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## No fertiliser crisis despite 2 plants' closure

### Says agriculture minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque yesterday said there would be no fertiliser crisis in the country before the next boro season despite the closure of two plants amid gas shortage.

He said this at a press briefing at the agriculture ministry.

"We've talked to the high-ups. We've been told that there is little hope of getting gas. In that case, we'll have to meet the demand through imports."

Stating that price hike of fertilisers in the international market is a problem, Razzaque said the price shot up to \$1,500 from \$300-350 per tonne.

Though this will put pressure on the country's forex reserves, the government has decided to keep the supply of fertilisers uninterrupted, he added.

Asked if the government would increase the price of fertiliser, the minister said no decision was made yet in this regard.

"The prime minister is trying not to increase the prices. We used to provide a subsidy of Tk 8,000-10,000 crore on fertilisers, but the figure has now gone up to Tk 28,000-29,000 crore."

He said the farmers are the beneficiaries of the subsidy. The state-owned Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Ltd and

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A man trying to sell a large Gangetic Goonch, locally known as Bagha Ayer, by the side of a road in Nagdarpar area of Khilgaon in the capital yesterday. The IUCN recognises Gangetic Goonch as an endangered species and as per the country's Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act 2012, it is illegal to catch, sell and consume it.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Bangladesh to host 2024 Women's T20 World Cup

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 will be held in Bangladesh, International Cricket Council



announced as it confirmed the host nations for every major ICC Women's tournament between 2024-2027 during the ICC Annual Conference in Birmingham on Tuesday.

Four women's tournaments will take place in four years, starting with the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024, which will take place in Bangladesh.

It will be the first time that Bangladesh host a major ICC women's tournament and the second time it will be host a T20 World Cup, previously staging the 2014 edition.

The tournament will be held between September-

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## CTG UNIVERSITY 5 BCL men remanded over sexual assault

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday placed five Bangladesh Chhatra League activists on a two-day remand each in a sexual assault case filed by a female student of Chittagong University.

The court of Judicial Magistrate Farjana Yasmin granted the remand after hearing the remand prayer by Sub-Inspector Mizanur Rahman of Hathazari Police Station, also the investigation officer of the case.

The IO had sought seven-day remand for each of the BCL men.

The case was filed with Hathazari Police Station under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act on July 20.

After arrests, the perpetrators admitted their involvement with BCL to Rab officials, Commanding Officer Lt Col Muhammad Yousuf of Rab-7 told The Daily Star.

The five are: Azim Hossain, 23, and Nurul Absar Babu, 22, of CU; Masud Rana, 22, and Nur Hossain Shawon, 22, of Hathazari College; and Saiful Islam, 23, a college dropout.

Campus sources said the arrestees are supporters of CU BCL President Rejaul

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## EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATES' JUDICIAL POWER

# A crucial question unsolved in 13yrs

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The question of legality over the executive magistrates performing some judicial functions, including taking cognisance of offences, has not been resolved in the last 13 years as a related case remains pending before the High Court.

This is due to changes in hearing jurisdictions of HC judges concerned and the government's inaction to dispose of the case.

The legal proceedings ensued after parliament passed amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) in 2009, paving the way for executive magistrates to take cognisance of offences.

The HC, hearing a writ petition filed in the same year, had questioned this jurisdiction of executive magistrates, saying only the judicial magistrates are entitled to do such activities as per the constitution and the directives of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court.

However, as the case is pending before the HC, executive magistrates have been enjoying the judicial powers.

The government has also not taken any initiative for a hearing on the rule in the HC and disposing of the rule, court sources said.

According to case documents, the last hearing of the case took place in April 2015 when counsels for the petitioner and the state, and two amici curiae (friends of the court) — Dr Kamal Hossain and Ajmalul Hossain — had placed their arguments before the HC bench of Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Md Ashraf Kamal.

During the hearing, both the lawyers told the HC that performing judicial functions by the executive magistrates was not lawful.

**Dr Kamal Hossain and Ajmalul Hossain told the High Court that performing judicial functions by the executive magistrates was not lawful.**

Opposing the petition, state counsel and then deputy attorney general Motaher Hossain Sazu said executive magistrates were given the powers to take cognisance of some offences for the time being to maintain peace and tranquility in the areas concerned.

The executive magistrates have been given the powers to carry out such functions under sections 145 to 147 of the amended CrPC, passed in parliament on April 7, 2009. The government issued a gazette notification on the act the following day.

According to the sections, an executive magistrate decides issues of possession, grants ad-interim injunctions, appoints a receiver (administrator), restores possessions and grants

injunctions in cases until those are disposed of by the judicial magistrates' courts.

The writ petition was filed with the HC on November 14, 2009, challenging the legality of the amended sections, saying that those contradict some provisions of the constitution and the principles of the Supreme Court judgement in the Masdar Hossain case, widely known as judiciary separation case.

Advocate Manzill Murshid, writ petitioner's counsel, attributed the delay in disposal of the petition to the changes in hearing jurisdictions of the HC judges concerned.

"The High Court bench has been reconstituted thrice since then [last hearing]," Murshid told The Daily Star.

He said the other two amici curiae — M Amir-Ul Islam and Rakanuddin Mahmud — were scheduled to place their arguments before the HC on resumption of the proceedings.

