

Spirulina, a protein-packed algae enters market soon

By Raffat Binte Rashid

Bangladeshi entrepreneurs are taking steps to introduce spirulina, a blue-green algae, which is considered as a health food supplement, in the local markets, according to BCSIR officials.

A group of scientists at the Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) have successfully picked up the technique of spirulina culture from French experts, the officials said.

BCSIR has now leased out the process for culture of spirulina to Nature Food Products, Projects Builders and Comilla Proshika Unnayan Kendra, for its production on a commercial and semi-commercial basis.

The council is also training some experts to help these organisations in commercial production, which scientist believe will work wonders for protein hungry Bangladesh.

According to foreign scientists extensive research on spirulina has gradually revealed its economic importance to such an extent that world production of it today is nearly 1000 tons.

It is the developed countries which know the importance and have created a good import market especially in Europe and South East Asia," said a scientist of BCSIR, "spirulina can be a source of foreign exchange. It grows in tropical places, and loves sunshine, which makes Bangladesh an ideal place for its culture."

In the USA, spirulina capsules cost Tk 7000 per kg, and in Bangkok one kg is worth Tk 14,000.

Spirulina is an aquatic blue-green algae, which has the highest protein level (65%) among all types of natural food. The digestibility of the plant is 84-95% and protein utilization is 61%.

According to a BCSIR study, spirulina is considered as unique source of medicinal food. Other than its huge quantity of edible protein, it has the highest source of vitamin B12, iron and a good source of vitamin A, and its cholesterol content is low.

In a country like Bangladesh where 80% of the people suffer from anaemia, night-blindness, malnutrition, spirulina is definitely the answer, the scientist informed the Daily Star. In addition, it can also fight cirrhosis, pancreatitis, hepatitis, lethargy, diabetes, cancer, etc the study reported.

It can be stocked and later used as an emergency food during cyclone, flood or any other natural calamity.

"One spoon of spirulina is enough for the undernourished victims. Its milk, green in colour, can be fed to the children. It is an easy and instant source of protein and energy, which gives them the drive for life."

"A more natural diet satisfies the hunger for nutrition, and spirulina, which contains no drugs or chemicals to trick the body, satisfies a body's hunger," the scientist said.

Diabetic patients are very much enthusiastic about this cure-all, because it can provide them with a balanced diet of natural food, minimizing high calorie fattening foods.

"This edible natural protein's easy digestibility is especially important for older people, who face difficulty in digesting complex proteins and are on restricted diets," added the scientist.

This panacea comes in a variety of forms. Its powder can be mixed in fruits or vegetables drink. Tablets, capsule can be conveniently taken any time. Many dieters also prefer spirulina because it allows them to have a light diet.

"Bangladesh always had an abundant source of such profitable and promising crops, now its time the local people be benefitted. It's simple form of useful protein is sure to help our people," the scientist said.

Scientists are now trying to culture spirulina in shade away from sunlight for domestic utilization.

"Within a short span of one year, spirulina will be ready to be used by the people of Bangladesh." It is predicted that its production on commercial scale will also open new opportunities in the outside world.

CU student falls from 3rd floor balcony, dies

CHITTAGONG, Nov 22: A Chittagong University student died when he fell to the ground from a 3rd floor balcony of Shah Amanat Hall of the university this (Sunday) morning, reports UNB.

ASM Golam Samdani Mojnu, a first year Physics student, was rushed to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital where the attending doctor declared him dead.

Witnesses said Mojnu was engrossed in studying notes for an examination scheduled to begin at 1 pm but had the fatal fall from the open balcony at about 11 am.

Labour laws

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at the two-day seminar on "Women's rights, law reforms and uniform family code," organised by the Mahila Parisad at the National Museum auditorium.

She said that the garments owners now preferred male workers as the 12-week maternity leave granted to woman workers caused frequent disruptions in production.

Moreover, the other demands of the female workers including one toilet for every 25 workers, their rest rooms and childrens' rooms were also considered to be problems by the owners.

She said quoting her findings, that only 50 per cent women in factories were permanent workers while the rest were temporary and very low paid.

