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SECOND EDITION

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24 PAGES PRICE : Tk 12.00

REGD. NO. DA 781 | Vol. XXIV No. 265 | ASHWIN 30, 1421 BS | ZILHAJ 19, 1435 HURI

INFLATION AT 20-MONTH LOW

Good rice production brings down inflation in September

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TRIBUTE TO COMRADE MATIN

Bangladesh has lost not only a Language Movement hero but also a Left icon

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PERCEPTION CHANGING?

UK MPs back Palestine state while UN chief visits war-ravaged Gaza

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Cricket great Sachin Tendulkar made a brief Dhaka visit yesterday. Here the living Indian legend is seen obliging autograph hunters at Rugganj on the outskirts of Dhaka where he attended a programme as a Unicef goodwill ambassador. Besides, he also unveiled the logo of a club called Legends of Rugganj at a city hotel in the afternoon before flying back to India in the evening. Stories and more photos on sports page.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

From 2 to 17

DU lowers qualification marks for admission in English dept, finds hardly anyone eligible

WASIM BIN HABIB and PROTIK CHAKRABORTY

Poor performance of applicants aspiring to enrol in Dhaka University's English department has compelled the authorities to relax the eligibility criteria to fill the 150 seats of the department.

At a meeting yesterday, the DU General Admission Committee lowered the pass mark to 8 from 15 in elective English section and 18 from 20 in general English section to allow applicants from kha unit to get admitted.

But despite that, the authorities found only 15 candidates qualified to enrol in the department from kha unit, apart from the two students who already got through the admission test.

Making an exception to the usual practice of enrolling 25 candidates from gha unit,

the committee then decided to get more students from the unit to fill the vacant seats for this academic session.

With all these efforts, the authorities could find 134 candidates -- 17 from kha and 117 from gha unit -- who are eligible to get admitted to the department.

However, it's not certain that all 134 applicants will enrol in the department, as the admission process is still on, said DU sources.

In the admission test under kha unit last month, only two of 1,364 applicants qualified for enrolling in English department by obtaining at least 15 marks out of 30 in elective English and 20 out of 30 in general English.

"The meeting discussed the reasons behind the applicants' poor performance in English. Students don't achieve the desired

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2 shot dead 'by police'

Alleges family; cops say they might have been killed by rivals

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhemidah

Bullet-hit bodies of two criminals were found from Phulbari Gate area in Kaliganj upazila of the district yesterday.

The criminals were picked up by Jessore police around 11:30pm on Monday night, father of a victim claimed.

Police, however, refuted the claim and said the duo might have been killed by rival groups due to internal feud.

The dead are Abdul Hadi, 35, and Shohag Hossain, 30. Both of them hail from Boro Rajapur village under Jessore Sadar upazila.

Shohag's father Rakibul Islam, a commander of Bangladesh Ansar, told The Daily Star that his son along with Hadi and few others were sitting at a tea stall near their house on Monday night.

A team of Detective Branch (DB) of police accompanied by Sub-Inspector Masud Hossain of Khajura Police Outpost

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PM'S ENTOURAGE TO ITALY

12 denied visa

PMO officials say embassy not at fault

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The Italian embassy in Dhaka has denied visas to a nine-member media team and three businessmen, all scheduled to fly with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to Milan today.

The PM is due to attend the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit on October 16-17.

For the four-day trip, 125 persons, including diplomatic and official passport holders and 74 businessmen, were selected as Hasina's entourage.

All but the 12 have been granted visas. The Italian embassy refused to accept visa applications of the media persons -- four of whom are attached to the PMO -- as they failed to submit applications within 10 working days before departure, diplomatic sources say.

PM and Awami League President Hasina's Information Adviser Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury and four other leading journalists were also in the media team.

The nine went to the embassy to submit their applications on October 8. They should have done it by October 2, the sources added.

It could not be known why the three businessmen were denied visas. This is quite unusual, said an influential PMO staff. The media team failed to get visas due to negligence of a high official of the PM's press wing, he alleged.

The prime minister is leaving at 10:00am today to attend the 10th ASEM summit in Milan at the invitation of European Council President Herman Van Rompuy, Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi and European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

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Soap must, not used

Millions of children suffer from malnutrition, diarrhoea for no or improper hand wash

PORIMOL PALMA

Farhana Alam knows very well that washing hands with soap before meals and after using toilet is a must for good health. She always washes her hands with soap after using the toilet, but not all the time before meals.

"I usually wash hands just with water before meals or feeding the children,"

says Alam, mother of two and a university graduate living in Dhaka.

However, her four-year-old child is underweight. At this age, the kid should be weighed 15 to 16 kilograms, but he is only some 13 kilograms though his diet is quite good, said the worried mother, adding that he gets fever four to five times a year, if not diarrhoea.

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*http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh
**Source: CHERG 2010, Sandy Cairncross, Caroline Hunt, Sophie Boisson, Kristof Boesten, Val Curtis, Isaac Oh Fung, and Wolf-Peter Schmidt Water, Sanitation and hygiene for the prevention of diarrhea. Int J Epidemiol. 2010 39: 1193-1205.