

DOWN TO EARTH

Sales of Dubious Quality Meat in City

By ASM Nurunnabi

Nowadays in line with the easy availability at their doors in some local areas of the city of such daily necessities as vegetables and fish through vendors, the citizens of Dhaka are also enjoying the facility of buying meat at wayside meat sellers or impromptu meat shops. But it is alleged that in most cases, the meat sold at these places is not upto standard. In fact, sales of such meat of questionable quality are rampant in the city not only at the wayside selling points but also in regular markets.

According to the Meat Quality Control Law and the 1983 City Corporation Ordinance, a butcher should slaughter animals in an authorised house and take the meat to markets after getting the quality seal from the Corporation's veterinary officials. A large number of meat sellers, particularly those at roadside shops and on footpaths, do not follow the rules. No adequate mechanism appears to operate to enforce due observance of rules by meat sellers.

It is alleged that in a large number of cases, slaughter of animals is done at unauthorised places in dirty environment. At such places, diseased cattle, draught cattle, milch cows and even pregnant cows are slaughtered indiscriminately. Thousands of meat buyers of the city are left in the dark about the kind of meat they bring home for consumption.

It is learnt that about four to six hundred cows and fifteen to twenty five hundred goats are slaughtered everyday in the city not only in the five autho-

rised slaughter houses of the city also at other places at random. The Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) has five inspectors and one veterinary surgeon at each of the authorised places to look into any irregularity. It is, however, alleged that with the connivance of the inspecting staff, some cruel and unscrupulous butchers resort to slaughtering diseased and unsuitable cattle. There are allegations that 15 to 20 per cent of the cows slaughtered at these unauthorised places are pregnant. There is an instance at the Hazaribagh slaughter house where a live calf came out of the slaughtered cow. In fact, according to some observers, slaughter of pregnant cows is so rampant that dustbins in the New Market area for instance, are found to contain bodies of dead calves frequently. The City Corporation has no instrument in any of its slaughter houses to detect pregnant cows before slaughter. The inspectors of the City Corporation are also alleged to be perfunctory in their duties with regard to these serious irregularities.

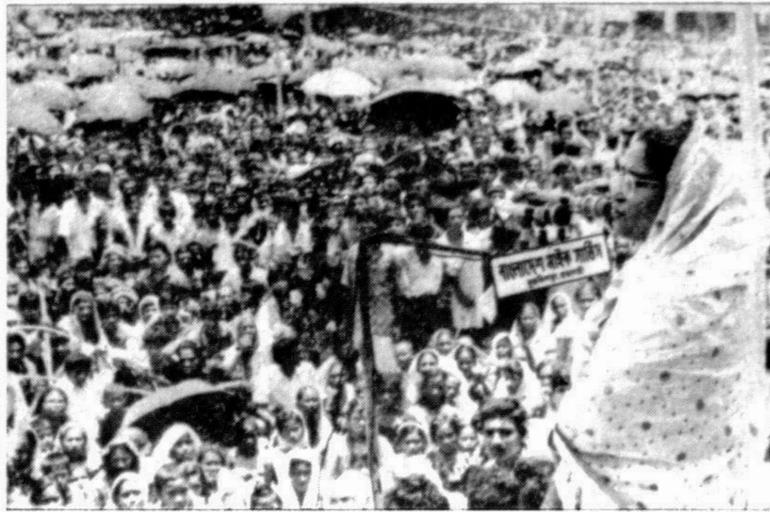
The DCC has only five modern slaughter houses at Hazaribagh, Koshaituli, Gulshan, Mirpur I and Mirpur II. A DCC source admitted that the number of slaughter houses in the city is inadequate to meet the total demand of the eight million residents of the city. The inadequacy of slaughter houses is a factor which encourages unauthorised slaughters at places with dirty environment in most cases which poses a danger to health.

Slaughter of animals take

place very early in the morning at the slaughter houses but selling of the meat continues till the evening. The long interval allows harmful bacteria to grow on the meat, as there are no arrangements for refrigeration in most of the city's meat shops.

