion; Venue: Jatiya Press Club; Time: 11:00am.

Roundtable
The weekly Kagoj will arrange a roundtable; Venue: Hotel Sundarban; Time: 3:00pm.

Meeting
Bangladesh Shanti Parishad will organise its meeting; Venue: Institution