The BIDS researcher said that most of the garments factories were now discarding their child labourers after an American human rights organisation raised complaints about the large number of child workers. Bangladesh garments factories had 16 per cent child labourers, she added.

She suggested that the matter be reevaluated in the present perspective.

Double checking

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also fax documents to Bangladesh authorities for authenticity of GSP.

"The double checking and the sending of list will be fool-proof measures against any fraudulence," a Commerce Ministry source said.

The source said the forged GSP papers were issued with the stamp of a "joint director" of EPB. Ironically, there are no posts of any joint director in the EPB, he said.

Meanwhile, the EC has warned that if the fraudulence can not be checked at any cost, the EC will impose quota on Bangladesh garment export under the basket exit clause of textile agreement.

In reply to Bangladesh's request to liberalise GSP with relaxation of rules of origin criteria, the EC did not agree to extend origin of criteria to global cumulation through. If this could be ensured, final products from Bangladesh with raw materials imported from any other GSP beneficiary country could be eligible for GSP benefits.

However, regional cumulation for SAARC countries' raw material was entitled to GSP benefits.

Cement factory

From Page 1 Col 5

mented under a joint-venture between a group of local investors and a 30 per cent equity participation by the Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC).

Finalisation of the project is likely to be completed soon, a corporation source said on Sunday.

Earlier this month, JCCL signed a long-term agreement with the Meghalaya Mineral Development Corporation (MMDC) for importing limestone for the plant.

A report in the November 10 issue of The Shillong Times termed the agreement as a 'major breakthrough' by a state-owned Indian corporation into the Bangladesh market.

"MMDC proposes to set up a fully mechanised extraction plant to transport limestone directly to JCCL's plant in Chhatrak," the report added.

Sponsors of the project noted that it is an import substitution project as the plant would meet about 10 per cent of the internal demand for cement. Bangladesh currently imports over two million tons of cement each year.

The existing Chhatrak Cement Company, the only complete cement factory in the country, has a production capacity of 1.75 lakh tons per year.

The JCCL project was initiated in 1990 but was delayed for various reasons and again revived this year.

The sponsors of the project met with BCIC officials last week to finalise the deal. But Corporation officials have asked them to present an 'updated' estimated project cost including the sectorwise expenses.



Evacuees continue to trail back home from the cyclone shelters. — Star Photo

Cyclone damages property worth Tk 35 lakh on St. Martin's

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, Nov 22: Officials today estimated property damage worth Tk 35 lakh on St. Martin's island, over which the cyclonic storm crossed Saturday leaving one person dead.

Official estimates revealed that 120 acres of paddyfields were completely damaged by the storm. 75 kutcha houses were also completely damaged. 110 houses were partially damaged.

The St Martin's Island, that grows a good number of palm trees, lost 510 such trees, official sources said adding that St Martin's Junior High School building was also seriously damaged.

Meanwhile, the Teknaf thana administration provided 400 kg rice, 50 kg mollasses, 50 cartons of biscuits, 51 kg muri and other necessities to the people of St Martin's island as relief.

A government medical team is also on the island.

Meanwhile, officials estimated damages to 12 flood protection embankments and 250 acres of paddyfields in Teknaf in the cyclonic storm.

Officials today also estimated that in Teknaf 67 houses were totally damaged, 200 acres of land used for shrimp culture, 17 mosques, 8 madrasas, three culverts and two primary schools were also damaged in the cyclone.

Seminar: Women's rights

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the speakers added.

Former Chief Justice Kamaluddin Hossain presented a paper on "the limitations and incompleteness of the existing laws", at the concluding day which was discussed by Prof Anisuzzaman, Barrister Amirul Islam, Santosh Gupta, Suranjit Sengupta MP and Dr Protima Pal. Chitra Bhattacharya chaired the session.

The afternoon-session on "the necessity of a family code" was discussed by Deputy Opposition Leader in the Parliament Abdus Samad Azad, Justice K M Sobhan and Debesh Bhattacharya. Begum Sulfa Kamal chaired the session.

The Mahila Parisad has drafted a uniform family code and submitted it to the government for enactment in Parliament.

