

Poultry feed churned out from tannery waste

Experts warn of serious health hazards; government unaware of such business

TAWFIQUE ALI

Traders in the city's Hazaribagh area are putting public health at great risk by producing poultry feed from tannery waste, keeping the government in the dark.

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Ukil Abdus Sattar told The Daily Star that he was unaware of such activities and that poultry feed production needed his ministry's approval.

When his attention was drawn to the fact, he said he would look into the allegations.

The director general of Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute, Quazi M Emdadul Huque, also said he was unaware of the practice.

He said the technology for producing protein-concentrate feed was not commercially available in Bangladesh.

"It would be very harmful to

public health if animal waste was widely used as raw material for poultry feed without being treated by the proper technology."

But the allegations continue to be made by various sources, who claim the practice has been going on for several years.

They say tannery waste, along with dried fish dust and bone, is used to feed young broiler and layer chickens.

This correspondent saw a large

quantity of solid tannery waste being sun-dried in the open along the Dhaka Flood Protection Dam near ZH Sikdar Medical College in Hazaribagh.

At a factory in the area, a worker was found brewing a thick tar-black waste material in a drum-like container. He said he was preparing the raw material for poultry feed.

Staff at the factory, owned by Khalilur Rahman, said they could

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Akheri Munajat offered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Millions of people from home and abroad including top national leaders offered Akheri Munajat (concluding supplication) at the end of Biswa Ijtema at Tongi yesterday.

They sought divine blessings for continued peace, progress and prosperity of the Muslim Ummah.

President Iajuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina joined millions of devotees and offered a Munajat from three separate stages specially erected for them.

Moulana Zohair Hasan of Delhi led the Munajat that continued for 20 minutes starting from 12:45pm. In his Munajat in Arabic and Urdu, Moulana Zohair sought blessings of

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BB mulls ban on money transfer thru' courier

Service providers cite public benefit in defence

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The central bank is going to ban money transfer through courier services following questions about the legality of such transactions and allegations of their misuse for hundi business.

Bangladesh Bank (BB) will announce the measure as soon as it receives a directive to this end from the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication, a central bank official said.

Criticising the move, President of Courier Service Association of Bangladesh (CSAB) Imamul Kabir Shanto said, "This will not be the right thing to do. If necessary,

Bangladesh Bank may impose a limit on the level of money transfer for the courier services."

Imamul, who is also the managing director of Sundarbans Courier Services, said, "After all, this service is helping the people."

The central bank, however, views the impending ban as one of the many measures it has chalked out to stop illegal money transfer. Sources said the move was initiated when a BB taskforce on money laundering reported from Barisal that the courier services were being used for hundi transactions.

"We have sent 11 teams to visit different places to investigate how the hundi business operates in

Bangladesh. They are probing the courier service companies as well as the banks to clean the picture," said a central bank official.

The investigators will also examine whether the courier services have any legal authority to transfer money. The BB also held meetings with the finance and post and telecoms ministries in this regard.

"As per the Bank Company Law and the Post Office Act, only banks and post offices can transfer money," noted the official. "We are now waiting for a directive on the issue from the telecoms ministry."

Defending the legality of money transfer through courier services,

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Tariff barriers should go before FTA deal

Says visiting Indian minister

UNB, Dhaka

The visiting Indian minister of state for commerce and industry has favoured removal of tariff barriers with Bangladesh before signing of a free trade agreement (FTA) between the two countries.

"Or, such barriers can also be removed well in the process of FTA," Satyabrata Mookherjee said in an

interview with the news agency yesterday.

However, he does not consider FTA as an antidote to all problems. "Then a new set of problems can come up and again there is a need to get those resolved bilaterally," he said.

