

Rabbit can be rich source of protein

By Masud Arif



and Food Science (INFS) of Dhaka University and Grameen Bank have jointly taken steps to launch a campaign to motivate the people to go for rabbit farming.

A recent INFS study says rabbit can also be a good source of animal protein, calcium, phosphorus, iron and vitamin B-1.

The study quotes researchers at the INFS as saying that rabbit's meat contains less fat and unsaturated fatty acid, which are major causes of heart diseases.

The researchers are in favour of using rabbit's meat to boost protein supply, especially for pregnant women and children.

The study says a female rabbit can produce more than 40 offspring a year and a male rabbit attains maturity in six months.

Rabbit raising is inexpensive too. It takes less than a quarter of food energy than a cattle to produce one kilogram of meat.

A full-grown rabbit can live in 130 grams of grass, less than a quarter that a cattle needs. Rabbits also eat wheat, mango leaves and vegetable wastages.

The study says Muslims can eat rabbit meat as 'halal' food. This has been prescribed as food in the Holy Quran.

Bangladesh offers a fair climate for rapid growth of rabbit, according to experts. Wildlife experts believe that Bangladeshis should be encouraged to raise rabbit which is endowed with high reproductive system. Rabbit, the small burrowing animal of the hare family with

long ears and short furry tail, is becoming near extinct in Bangladesh due to people's lack of knowledge about it. Though the experts are unable to specify the country's rabbit population, the small playful animal is now a rare sight. The Institute of Nutrition

UP polls send anti-smuggling drive to hibernation

By Staff Correspondent

The nationwide drive against smuggling and sale of contraband commodities has received positive response from people and officials say they are satisfied with the success so far achieved.

However, they admit that the drive that began on the new year's day has gone for a brief hibernation, except in the capital, because of the on-going union parishad elections.

Giving an account of the government's performance during the drive, Home Secretary Luthful Majeed, who spoke on behalf of Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Tuesday night termed the campaign as "success". The minister was physically indisposed to comment.

He said that the officials had recovered smuggled goods valued more than one crore taka so far during drive this month in different parts of the country. He said the officials recovered cigarettes worth Taka 54 lakh from Hatia alone while the value of the recovered contraband items stood at Taka 60 lakh in Chittagong division and Taka 30 lakh in Dhaka division.

The drive included search and seizure of smuggled goods, swoop on the secret stores and increased surveillance along the border.

A high-powered anti-smuggling task force was formed with the Customs, BDR, Police and other agencies officials. Regional task forces were also formed in four divisions of the country while deputy commissioners were directed to co-ordinate the drive at the district level.

Earlier, the date for launching of the much publicised campaign was deferred twice because of stiff protest from a section of traders. The Home Minister, in several rounds of talks with the country's busi-

ness community, assured that no harassments would take place during the drive.

When asked if the recovery of the smuggled goods was too small to match the massive efforts, the Secretary said the anti-smuggling programme was more of a motivational one than just a supply reduction campaign. The drive has succeeded to create increased awareness among the country's people against smuggling which was one of the objectives of the drive, Majeed said.

The country's economy has begun recovering as an impact of the drive, he said, and it would continue "until further order."

On the first day, the drive began in the capital and at elsewhere in the country with search and seizures at the shopping centres.

During the five-hour drive at the New Super Market in Dhaka on the day, Task Force members recovered crockeries and cutleries worth Taka seven thousand.

The National Anti-smuggling Committee at a meeting on January 4 decided to crack down on the secret stores. The meeting reviewed the overall situation and noted that the programme was continuing satisfactorily. People's response to the government efforts was positive, the meeting observed.

The chief of the Task Force and Member of the National Board of Revenue Shah Abdul Hannan said the success of the campaign should not be judged on the basis of recovery. "We expected that the drive would free the country's markets and shopping centres from the smuggled goods and we have achieved the goal," he said.

The demand for the locally made commodities has in-

creased since the drive began, leaving a positive impact on production in the industrial sector, the Task Force chief said.

The value of Taka in terms of dollar and rupee has also gone up. This means that smuggling-out of goods has reduced substantially.

The syphoning off of dollars have also stopped because there was no marketing channels in the country," Hannan said.

However, officials involved in the drive pointed out several problems including lack of adequate manpower, transport and other logistic support for smooth operation.

The officials of Customs, Police, BDR and other law enforcing agencies have to conduct the raids beside their normal duty," said one official on condition of anonymity.

The success, which would eventually depend on the continuity of the campaign in future, was achieved in the sense that we have achieved what we wanted," he said.

Trading community also spoke highly of the government's anti-smuggling drive. The leaders of the shop owners' associations said that the raids were being conducted peacefully and they were cooperating with the government. No untoward incident took place during any raid, they said.

However, the raid caused price hike of some commodities produced in the country, the shop-owners reported.

