

# Second GM crop ready for release

*Disease-resistant, genetically-modified potato could save Tk 100cr a yr in pesticide cost*

REAZ AHMAD

Three years after the release of Bt Brinjal, Bangladesh is going to get its second genetically modified (GM) crop -- a disease resistant potato -- as scientists have sought government approval for its commercial use.

Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute, which has developed the blight resistant (RB) potato, applied on December 29 for the commercial release of the crop. Bari Director General Md Rafiqul Islam Mondal told The Daily Star yesterday.

GM crops are the ones whose DNA has been modified, in most cases, by introducing a new trait to the plant, thereby, giving it extra vigour either to resist diseases or withstand stress conditions.

Once released, RB potato will be farmers' answer to late blight, one of the most devastating plant diseases caused by fungal attack. Farmers in Bangladesh spend up to Tk 100 crore a year in spraying 500 tonnes of fungicide to protect this major tuber crop from late blight.

With an annual output of nine million tonnes, Bangladesh is a potato exporting nation ranking 7th among the top potato-producing countries in the world.

Apart from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Uganda are also working on developing and releasing blight resistant GM potato.

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Vegetables on display at the National Vegetables Fair 2017 at the Department of Agricultural Extension in Khamarbari yesterday. The three-day fair ends tomorrow. Visitors said the vegetables being sold there were cheap and of good quality. See City in Frame page 16. PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

# JUDGE REMOVAL SC won't accept law as relevant case pending

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court will not welcome the proposed law that seeks to make disciplinary rules for removing its judges for incapacity or misconduct, as the draft of the law was prepared when a relevant case was pending before the High Court, the apex court said yesterday.

The entire judiciary is operating without any control, as there are no disciplinary rules for lower court judges and no law for taking measures against HC judges for violating discipline, it said.

There should be specific disciplinary rules for all professionals, it noted.

The top court made the observations while dealing with a petition by Attorney General Mahbubey Alam for adjournment of hearing on a government appeal against the HC verdict that scrapped the 16th amendment to the constitution.

The amendment, passed

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# ANNIVERSARY OF JAN 5 POLLS AL celebrates, BNP's programme obstructed

STAR REPORT

The ruling Awami League celebrated "democracy victory day" across the country yesterday with much fanfare, while the BNP faced difficulties in holding programmes to mark the day as "democracy killing day".

The two major parties -- in totally contrasting ways -- observed January 5 when the AL won a landslide victory in a "one-sided" national polls in 2014. The AL assumed

office for a second consecutive term through the election boycotted by the BNP and some other political parties.

BNP leaders and activists alleged that they faced obstruction in different districts when they tried to bring out black-flag processions as part of the party's nationwide programme.

There have been reports of sporadic violence in several districts, including

PHOTO ON PAGE 16 SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

# NASIRNAGAR MAYHEM 'Organiser' UP chairman held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

Dewan Atiqur Rahman Ankhi, allegedly an organiser of the October 30 hate attack on Hindus in Nasirnagar, was arrested in the capital's Bhatara yesterday.

A patrol team from Bhatara Police Station in the early hours detained Ankhi, chairman of Haripur Union Parishad in Brahmanbaria and also a local ruling Awami League leader.

Officials then contacted the detectives from Brahmanbaria who were already in Dhaka to detain him,

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**HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS**

Mosharaf Composite Textile Mills Ltd. (MCTML), one of the sister concerns of Mosharaf Group, has been awarded **National Export Trophy** for the year 2013-2014, as a recognition of extraordinary achievement in exporting all kinds of yarn.

Heartiest Congratulations to our mentor **Md. Mosharaf Hossain**, Chairman, Mosharaf Group and Managing Director, MCTML for being awarded with **National Export Trophy** by the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. We appreciate his intellectual rigor, strong leadership, integrity, determinations and dedications, which helped us pave our ways to achieve this significant milestone.

We hope, our Honorable Chairman **Md. Mosharaf Hossain** will continue to provide us his dynamic leadership to our journey to achieve highest professional excellence in textile and spinning sector in Bangladesh.

We wish him a good health and long prosperous life.

All members of Mosharaf Group.