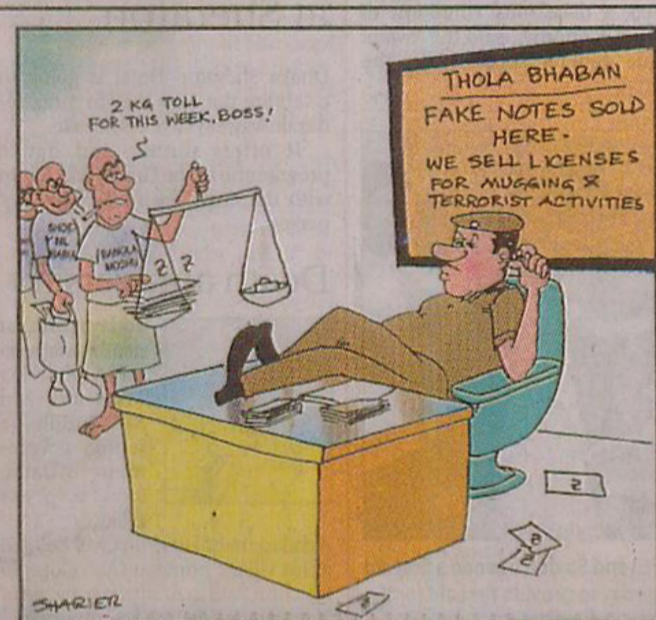
In the long run, Mookherjee foresees, the proposed FTA will help Bangladesh increase her exports to

the Indian market and attract more Indian investment here, as in the case of Sri Lanka after signing a bilateral FTA accord.

He said he does not see anything apprehensive in the bilateral trade gap if it is viewed in the overall context. Any country may have such a gap in the course of external trade.

"You also enjoy trade surplus with

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Cop with alleged note forgery links escapes raids

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A traffic constable believed to be the ringleader of a banknote forgery racket has been on the run since six of his accomplices were arrested with Tk 50,000 in fake bills in Dhaka on Saturday.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police carried out a string of raids on the house of Humayun Kabir in Ibrahimpur, but could not track him down.

"We also raided his home in Barisal," said CID Inspector

Monsur Ali Mondol, adding one of the arrestees, Jahangir Alam, linked the constable of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's traffic division to the forgery gang as its mastermind.

"Humayun gave me wads of counterfeit notes to change them for original bills under the cover of purchase at the busy Biswa Ijtema venue," Jahangir told the CID personnel after arrest in North Badda on December 27.

The CID arrested Humayun's brother Ataur Rahman, Mostafa,

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8 abducted in Rangamati

BSS, Rangamati

Eight activists supporting the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) peace accord were abducted by armed miscreants from Kattali area under Langadu upazila of the district yesterday morning, security and local sources said.

The abducted people are Jagat Jyoti Chakma, 18, son of Mohini Bushan Chakma, Nalini Kanta Chakma, 47, son of Mohesh Chandra Karbari, Ajoy Sing Chakma, 27, son of Moharaj Chakma, Bakta Chakma, 27, son of Dhananjay Chakma, Manik Kumar Chakma, 22, son of Barto Ram Chakma, Kala Chuikka, 30, son of Rabindra Chakma, Sushil Kumar Chakma (age unknown), son of Nishi Mohan

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No let-up in cold snap soon

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cold snap sweeping across Bangladesh is likely to continue for at least two more days when temperatures will dip further and drifts of smog will hang in the air amid overcast conditions.

A blanket of fog covered Zia International Airport (ZIA) yesterday, forcing the diversion of two incoming airliners to the eastern Indian city of Kolkata and disrupting vehicular movement elsewhere.

The cold spell, which has already taken the lives of two elderly people in Jessore, brought unbearable sufferings to the poor, especially street sleepers in Dhaka and other

cities, many of whom lit bonfires to blunt the bites of cold.

Hospitals in many regions said they were treating people with cold-related complications.