Afroz Khanam, a housewife who went to buy salt in the capital's Mauchak market, on Tuesday said the drive would benefit our own traders producers in the long run.

A resident of Rampura area, she wished that the campaign be continued.



Ambassador Jacques Bailly, the head of the delegation of the Commission of the European Community, called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday. Story on Page 7. —PID photo

Punitive steps against VAT defaulters likely

CHITTAGONG, Jan 28: Stringent punitive measures like arrest, office closure and penalty for anyone's failure to register with the VAT authorities may be enforced in the port city from mid-February, reports UNB.

A decision relating to the methods of punitive action, probable positive and negative repercussions will be taken at a high-level meeting of VAT cell in the first week of next month, officials said.

Although 99 per cent of manufacturing units here have got VAT registration, about 70 per cent of service sector units are yet to be enrolled for the new taxation system, they said.

The last date for registration under the Value Added Tax system expired on December 30 last.

According to the provisions of the VAT Ordinance, the accused face penalty of Tk 25,000 or one year in jail.

It also provides for closure of business firms or offices which fail to get the compulsory registration within one month of promulgation of the ordinance. Officials have already started the process of filing cases against the VAT evaders in the service sector.

About 3,000 service sector units in the country, including hotels, restaurants, workshops, construction firms, travel agencies, are yet to have

their registration, the officials estimated.

More than 500 such units alone under the Chittagong Collectorate have failed to register on time.

According to an official directive, the enlisted contractors who don't have VAT registration will not be issued work order or allocated tender of PWD, WASA, Ctg Port, Food Department, WAPDA, Railway, Roads and Highways Department, government and autonomous bodies.

Bangladesh Biman has also been asked not to allow its defaulting agents to issue tickets. These service sector units are reportedly charging VAT directly or indirectly on their customers.

These units, specially hotels, Chinese restaurants and sweetmeat shops, have allegedly been charging VAT-added higher prices since the introduction of the new taxation across the country.

Officials said revenue earning would double if the service sector units are fully brought under VAT. "It will yield a tremendous effect and remarkable result in our revenue sector," a concerned high official said.

Authorities are also planning to introduce advance cutting and double-checking system for checking VAT evasion.

PDB snapped 1200 connections

KUSHTIA, Jan 28: Power Development Board (PDB) snapped 1200 power connections for non payment of arrears bills and realised Tk 70 lakh in the month of December last year, officials sources said here today, reports UNB.

School enrolment

From Page 1 Col 8 highest enrollment was in the primary schools-1,19,39,949 that included 18,11,606 students in the private primary schools. The number of students in the colleges in 1991 was 859,966 compared to 823,912 in the previous year.

Replying to a supplementary question, Professor Khan said 4775 teachers are lying vacant in the government primary schools which are likely to be filled up within two months. In the government secondary schools, nearly 1400 posts of teachers are also lying vacant and it is expected to be filled by next month. All these vacancies will be filled through proper ways and advertisement.

The minister said there are some technical difficulties in recruiting teachers in the government colleges, because college teachers are one of 32 cadres under Public Service Commission. He said efforts would be taken so that advertisement for these vacant posts could be issued soon.

The Midnight File

Copter shot down in Azerbaijan: 40 killed

MOSCOW, Jan 28: A civilian helicopter was shot down by a rocket in Azerbaijan today, killing around 40 people. Tass news agency said. Tass, quoting a senior Azeri official in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, said the helicopter was shot down while flying from the Azeri town of Agdam to a town in Nagorno-Karabakh, reports Reuter.

EC union treaty to be signed Feb 7

THE HAGUE, Jan 28: The European Community's treaty on political and monetary union will be signed February 7 in Maastricht, the southern Dutch town where it was negotiated last month, the Dutch Foreign Ministry said Tuesday. Signing the treaty, which will give the EC states a unitary voice in most economic and some political areas as the decade progresses, will be the foreign and finance ministers of the trade bloc's 12 states, reports AP.

US to cut long-range nuclear missiles

BRUSSELS, Jan 28: The United States told its NATO allies today that it was planning to make deep cuts in its long-range nuclear arsenal if former Soviet republics agreed to do the same, alliance sources told Reuter.

Middle East talks

From Page 1 Col 4

gathering of foreign ministers and senior diplomats from over 20 nations, including Eastern and Far Eastern countries.

In an attempt to defy restrictions imposed at Israel's insistence, the Palestinian delegation arrived Monday with members from the Israeli-occupied territories as well as Jerusalem and countries beyond Israel's rule.

Israel, however, says it will only negotiate according to the procedure established for an earlier peace conference in Madrid whereby only Palestinians from the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip can take part.

That ruled out five of the eight Palestinian delegates in Moscow.