Other malpractices resorted to by meat sellers, according to reports, include passing off buffalo meat as beef and selling of left-overs of stale meat of previous days. Also in the observance of meatless days, violation of rules is detected in many cases. Drives are sometimes launched in city markets to enforce the restriction, but such drives have been found to be few and far between with isolated pockets remaining out of reach of such drives. Recently in a drive in Geneva Camp in Mohammadpur area, a mobile court of the Corporation seized one thousand thirty seven kg of meat intended for sale in violation of the rules. In spite of the punitive measures sometimes taken by the DCC, observers do not find any control of sales of meat of dubious quality.

With the fast growth of the city population, it is natural that expansion of meat trade will inevitably follow. What the DCC should guard against, according to observers, is to check proliferation of unauthorised meat sellers. To ensure this, it is necessary that the DCC officials should be more vigilant, mounting more frequent drives against unauthorised sellers so that the citizens can be assured of good quality meat certified by Corporation's officials.



Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina addressing a public meeting at the Karimpur High School ground in Lalpur thana of Natore district yesterday. — AL photo

Voter registration

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ing areas of the city, however, left the capital to be registered as voters in their respective areas.

Talking to The Daily Star, Additional Secretary of the EC S M Zakaria said the voters have to remain physically present before the enumerators during registration.

None would be excluded from the registration process, he said, adding those unable to go to their village homes would be registered in the city.

If anybody wants to change his address and shift his registration, he should apply in a prescribed form to the registration concerned officer, he added.

About the reported complexities in registration forms, particularly question No 11 in which voters are asked where do they want to cast their

votes in parliament elections, union parishad elections, panchasabha elections and city corporation elections, he said this information was needed for preparing of identity cards and establishing database management.

Meanwhile, a resident of Banani area in the city refused to be registered as voter when the enumerator asked him to put his thumb impression along with the signature in the registration form. "I felt insulted to give thumb impression. I am not illiterate," he told The Daily Star over telephone.

The EC, in a press release yesterday said every literate voter would have to put his signature and thumb impression in the registration form. Illiterate voters would however, put only thumb impression.

The EC said signature may be duplicated but it is not possible to copy thumb print. Considering this, the EC has taken initiative to collect thumb print of every voter, it added.

Bus mishap kills one

From Our Correspondent

GOPALGANJ, May 26: One young boy was killed and 40 others were injured when a bus skidded off the road and fell into a ditch at Satpur here today. The boy Mukul, 9, was killed on the spot.

Americans in Karachi warned

WASHINGTON, May 26: The State Department on Thursday urged Americans in Pakistan to exercise caution and avoid situations where large crowds are present and the risk of mob violence might escalate. Reuter reports from Washington.

In a statement, the department urged American citizens in Karachi to "exercise extreme caution," stay off the streets whenever possible and avoid situations that might lead to a protest, demonstration or other group action.

Mongla Port

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"What they do not understand is that construction of Rupsha bridge and an airport at Khulna will not only gear up economic activities in Khulna but also boost the total revenue earning of the country," he said.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia had laid the foundation of the Rupsha bridge last year. However, the additional chief engineer of the Roads and Highways, Khulna Zone, informed this correspondent that no significant progress has been made after the foundation-laying ceremony.

AU Ahmed, a leading local industrialist and convenor of 23-point implementation committee of Khulna, said, "Every government had committed to construct this much demanded bridge before the elections. It remains an instrument to bag votes."

"We are constructing a bridge over the Jamuna (I am not opposed to that), but we tend to forget that the ball also lies here at Mongla", he added.

Sheikh Taibur Rahman, Mayor of Khulna City Corporation, admitted that neither the needed feasibility studies have been conducted nor the donors have been approached to seek funds to construct the bridge over the Rupsha, which connects Mongla with the mainland.

However, the government has recently initiated an ADB financed Taka 2.48 crore six-month-long Mongla Port Area Transport Development Study to identify development requirements of the port, suggest ways and means for its increased utilisation and reconnaissance of the Rupsha bridge.

The study, being conducted jointly by Japan Overseas Consulting Co. Lt, Fredrich R Harris and Bangladesh Consultants Ltd, is scheduled to complete its final report by December.

