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Copenhagen will host Women Deliver 2016 global conference
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To introduce it, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy launches a mega fest
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Says there's no question of Pakistan prime minister's resignation
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Textile industry on a rocky road

Braces for huge loss as global cotton price falls sharply, is up against archaic central bank regulations

INAM AHMED

Bangladesh textile industry is in deep trouble as the global cotton price has dipped sharply, leaving it stacked with the raw material bought at a much higher price.

The worst is the industry could have easily avoided this loss but for the archaic central bank regulations that bar them from participating in modern financial instruments hedging commodity importers from price fluctuations.

For a country like Bangladesh which is the second largest garment exporter and is projected to be the top exporter, such old-fashioned regulations now create a big hurdle, as a tussle between yarn producers and garment manufacturers is imminent.

Textile lobby will try to avoid loss due to price fluctuation by factoring in yarn price based on high cotton price. But garment manufacturers will argue that since global cotton price has dipped, yarn price should



drop correspondingly.

Bangladesh has some 400 spinning mills affiliated with the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA). Their 10 million spindles whir to produce about 1 lakh tonne of yarn a year to feed both the local and export markets.

For the knit apparels like T-shirts, they provide 90 percent of the yarn and for the woven apparels like shirts and trousers, at least 35 percent.

Bangladesh needs 40 lakh bales (each bale equals 480 pounds) of cotton a year for its domestic and export consumption. Only 25,000 bales are produced in the country, which is not regular, and the rest is imported from the USA, Africa, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), India and Pakistan.

The total global cotton production was 117 million bales last year. China being the largest producer of fabric is also the top importer of cotton. Its total requirement

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NIGHTMARE RIDE

A human haulier almost tips over as it negotiates the deluged and potholed New Circular Road near Mouchak in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN



Flood lingers in northern districts

People worry over food, drinking water

STAR REPORT

With scant or no relief from the government, several lakh flood-hit people in the northern districts are faced with an acute crisis of food and drinking water.

As the flood inundated many low-lying areas in northern and northeastern regions over the past few days, the affected people have taken shelter on the highlands and embankments. But emergency relief materials were yet to reach them.

Abdul Haque, 46, of Rahmatpur village in Kurigram Sadar, said he along with 37

other families has been staying on a highland for the last three days and has since been living on the little dried food they had brought themselves.

"None has come with food yet," he said yesterday.

"We have been living on only dry foods like ruti, puffed rice, flattened rice and molasses as we cannot cook here," said Asgor Ali, 70, of Char Narsingh village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila. He was staying on an embankment at a nearby village as his own went under water last week.

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A temple goes under water at Etapota of Lalmonirhat yesterday as the northern region continues to suffer floods.

PHOTO: STAR

Doubts over poverty cuts

Mirza Azizul Islam's book on macroeconomic issues launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The poverty rate in Bangladesh would have been 80 percent, not 26 percent, had it been calculated based on \$2 a day income, a former finance adviser to a caretaker government said yesterday.

Citing a report of World Health Organisation, Akbar Ali Khan said the number of poor people in Bangladesh is higher than in the entire sub-Saharan African countries.

"Poverty is determined in Bangladesh on the basis of consumption bundle, which has changed a lot over the years," Khan said at a book-launching programme at The Daily

Star Centre in Dhaka.

The World Bank defines extreme poverty as living on less than \$1.25 per day at purchasing power parity.

The book -- Selected Macroeconomic Issues...Theory and Practice -- has been written by AB Mirza Azizul Islam, another former finance adviser to a caretaker government. The Daily Star published the book and hosted the launching programme.

Mustafizur Rahman, executive director of Centre for Policy Dialogue; MA Taslim, chairman of economics department at Dhaka University, and Zahid Hussain, lead economist at World Bank's Dhaka office,

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Interpol on trail of foreign buyers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) is assisting Interpol to identify and apprehend the foreigners who had bought child pornography from Bangladesh.

The move to nab the international clientele was initiated following the arrest of Tipu Kibria, an author of children's literature, and three of his associates on June 12 for using street children in pornographic shoots and selling those to foreign buyers.

"So far we have identified 13 customers and dealers from eight countries, including the United States, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Belgium and the Philippines," said Shah Alam, additional deputy inspector general (organised crime) of CID.

Referring to Tipu's gang as well as the foreign buyers, Alam said, "They not only violated international laws related to pornography, but what is more disturbing is that the buyers constantly demanded new pictures and video clips."

Tipu had to bring in a new child or two for shooting every week, he said, adding that more than 500 children, as Alam roughly calculates, might have fallen victim to child pornography since 2005 when Tipu began the trade.

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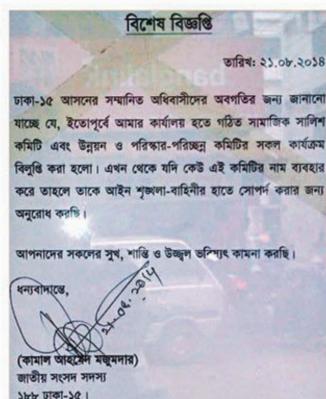
MP Kamal finally shuts his 'court'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ruling Awami League lawmaker Kamal Ahmed Majumder has abolished his controversial quasi-judicial body, Samajik Salish Committee, in the wake of recent media reports on the matter.

In a "special notice" issued on Thursday, the lawmaker stopped all activities of the committee and also those of the Unnayan O Parishkar-Parichchhanna Committee, another platform he had floated to look after development activities in his constituency.

"It is to notify the residents of Dhaka-15 constituency that all activities of Samajik Salish Committee and Unnayan and Parishkar-



Parichchhanna Committee, formed under my office, have been stopped," stated the notice written on the legislator's letterhead pad and signed by him.

"From now on, it is requested that if any person uses the name of the committee, s/he should be handed over to the law enforcement agencies," it added.

The notice was yesterday found pasted on the gate of the lawmaker's political office in Mirpur-7, which had been used as the salish committee office as well.

Some national dailies recently reported that the committee was dealing with disputes in violation of legal provisions.

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