"We are not going to the conference," Palestinian delegation leader Faisal Husseini said in an interview after the talks began without the

Palestinians.

"We are ready to go as soon as they accept our delegation... At the moment that the pre-condition on our delegation is removed, we will attend the conference, but not before then," he said.

Israel says acceptance of Palestinians from east Jerusalem and other places outside the West Bank and Gaza would imply recognition of their claim to Jerusalem's Arab sector and the homes they lost when Israel became a state. Israel seized east Jerusalem along with the West Bank and Gaza during the 1967 Middle East War and later annexed it.

Mrs. Ashrawi told reporters the Palestinians have always had the right to decide their own delegation, freely choosing to West Bank and Gaza residents in order to get the peace talks started. Now that broader issues involving the Palestinians are exercising their right to include those in exile.

Ill-gotten property

From Page 1 Col 7

members to open a new chapter of cooperation by not opposing the bill.

Sixteen Opposition members took part in the discussions on the bill while moving amendments to elicit public opinion on the bill or to send it to a parliamentary select committee.

Opposition members urged the removal of legal loopholes, linking the law with morality and making it more disjunctive rather than conjunctive to make it more effective.

While agreeing that the law needed to be changed, they pointed out that it should be uniformly applied as it had been seen that politicians had been 'victimised' by the law while public servants involved in corruption cases went relatively 'scot free'.

Opposition members taking part in the deliberations included Abdus Samad Azad, Shudhangsu Shekhar Haldar, Asaduzzaman, Abul Ahsan Chowdhury of the Awami League, Maulana Mattur Rahman Nizami of the Jamaat, Rashed Khan Menon of the Workers Party, Suranjit Sengupta of the Ganotantri Party and Monirul Huq and Ebadur Rahman of the Jatiya Party.

Winding up the debate Golam Hafiz urged the Opposition to support it as it was in the national interest.

Describing the bill as the initial step to freeing the society from corruption, he pointed out that the existing Act, enacted 43 years ago, was no longer suitable under the changed situation of today.

He said, under the new amendment, provisions have been made for confiscation of ill-gotten money as well as property of those who have accumulated wealth through corruption.

Referring to the loan defaulters, he noted that many industries have been destroyed by those who have opened new banks with the money taken from commercial banks.

He assured the House that the law would be uniformly applied, including on bureaucrats and those who had accumulated crores of taka through corrupt practices.

The Pourashava (Amendment) Bill 1992 and the Local Government (Union Parishad) (Amendment) Bill 1992 were passed by the House in separate voice votes.

During the debate, Opposition members slated the provision for appointing administrator during the interim period between two elections.

Saying that the promulgation of ordinances before the bills were brought to parliament was undemocratic, the Opposition members pointed out that the systems can again be changed through other ordinances suiting the party in power.

"Although the Constitution allows promulgation of ordinances, Opposition Chief Whip Mohammad Nasim urged the ruling party to cooperate with the other parties in parliament for the sake of democracy and for avoiding partisan politics. Terming the bills as 'self contradictory' JP leader Moudud Ahmed said that the ordinances slighted democracy adding that the bills were a politically motivated partisan move.

Others who took part in the deliberations on the two bills included Matia Chowdhury, Kazi Abdur Rashid, Tofael Ahmed, Dr Mozammel Hossain of the Awami League, Shahjahan Chowdhury and M K Afsar of the Jamaat and Sharuddin Khasru, Monirul Huq Chowdhury of the Jatiya Party and Shamsuddoha of the CPB.

Winding up the debate, LGD Minister Abdus Salam Talukdar said that the appointment of administrators was only a contingency provision. Such provisions were also present in many other countries of the world, he added.

He refuted the Opposition allegations that it was a partisan move and pointed out that there were no appointments of BNP workers in any pourashavas in the country. "The ruling party has no intention to make the local government system partisan," he reiterated.

He reminded the House that the bills did not deal with the structure of the local government institutions. He said the actual intention of the bills was to make the institutions more effective.

He finally urged the Opposition members to withdraw all amendments to the bills and support their passage in the House.



Prof Moniruzzaman Miah, the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, addressing the inaugural session of the two-day annual general meeting of the Dhaka Union of Journalists at the National Press Club yesterday. —Star photo

Uncover roots

From Page 1 Col 7

and freedom of the press. In his presidential address, DUJ President Zahurul Haq demanded necessary amendment to Sections 501, 502 and 503 of the Criminal Procedure Code that subject the journalists to arrest and punishment for press offence.

Earlier, DUJ General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi delivered an address of welcome. BSS adds: The Vice-Chancellor said in spite of party influence, people had still optimum level of their confidence on newspapers compared to radio and television. He called upon the newsmen to project things objectively and precisely.

"The image of national institutions must be protected because they are being run by people's money," he said calling upon the journalists to write objectively about Dhaka University, but not to serve the cause of any vested quarters through imaginary news.