Serb attack

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ammunition dump, located some two kilometers (1.2 miles) from the headquarters of Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

About a dozen missiles appeared to have been fired in about an hour of attacks that began just before 10:30 am (0830GMT).

Pale residents first fled for cover, then came out of their houses to watch.

Noor Uddin denies press report

Former Army chief Lt Gen Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan yesterday denied a press report that he might join the Awami League.

"I have no intention to do politics and so the question of joining any political party does not arise," he told UNB over phone.

Gen (Rtd) Noor Uddin who is now on LPR said: "I am still drawing salary from the government and staying in the official residence."

Independent tabulation

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would be undertaken for the first time in a parliamentary system in Bangladesh. Earlier such tabulation was practised in the Philippines and Bulgaria.

He said they had already organised a training programme last month in which some 30 persons were trained as to how to monitor elections. They are now working in 10 regions and the process would be spread to grass-roots level, he said.

"Non-partisan and unreliable persons would be involved in the process so that no controversy was created," he said, adding, they are also keeping contact with Election Commission. Anybody intending to manipulate results would think twice if he knows that there is a parallel vote tabulation, he asserted.

"We want to work as a pressure group so that elections are held in a free and fair manner and thereby democracy is strengthened in the long run," he said.

The FEMA would also undertake a massive voter awareness programme to enlighten the citizens about the electoral

process, he said. It would also monitor election campaign by the candidates and media coverage on election issues.

On the election day, one non-partisan poll observer would be posted in each of the polling stations in all the 300 constituencies. Their work would be supervised by an union coordinator. A thana coordinator would coordinate the activities of the union coordinators and a constituency coordinator would coordinate the activities of the constituency.

Fakhruddin Ahmed further said they have estimated the total cost of the process at Tk 2.5 crore, which would be collected from different agencies working in Bangladesh. These are US-based National Democratic Institute and International Federation for Electoral System, USAID, Asia Foundation, Ford Foundation, NORAD, SIDA and CIDA and the British High Commission and Japanese Embassy.

Former Secretary General of SAARC Abul Ahsan is also involved in FEMA, while Tarikul Ghani of Study and Research Group is working as member-secretary of the organisation.

BGMEA stand

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Child Labour Coalition (CLC), a Washington-based organisation, launched a campaign for general boycott in the American market to press garment manufacturers to sign and accord to end child labour and provide schooling facilities for them.

The SGSJ plans to observe "conspiracy resistance month" next month through organising seminars and discussions.

It will submit a memorandum to the US Embassy in Dhaka on June 21 protesting against the propaganda and observe 'demonstration day' in Dhaka on June 28.

"We do not support child labour, but the demand for throwing out child labourers from the garments industries by some NGOs are illogical," Rashid told the press conference at the Jatiya Press Club. Top leaders of the Jote were present.

The SGSJ president described the role of American Asian Free Labour Institute (AAFLI) and Gono Sahajya Sangstha, two parties involved in framing up the accord, as mysterious.

Throwing out the child labourers from the factories will not ensure fundamental social rights of the children, he said, adding that some 7 million children are engaged in different sectors of the country.

He said the boycott call in the USA would leave a serious impact on the Bangladesh economy and urged the government to take diplomatic steps against the propaganda.

Ties with Seoul

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forces. Our macro-economic management is aimed at encouraging foreign private investment," said the Bangladesh Prime Minister.

She hoped that Korea would offer Bangladesh special and preferential opportunities for market access and in securing substantial ROK investment.

As a member of the UN, she said, both Bangladesh and Korea have an abiding interest in global peace and security. "Our peoples share the common dream of humanity for peace, security and progress."

She said Bangladesh is looking forward to the Republic of Korea's membership of the Security Council.

Members of the Bangladesh delegation, ROK ministers, senior officials and dignitaries were present at the state dinner.

Speaking at the banquet the South Korean President Kim Young Sam said Bangladesh has become a model for transition to democracy and market economy in South Asia.

"South Asia is now shifting towards democracy and market economy and Bangladesh has become a model for transition in South Asia by making spectacular progress on many fronts," he said.

The South Korean President also lauded the progress of SAARC and described the Delhi summit earlier in the month as successful.

President Kim laid emphasis on closer relations between Bangladesh and South Korea that would contribute to world peace and prosperity.