The Parisad early this year organised two "Sangsad marches" to press their demands and appealed to the Opposition and the ruling party MPs to help enact the law. The draft would, however, be amended if necessary.

The Law, Justice and Parliament Affairs Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, however, said Saturday that a special cell had been formed to examine the legal aspects to ensure equal participation of women in all socio-economic activities.

Kamaluddin Hossain said that constitutionally we had accepted the United Nations charter on women's rights but that there were a lot of disparities between the acceptance and implementation.

He said that it was essential to form a uniform family code to eliminate the disparities.

Dr Anisuzzaman said that the Constitution, drafted in 1972, has almost lost its essence because of so many amendments and the discarding of secularism.

Barrister Anisul Islam said that amendment to the family court and constitution of a uniform family code could help to ensure women's rights.

Barrister Islam said that school children, mainly girls, should be made aware of some basic laws of marriage and their rights in society.

Suranjit Sengupta said that another movement was to start to implement the Joint Declaration of three alliances that also covered unfulfilled demands of the Mahila Parisad.

Abdus Samad Azad said that as far as he could recall the Prime Minister, a woman, did not reject the Parisads appeal when the memorandum was submitted to her. But unfortunately demands were not fulfilled yet, he added.

The Deputy Opposition Leader referring to Information Minister Nazmul Huda's claim on producing the Joint Declaration said that how could the producer of the document oppose its implementation.

General Secretary of the Mahila Parisad Ayesha Khanam said that the women's rights activists had a feeling that the politicians were not active enough to help them achieve the demands.

Editorial on page 4

Nepal, Bhutan talk refugees' repatriation

KATHMANDU, Nov 22: Nepal and Bhutan held ministerial level talks at the Nepalese Foreign Ministry today on the repatriation of more than 70,000 Bhutanese refugees in southeastern Nepal, an official said, reports AFP.

Edn reforms

From Page 1 Col 7

members in the managing committees of schools, and a special scheme for stipends and scholarships for secondary and higher secondary girls.

The draft report also suggested for upgrading 10 per cent of the existing primary schools of the upper primary junior secondary level, developing 50 per cent of the existing 2000 junior high schools to become self-supporting and viable through increased enrollment, retention of pupils and improved quality of education.

The study suggested 30 major interventions and an operational mechanism for their implementation which would involve an estimated expenditure of about 315 million US dollars over a seven-year period (1993-2000).

The seminar was divided into three sessions which was chaired by Prof. Muhammad Shamsul Huq, Kazi Raquibuddin Ahmed and Shaiful Alam.

The study team, headed by Dr AK Jalaluddin, comprised AH Karim, Salma Akter, M Eltasuddin, MA Jabbar and Najmunnessa Mahtab.

The final report is expected to be ready by the end of December, this year, seminar sources said.

PM: Democracy

From Page 1 Col 7

for Social Welfare Tariqul Islam, State Minister for Establishment Nurul Huda, Selima Rahman MP, Shamsunnahar Ahmed MP and local BNP leaders—Mokbul Hossain, Mollah Khabiruddin and Advocate Golam Mohammad.

A crest of Narail Press Club was presented to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister said agriculture, textile, health, education and housing were priority areas of her government for all-out national development. She said her government believed in equal development of all areas.

Turning to women population, she stressed the need for their integration in various development programmes. She said women could undertake programmes of vegetable cultivation, flower cultivation, raising of poultry and cattle which required small investment.

Responding to some of the local demands, she said her government would consider construction of a bridge over the river Teesta, nationalisation of Narail Women College and improvement of infrastructures.

Blasts kill 40 in Guwahati

GUWAHATI (India), Nov 22: Forty people were killed, many of them burnt to death, when two remote-controlled bombs exploded almost simultaneously in the northeast Indian city of Guwahati, police said today, reports Reuter.

The Midnight File

No seats available for Benazir's train trip

ISLAMABAD, Nov 22: Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif slammed the opposition today as officials said no seats were available on a train former premier Benazir Bhutto planned to use for a cross-country anti-government campaign. Press reports quoted Sharif as dubbing his opponents "enemies of the country" and ruling out any compromise with them. Sharif, speaking at a seminar in Lahore Saturday, said he would not shake hands with "enemies of Pakistan and saboteurs", reports AFP.