The senior lawyer said the then chief justice had reconstituted the HC benches as part of his

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## COVID VACCINE 1.93cr shots to expire by November

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As many as 1.93 crore Covid-19 jabs, stored as the first and second doses, will expire by November, health officials said yesterday.

As a result, no first or second dose of the vaccine will be available after that, Shamsul Haque, member secretary of the Covid-19 Vaccine Management Taskforce, said.

The government has a target to inoculate around 13.29 crore people. Of them, 12.96 crore have taken their first doses, according to Shamsul.

In addition to the remaining 33 lakh people, around 94 lakh others were yet to take their second doses.

"In total, 1.27 crore people should take their first or second jabs immediately," Shamsul said.

So far, the government has collected 30.78 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccines. Of those, 28.85 crore shots have already been administered.

The five brands of vaccines being used are — Covishield, Moderna, Sinopharm, Pfizer, and Sinovac — which were either purchased by the government, or donated by different countries or organisations.

Besides, the government received some 3.36 lakh shots of the single-dose vaccine developed by Johnson & Johnson company as a gift from the United States government in January. Shamsul said that the government will now import vaccines for the booster dose campaign.

He added that around 7.3 crore vaccine recipients are now eligible for the booster dose. "After November, only the booster dose campaigns will continue."

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## 'Supercharged' rice sees crop yields improve 40pc

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Chinese scientists have discovered a way to boost the yield of rice crops by up to 40 percent through tweaking the plant's genes.

A team led by plant biologist Wenbin Zhou from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) found that the change allowed the plant to absorb more fertiliser, increase photosynthesis and accelerate flowering.

The experiments ran for three years in climates ranging from temperate to tropical, with researchers hopeful that the "supercharged" technique could be applied to other crops.

"I don't think I've ever seen anything quite like that before," said Matthew Paul, a plant geneticist at Rothamsted Research, who was not involved in the work.

The scientists hope it can address global food shortages brought about by rising population growth and conflict-related supply chain issues.

"To achieve the required yield increases and make agriculture more sustainable, intensified breeding and genetic engineering efforts are needed to obtain new crop varieties with higher photosynthetic capacity and improved nitrogen use efficiency," stated a paper detailing the research, published in the scientific journal Science.

"Our work demonstrates that by genetically modulating the expression of a single transcriptional regulator gene, substantial yield increases can be achieved while the growth duration of the crop is shortened."

Improving photosynthesis is seen as one of the most promising avenues for increasing crop yields, though genetically modified foods, including transgenic crops, have faced opposition from

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## Three held over killing of SUST student

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Police yesterday detained three individuals in connection with the murder of a student of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Sylhet.

"We cannot confirm whether they're involved with the murder. We're interrogating them," said Azbahar Ali Sheikh, deputy commissioner (North) of Sylhet Metropolitan Police (SMP).

A source in the SMP said the detained individuals live near the campus, but are not students of the university.

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Students of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology at a human chain yesterday protesting the murder of their fellow student Bulbul Ahmed who was stabbed to death on the campus on Monday.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

**BANGLADESH-INDIA FRIENDSHIP POWER COMPANY (PVT.) LIMITED**  
 (A Joint Venture of BPOB and NTPC Limited)

NET/IT Ref No: BIFPCL/OT/MS/HC & M/2022/202 Date: 27.07.2022

**Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for Hiring of Vehicles**

1. BIFPCL invite tender from interested tenderers with the following details:

Name of the Tender	Deployment of vehicles for a Period of Two (2) Years at 2x660 MW Maitree Super Thermal Power Project, Rampal, Bagherhat.
Brief scope of service	Hiring 34 Nos. of Vehicles (07 Nos. Sedan car, 16 Nos. Microbus, 10 Nos. Double cabin Pickup & 01 No. Mini Bus/Coaster) on Regular monthly basis and specific requirement on daily basis (as and when basis) for Maitree Super Thermal Power Project, Rampal, Bagherhat for 2 years.
Tender Security	Two separate Tender Securities: Tk. 3,65,000/- (BDT Three Lakh Sixty Five Thousand only) and Tk. 10,000/- (BDT Ten Thousand only) for Regular monthly basis and specific requirement on daily basis (as and when basis) respectively.
Tender document Sale date and time	From 27/07/2022, 09:00 Hrs. to 10/08/2022, 23:59Hrs.
Last date for submission of Tender	11/08/2022, 15:00 Hrs.
Opening of the Tender	11/08/2022, 15:30 Hrs.

Interested tenderers having service facility to perform the required service may participate in the tendering process.

2. For Qualifying Requirements, Scope of Work, availability of Bidding Document, and other details, please visit our website at [www.bifpcl.com](http://www.bifpcl.com) or contact Chief Procurement Officer, BIFPCL, Level-17, Unique Heights (Bank), 117 Kazi Nazim Islam Avenue, Eskaton Garden, Dhaka-1000, Tel. Nos. +88-0258314264, email: [cpro@bifpcl.com](mailto:cpro@bifpcl.com) or [DGCM \(C&M\), MSTPP, Rampal, Dist. Bagherhat, Bangladesh, Tel. Nos. +88-01678582961](mailto:DGCM (C&M), MSTPP, Rampal, Dist. Bagherhat, Bangladesh, Tel. Nos. +88-01678582961) email: [jibhaskar@bifpcl.com](mailto:jibhaskar@bifpcl.com)

Tapas Kumar Mazumdar  
 Chief Procurement Officer-Ec, BIFPCL