The Midnight File

Serbs using 13 UN troops as human shields

UNITED NATIONS, May 26: Bosnian Serbs are using at least 13 UN peacekeepers as human shields in Bosnia to fend off fresh NATO air strikes, diplomatic sources said today in New York, reports AFP.

US rejects Japan's offer for talks on trade dispute

GENEVA, May 26: The United States on Friday rejected Japan's proposal for immediate talks on their automobile trade dispute, but agreed to hold discussions starting in about three weeks, an official said. The US Trade Representative's office in Geneva also indicated it wanted to take its time in the dispute by rejecting a Japanese request for urgent treatment, which could shorten the formal dispute-settlement process, a Japanese official said, reports AP.

Partners in progress

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tract foreign investment, especially the Korean investment, and also established Board of Investment for providing prompt services to the investors.

Bangladesh has also created Securities and Exchange Commission for bringing a higher level of vitality, discipline and predictability in the national stock market. "We are implementing policy of disinvesting public sector enterprises through the Privatisation Board," she said.

Begum Zia assured that investment in Bangladesh was fully protected and secured. It ensures legal protection to foreign investment, guarantees repatriation of capital and return from it, and equitable treatment with local investors.

She said Bangladesh's top agenda now is to attract increased levels of investment, specially from abroad, for ensuring rapid industrialisation for an export-led growth of its economy.

Bangladesh has liberalised its economy and welcomed private investment from foreign sources in almost all the sectors of investment, she said.

Begum Zia observed that technological advancement and high labour costs have rendered certain industries commercially less viable in East Asia as well as the ROK and appreciated their policy of gradual relocation of these industries in friendly developing countries. "Bangladesh offers you an excellent option in this respect."

She said Bangladesh has been playing a pioneering role in the stimulation of regional cooperation in South Asia and because of its location, it is poised to play a historic role in linking the great growth regions of East, South-East and South Asia.

Bangladesh's convenient location makes it possible to serve the whole South Asia which can be served by industries set up in Bangladesh, she observed and said the SAPTA

is likely to help in opening up bright new trading opportunities for Bangladesh.

Begum Zia also addressed a reception and joint luncheon given in her honour by four economic organisations — KFSB, KCCI, KFTA, LKFT — at the Grand Ball Room of Hyatt Hotel.

President of Korea Federation of Small Business (KFSB) Sang Lee Park gave the welcome address at the function attended by ROK's leading industrialists and business magnates.

Addressing the function, the Prime Minister said the trend of investment that has been set in motion with the restoration of democracy in Bangladesh is only the august beginning of growth and prosperity in this region and called upon the Korean business community to be partners in the historic transition.

She assured that other investments would not only be fully safe but also highly profitable.

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh's private sector now represents the dynamism and entrepreneurship of the economy, both at the national and international levels.

She said her government believes that the private sector and individual enterprise can play a unique role in economic uplift.

The Prime Minister said Bangladesh is now on the verge of a rapid economic take-off. Three key elements in this forward march are hardworking and entrepreneurial people, favourable policy and substantial investments from home and abroad.

"The people of Bangladesh provide the first element, the government is providing the second. We invite you to provide the third. Together, we can make a historic transition," she said.

The Prime Minister told the investors to make a visit to Bangladesh to explore the possibilities of their investment in the country.

Jamuna erosion affects 11 unions

SIRAJGANJ, May 26: Some 102 families became homeless as erosion of the Jamuna affected 11 unions in three thanas of Sirajganj district with water level of the river rising 19 centimetres in 24 hours till Friday morning, reports UNB.

The erosion also totally damaged standing rabi crops — groundnut, sesame and linseeds — worth about Tk 10 lakh on 2,000 acres, according to TNO offices at Sadar, Chouhali and Kazipur thanas.

The affected unions are Kazipur, Natuarpara, Nishchintapur, Tekani and Khas-Rajbari of Kazipur thana; Chouhali, Mirputia, Ghorjan and Shal of Chouhali thana; and Mesra and Kawakola of Sadar thana.

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Agreed minutes

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ther expand the economic cooperation and bilateral trade.