12 killed in Panipat balcony collapse

NEW DELHI, Nov 22: The balcony of an old house collapsed Sunday, killing 12 children and injuring at least 52 people in a northern Indian state, police said. Nine persons were hospitalized in critical condition, said a police officer in Panipat, 90 kilometers (55 miles) north of New Delhi. The children were watching a marriage procession in Babil village in Haryana state when the balcony caved in, trapping the children and some members of the marriage group, the officer said, reports AP.

CPB observes Students, internes of Sylhet Medical College on strike

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Nov 22: The students and the interne doctors of Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College today began an indefinite strike to press for publication of the results of the MBBS professional examinations immediately.

He said that VI Lenin himself was the victim of dogmatic quarters when he had initiated 'new economic policy' and was termed an 'agent of capitalists'.

Nahid observed that the October Revolution brought about a new kind of hope for the people across the globe but that the dream remained unfulfilled despite its noble principles.

The meeting was also addressed by CPB leaders Mujibul Islam Selim, MM Akash and Moniruzzaman.

Selim asserted that the October Revolution would remain valid as long as class-struggle remained in society and that the triumph of socialism was inevitable.

Akash said the revolution was a justified event that led to a new consciousness in the world.

Shopkeepers

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Presided over by Helaluddin Hicjal President of the Federation of Dhaka Metropolitan Shop Owners' Association, the rally that continued for about four hours was addressed by 30 speakers including Amir Hossain Khan, Chairman of the Federation of Bangladesh Shop Owners' Associations, (BFSOA) Shamsul Alam Haas, Chairman of Bangladesh Jewellers' Association, MR Bhutyan, Chairman of New Market Merchants' Association, and Alamgir Kabir, Organising Secretary of the BFSOA.

The speakers at the rally also demanded Taka ten lakh from the government as compensation for Rafiq's family and proper treatment to those injured during the armed attack Thursday.

The speakers also warned the government that if any measures against the 'killers' were not taken by November 30, they would announce a greater movement December 1.

They also censured the government saying that despite introduction of the Anti-terrorism Ordinance, the killers of Rafiq were yet to be nabbed.

Meanwhile, the mosaic shop owners and employees in the city have decided to go on strike today to protest extortion and terrorism. They will also hold a rally today in this connection.

Thanks-giving

From Page 1 Col 5

chiefs of staff of three services, high civil and military officials, journalists and people from all walks of life attended the occasion.

Al-haj Hafez Qari Moulana Abdul Hallim, Pesh Imam, Bangabhaban Jame Masjid, conducted the milad mahfil and the munajat.

Earlier, Maghreb prayer was held at the same place which was followed by a mahfil-e-waz.

Two student leaders shot in Raujan

CHITTAGONG, Nov 22: Two student leaders were shot at and injured critically near Raujan College in the district today, reports UNB.

Rivals fired on Jashimuddin Parvez, General Secretary of the Raujan thana unit of pro-Awami League Chhatra League, at about 9:30 am in front of the college.

Bullets struck him in the head, chest and stomach. He was rushed to Chittagong Medical College Hospital in a critical condition, hospital sources said.

Witnesses said a group of armed hoodlums, said to be supporters of NDP, opened fire on Parvez passing by the college road.

The shooting touched off a violent backlash, including shooting in reprisal. Chhatra League activists also put up several barricades on the Chittagong-Rangamati highway.

During the blockade, Jaiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader was gunned while nicking for a party programme near the college campus about 10:30 am.

He was named Omar Faruq, a sophomore in Humanities group of the college, who got bullet in his chest and leg. The demonstrating Chhatra League members were blamed for the firing.

ভাড়ার টাকা প্রদানে এপার্টমেন্টের মালিক হওয়ার সুবর্ণ সুযোগ

যারা ভাড়া বাড়িতে থাকছেন অথবা বাড়ির মালিক হওয়ার স্বপ্ন অনেকদিনের তাদের জন্য আমরাই প্রথম এই উদ্যোগ নিয়েছি।

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