**Mosharaf Composite Textile Mills Ltd.**

# Major changes in Islami Bank key positions

NEW CHAIRMAN APPOINTED

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd yesterday appointed its director Arastoo Khan as the new chairman as the private bank brought major changes in key positions.

Khan, who replaced Mustafa Anwar, was appointed at a board meeting at the city's Radisson Hotel.

Yousif Abdullah Al Rajhi was reelected vice-chairman and Prof Syed Ahsanul Alam elected vice-chairman, said the bank in a statement.

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# Cops 'discouraged war crimes witness from testifying'

PROBE AGENCY OF TRIBUNAL ASKS HOME MINISTRY TO TAKE ACTION

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The investigation agency of the International Crimes Tribunal has written to the home ministry to take departmental action against two Satkhira police officials allegedly for trying to keep a witness from testifying in a war crimes case.

In the letter sent on Wednesday to the home secretary, it recommended suspending or transferring Ali Ahmed Hashmi, an inspector, and Rafiqul Islam, an assistant sub-inspector of the Detective Branch of police, from Satkhira immediately for the sake of investigation.

Signed by Sanaul Huq, co-coordinator of the agency, copies of the letter were sent to the inspector general of police, deputy inspector general (Khulna

range) of police, and additional secretary (administration/police) of the ministry.

The probe body had previously received allegations against leaders and activists of political parties or even journalist of intimidating prosecution witnesses.

"But this is the first time we have found such allegations against any police official," Sanaul said.

The war crimes case involved here is against Abdul Khaleq Mandol, former lawmaker and incumbent chief of the Satkhira Jamaat unit. A probe into the charges brought against him began in June 2015 and is still on, said Prosecutor Rezia Sultana Chaman.

Investigation officer of the case Abdur Razzak

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The Board of Directors of Shasha Denims Limited expresses its heartfelt felicitations and gratitude to all members of Shasha Family and respected shareholders for being awarded the Gold National Export Trophy for the year 2013-14.

On behalf of Shasha Denims Limited, Mr. Shams Mahmud, Managing Director of the company received the trophy from the Honorable Prime Minister of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh H.E. Sheikh Hasina on 1 January 2017.

Shasha Denims **SHASHA DENIMS LTD**

# Accused bites cop, escapes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

As he was being arrested, an accused in a drug case bit the hands of a police constable and fled with the help of his family members in Nandail municipality area of Mymensingh yesterday.

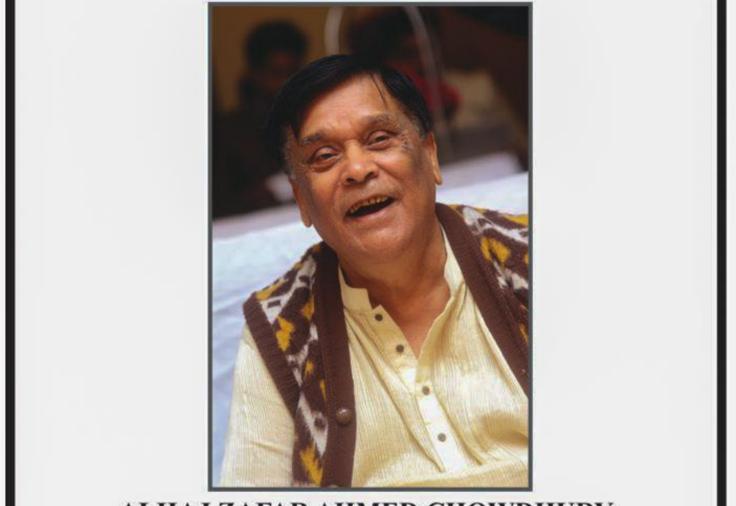
A police team, led by Sub-Inspector Md Alimuzzaman, raided the home of Shahabuddin Ahmed, accused in a case filed under Narcotics Prevention Act, around 10:00am to arrest him, said Md Ataur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Nandail Police Station.

When police were putting handcuffs on Shahabuddin, the female members of the house attacked the police team with sticks and sharp weapons, claimed the OC.

During the scuffle,

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Two years ago you left us. Today we ask all those whose lives you touched to join us in remembrance and prayer. We miss you every single day. And we thank you for blessing us in this lifetime.