China has allowed Bangladesh to repay the loan installments due in the next five years by commodity and agreed to send a buying mission late this year to purchase Bangladeshi commodities.

The mission will identify commodities for the Chinese markets and explore the prospects of items for trade in the private sector.

Both sides agreed to expedite the signing of agreements on avoiding double taxation and reciprocal promotion and protection of investments.

The Chinese delegation agreed to refer the proposal regarding the formation of joint business councils between the Apex bodies of the private business communities of the two countries and the issues relating to shipping and air link agreements to the concerned Chinese authorities for their consideration.

They also assured the Bangladesh side of starting the Korooa bridge soon and showed interest in private suppliers' credit for the construction of 300 megawatt Barapukuria coal based power plant and diammonium phosphate plant.

2 feared drowned in the Bay

From Our Correspondent

COX'S BAZAR, May 26: Two friends, one of them a student of Chittagong University, are feared to have drowned in the Bay here this morning.

Syed Masud Kabir, a second year BBA student of the CU and his friend Belal Uddin, 24 were washed away by strong waves while bathing in the sea. Their other companion, Lavlu, 21, managed to reach the shore.

Belal Uddin, a resident of Chittagong and son of one late Saleh Ahmed Chowdhury, came to Cox's Bazar to visit the house of his friend Masud Kabir, only son of Moslemuddin of Tekpara.

The two remained untraced till the evening despite a massive day-long search using speed boats and trawlers. A general diary was filed with Cox's Bazar police in this connection.

Biman's DC

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and accordingly gave a proposal in this regard.

The higher authorities however delayed a decision on procuring an engine on lease, the source said.

Biman would have to pay 1300 US dollars per day and another 180 dollars per flight hour for taking one engine on lease.

Biman's official spokesman was not available for comment. Biman has only two spare engines besides 12 engines of the four DC-10 aircraft of its own, the source said, adding the two spares were earlier sent abroad for repair. A DC-10 has three engines.

3 accords

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An agreement on exchange of cultural programmes was signed at the secretary level. A memorandum of understanding was also signed for establishing a friendship hospital in Bangladesh.

ROK to build industrial estate

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soon visit Seoul in this regard. Begum Zia, who arrived in Seoul Thursday on a three-day official visit, also urged South Korea to invest more in her country and met a score of South Korean industrialists today.

"I would like to see more Korean investment in Bangladesh," Kim told Begum Zia. The Prime Minister asked South Korea to extend low-interest development loans for railroads and open an air route to Bangladesh, the officials assisting Begum Zia at the talks said.

Promising further economic ties, President Kim Young Sam said that South Korea will invite more labourers from Bangladesh to work in the nation's labour-intensive industries.

Of the nearly 100,000 foreign workers currently employed in South Korea, Bangladeshi workers number about 2,000.

Regarding 'illegal' Bangladeshi workers in his country, South Korean President assured sympathetic consideration of their cases.

The Republic of Korea is fully prepared to support Bangladesh in its efforts to move to a higher plane of economic development, Kim said. His country would become an active partner in welfare

activities in Bangladesh, President Kim Young Sam added.

Exchanging views on international issues, the two leaders agreed to work together in establishing global peace and security, Bangladesh's Foreign Secretary said after the talks.

President Kim Young Sam congratulated Bangladesh for endorsing the candidature of South Korea for a non-permanent seat in the Security Council, which is now almost certain following withdrawal of the only other contender Sri Lanka.

The Bangladesh side renewed its support for a peaceful solution of the issue of unification of the Korean peninsula.

Begum Zia described the present friendly relation between Dhaka and Seoul as excellent and hoped that her visit would contribute to further strengthening the ties in all fields of cooperation.

Kim Young Sam, reciprocating the feelings, said the visit would work as a milestone in fostering a new era of cooperation.

The South Korean President has been invited to visit Bangladesh. He accepted the invitation and agreed to visit Dhaka at a mutually convenient time in near future.

During the summit and official talks Prime Minister Begum Zia was assisted by For-



British Queen Elizabeth walks with Emir of Kuwait Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Buckingham Palace yesterday at the end of a four-day state visit to the UK. — AFP/UNB photo

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