The Vice-Chancellor said he was an ardent advocate of freedom of the press and autonomy of universities. Freedom of the press is not at all whimsical behaviour of a newsmen or a newspaper, he said adding that such newspapers would not last long. Speaking about the unflinching role of the teachers and students of Dhaka University in all democratic movements, the Vice-Chancellor said professional groups including the journalist

community also played the equal role in those struggles including the anti-autocracy movement of 1990.

He said all of us should unitedly play our due role in protecting the hard-earned democracy from the hands of its enemies.

He said, if politics was meant for unseating a government and installing another one, then democracy would not exist.

In this respect, he stressed the need for mutual tolerance and respect among political parties and others concerned to establish democracy in all spheres of national life.

Prof Moniruzzaman Miah urged the government and the opposition parties in Parliament to help each other mutually solve the accumulated problems the country was now facing.

"Government alone could not take the responsibility of solving the problems," he said adding that the opposition political parties had also equal responsibility to work for solution of problems in the country.

In the afternoon session, General Secretary, Treasurer and Unit Chiefs of DUJ submitted their respective reports.

General discussions on the reports of DUJ General Secretary and Treasurer will be held today.

The election for the new executive committee of DUJ will be held on January 30 from 9 am to 5 pm with a break of one hour from 1 pm-2 pm.

\$ 423m ADB assistance

Bangladesh will receive 423 million US dollars from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the current year for executing different projects and programmes, reports BSS.

This is the highest ever allocation committed by the ADB for operation in a year in any country, an official handout said here Tuesday.

Judges

From Page 1 Col 8

Mohammad Habibur Rahman and Justice Abdul Hasib gave a split judgement on November 25, 1991 in the Presidential Election cases (challenging the election of President Abdur Rahman Biswas).

Justice Fazle Hossain Mohammad Habibur Rahman rejected the Writ petition summarily finding no merit for issuance of Rule Nisi.

Justice Abdul Hasib issued Rule Nisi upon the respondent government and others calling upon them to show cause as to why Section 10 of the Presidential Election Act 1991 (Act 27 of 1991) should not be declared void and inconsistent with the provision of the Constitution.

Justice Abdul Hasib while issuing the Rule expressed that the matter was of great public importance warranting issuance of a Rule.

In view of the split judgement the case is being heard by another single Bench.

Delhi asks Yangon to take back refugees

NEW DELHI, Jan 28: India has asked Myanmar to take back Naga tribespeople who fled across the border to escape alleged persecution by the Myanmar army, a spokesman said Tuesday, reports AP.

Myanmar Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw promised Indian ambassador M S Malik in Yangon on Monday that Myanmar would help repatriate the refugees, said Foreign Office spokesman Aftab Seth.

The spokesman said 958 people trekked across the border this year. Chief Minister Vamuzo, the highest elected official of the northeast Indian state of Nagaland, said Friday that 1,400 Nagas were given sanctuary since the crackdown in Myanmar began

in mid-December.

Myanmar, troops overran Naga villages on the border and tortured villagers who refused to follow their orders, said Vamuzo, who uses only one name.

Seth said one faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, a Naga guerrilla organization operating in Myanmar, clashed with Yangon troops and later attacked residents of two Myanmar villages in the mountainous region.

The exodus was the first large-scale flight of Nagas since Yangon's bloody suppression of a pro-democracy movement in 1988 which sent about 700 Nagas into Indian states of Mizoram and Manipur.

Dhaka asks Yangon

From Page 1 Col 5

and possible ways to facilitate return of the Muslim Rohingya refugees, sources said.

The leader of the Myanmar team said that they would convey all the points put forward by Bangladesh side to Myanmar foreign ministry and the government, sources said.

Sources in Cox's Bazar district said that today's meeting was the last of a series of talks between the border guard commanders of the two countries. The next meeting would be held at the diplomatic level, they added.

The visiting team presented the leader of the Myanmar side with a carpet. "It is not cannon, but a carpet as a token of friendship and peace between neighbours," the Bangladesh team leader was quoted as saying by one of the team members to his Myanmar counterpart when asked what the long roll contained.

Meanwhile, reports from across the border Tuesday said Myanmar troops set ablaze at least 50 homesteads at Kauarbel village, four kilometres of Mongdu in Rakhaine province Monday. The Myanmar soldiers also opened fire on some fleeing Rohingyas, the report added.

Editor: S. M. Ali
Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam
Published by S. M. Ali on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at Offset Printing Dialogue Publications Ltd., 19 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: 28/1, Toynbee Circular Road, Dhaka-1000. Tel: PABX-246023-4, 245061-2. Advertisement: 245063 & Ext. 20. Fax No. 89-02-863035. GPO Box No. 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR, DHAKA.