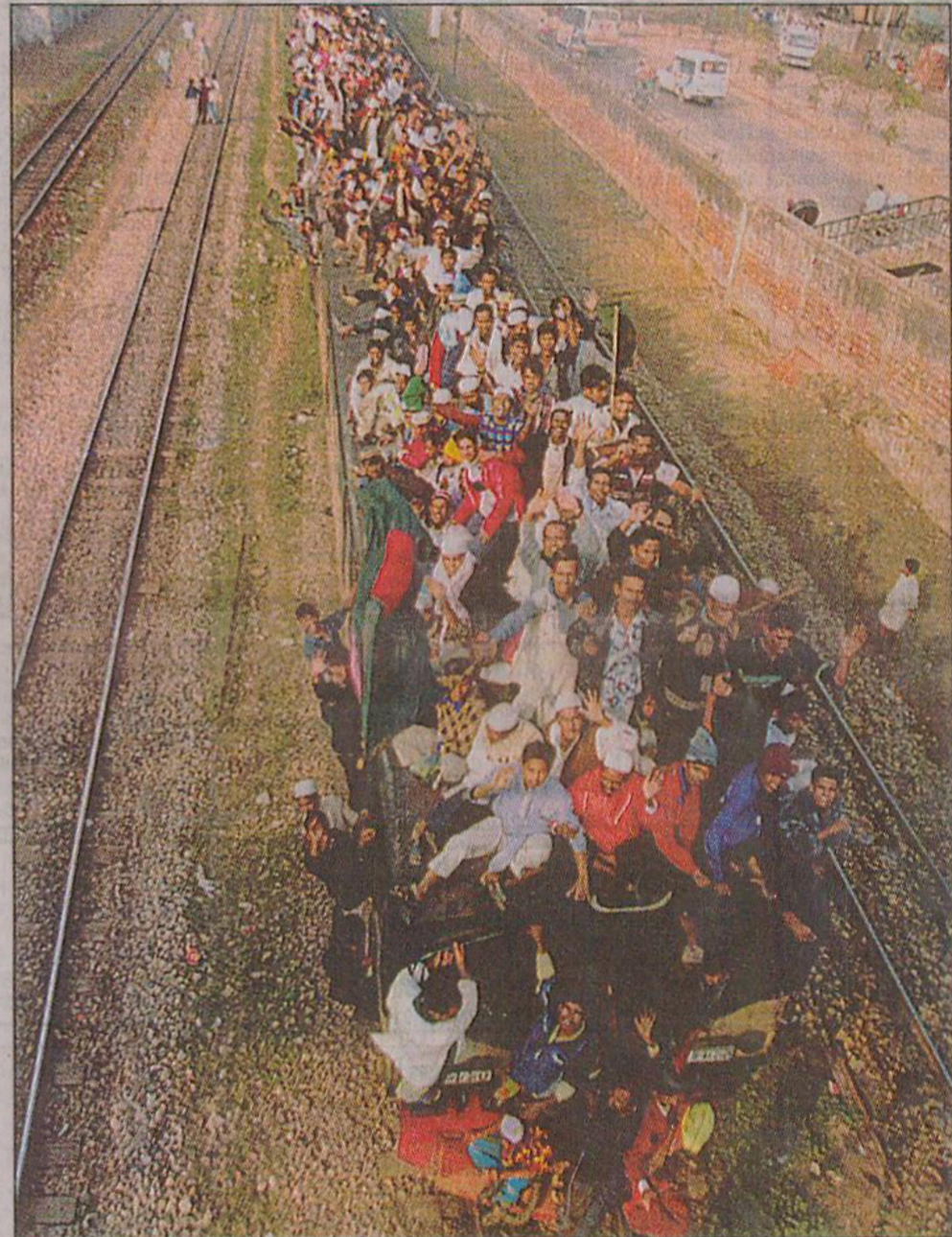
Dejan Bibi, 85, and Mokslesur Rahman, 65, both of Keshabpur upazila in Jessore, died on Sunday and Saturday.

"The weather in the next couple of days may be colder, especially in the northwestern regions," an official of the meteorological office said yesterday.

The lowest temperature in Bangladesh was recorded at 9.7 degrees Celsius in Jessore yesterday.

The lowest temperature in Dhaka

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A train teeming with devotees returns to Dhaka from the Biswa Ijtema in Tongi, after the Akheri Munajat yesterday.

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Nat'l Mourning Day tomorrow

Bodies of peacekeepers arrive same day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday declared December 31 the national mourning day for 15 peacekeepers, killed in a plane crash in the West African country of Benin on Thursday.

The decision was taken at a cabinet meeting with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in the chair.

Bangladesh Army will accord a guard of honour to the peacekeepers on arrival in coffins in Dhaka tomorrow morning, army sources said.

An army team from Sierra Leone, Benin's strife-torn neighbouring country, identified the dead as part of formalities that stemmed from the largest casualties in a single accident in Bangladesh Army since independence.

The officers were deployed to Sierra Leone and another strife-riven country, Liberia, on United

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Correction
A report headlined 'Intelligence unit to check VAT dodge: Collection up by record 70pc in Jul-Nov,' published in The Daily Star Monday, inadvertently cited that VAT collection during the July-November period of the current fiscal year had risen by 70 percent instead of the correct rate of 17 percent. We regret the error.

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