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Down to Earth

Growing Fast Food Culture In City

By A S M Nurunnabi

All over the city centre, fast food shops have become a characteristic feature. There is a steady trend of growth of this phenomenon. In this connection, it may be recalled that soon after independence, there was only a handful of bakeries in the city which used to make fast foods. From those centres, fast foods were supplied to some selected food outlets in city. Initially, such so-called fast foods consisted of only a few items like cakes, pastries and potatochops. Nowadays the city's fast food shops cater to a wide variety of food items. The wide range of products in the field of cuisine includes, as gathered from a few fast food joints, such items as fried chicken, chicken suslik, chicken patties, club sandwich, chicken ball, chicken burger, samu kabab, vegetable samucha, pizza, beef burger, vegetable roll, potato chop, kabab roll, hot dog, pastries, etc.

In the metropolis, there are a good number of fast food shops enjoying reputation of good qualities in areas like Gulshan, Banani, Baily Road, Kalabagan, Dhanmondi, New Market, New Elephant Road. The atmosphere there is generally considered pleasant with the air-conditioned coolness of those places, amiable service of their employees, and soft music permeating the places, we may tend to feel that there is no sorrow, suffering or want in the world. This illusion is an attractive element in creating popularity of these select food joints.

In the fast pace of life in the developed countries of the west and the east, the fast foods serve a helpful purpose in meeting the food needs of the working people at lunch time. With the progress of urbanisation, our food habits and ethos are changing. In the past, working

people used to carry their food for lunch with them. Nowadays many of such working people, instead of carrying their food for tiffin or lunch, use to go to nearby fast food shops to meet their lunch time needs. Of course, such fast foods are a little costly, which can be afforded by people of comparatively easy financial means. For them, which include young men and women, visits to such fast food shops are considered as signs of smartness and fashion.

There are some bright aspects in the growing fast food culture. One of them relates to the increasing association of many students with the running and management of some fast food shops in the city. Even some college and university students work part-time in fast food shops in some posh areas of the city. We have lately observed the enterprise of some university students in running mobile fast food shops in university areas. The items of food these mobile vans provide may be limited in number but their initiative and earnestness in standing on their feet economically are praiseworthy. Similar initiatives are also discerned among many housewives and other womenfolk of the city in earning additional income by preparing fast food items at home and selling them through some fast food network of shops in the city.

There is a contrasting picture of fast foods available in many areas of the city. There are many spots on city thoroughfares where a variety of eatables are offered for sale from mobile and makeshift stalls. Besides seasonal fruits, the fare mainly consists of rice, curry, dal and roti and different kinds of snacks and beverages. The locations of this business can be found mainly in the streets of Motijheel, Dilkusha,

Sadarghat, Tejgaon and many other busy places like bus stops, railway stations, launch ghats, etc. Maintenance of hygiene and sanitary condition in matters of food preparation and handling is lacking in most cases. There is no check-up by the municipal authorities of the standard of foods offered for sale. The raw materials used for the preparation of these foods are mostly sub-standard to make them cheaper.

Such fast foods available at city corners represent an important economic activity in view of their necessity and importance in the day-to-day life of certain socio-economic strata. The ramifications of such fast foods enterprise constitute a vast industry that involves thousands of people. It provides employment to a large segment of the urban population who might otherwise remain unemployed including women and city migrants. The issue of such foods which are called street foods has assumed such importance in the fast growing urban economies in the developing countries that the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) take interest in their quality and safety questions as well as considerations of valuable food and nutrition aspects. The ways the fast foods business in the streets are conducted at present need to be changed with firm guidance so that unhygienic and sub-standard items of food are not offered for sale in the interest of public health. In this respect, the health authorities have a great responsibility. In this connection, it may be noted that in several countries of South East Asia, such as Bangkok and Singapore, such fast food retailing system operates in a more hygienic and organised manner.

Bangabandhu Cup

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first-half against the comparatively more offensive Indonesian outfit and keenly marked their playmakers, specially Musa, Fatari and Leandro.

On the other hand, the PSM Club, who clearly outplayed Dhaka MSC 4-2 in the second semi-final on Wednesday with their extraordinary style, were nowhere near that peak performance yesterday. Perhaps they gave in to the pressure.

Brazilian midfielder Leandro, the man behind every man of the red and whites against Mohammedans, remained invalid in the first-half inactivating Fatari and Musa.

Although the Indonesians came close to scoring on a few occasions in the first session, it was sand in the pie because of a determined Malaysian defence performing like an impervious wall, an exhibition of sheer confidence.

After the breather, the Malaysians played with an all-out approach and contained the Indonesians in their half with a series of offensive down through both the flanks.

In the 53rd minute, striker Cik Jambil had the easiest opportunity to put his side ahead when he got the ball from the midfield with no one to stop him but the custodian. But the Malaysian forward lost his temperance and handed the ball straight to the advancing keeper.

However, he compensated with ingenuousness four minutes later with an accurate header through the near post capitalising on an Idris Kurni free-kick from the right corner (1-0).

The margin could have been easily doubled had striker Ching Chong Aik's power-packed grounder from a Shanmugam pass not hit the far post in the 72nd minute.

Unflustered, the Malaysians maintained the pace and scored another goal in the 76th minute to perhaps seal the fate of the Indonesians. It was Jambil once again who receiving a good through from the midfield rushed towards the post a la a 100m sprinter before placing the ball home past an advancing PSM custodian Ansar Abdullah (2-0).

With only 14 minutes left and being 2-0 down, there was hardly anything left for the PSM booters to do. But, finding their opponents a bit relaxed, the Indonesians made a late second-half rally to eventually pull back one goal in the 94th minute. Musa scored from a Fatari pass after his shot hit the inside edge of the cross-piece before ruffling the net (1-2). It was Musa's fourth goal in the meet which placed him jointly with

his teammate Ahmed Fatari as the top scorer.

In the remaining eleven minutes, the Indonesians tried everything possible to find the net and take the match to extra time. But lady luck was smiling elsewhere. In the final minute, they had their final chance when Fatari needed only to beat the Malaysian custodian Azmin Azram from close range. But the short Indonesian in haste place the ball and the Cup straight into the hands of Azmin.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, witnessed the final as chief guest and gave away the trophies.

For his effulgent performance throughout the tournament, PSM's Brazilian forward Leandro Luciano was declared the best booter of the meet by three different bodies of local sports journalists while his teammates Musa Kallon and Ahmed Fatari shared the highest scorers' award.

Two killed in ambulance-truck collision

COMILLA, Jan 10: Two people were killed and three others seriously injured in a collision between a truck and an ambulance on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway today, reports UNB.

Police said Maulvi Abdulhabur, 27, and his relative, Mahabur Rahman, 50, died on the spot at Kutumbar in Chandua thana at 7 am when the ambulance in which they were travelling collided head on with a truck coming from the opposite direction.

BNP protests

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nated moral values from the society.

The BNP leader also protested the statement of Ershad that the cases filed against him were false. "It is tantamount to contempt of court. Because granting bail to anybody and acquitting anyone from false charges are different things."

He rejected Ershad's allegation that the BNP sent a proposal to the Jatiya Party before election. During that time, he said, Begum Zia had said that if Ershad is freed, all criminals would have to be released from jail.

Khan said during the anti-Ershad uprising, the Awami League tried to escape from the movement, but could not do it. "It tried to protect Ershad secretly," he said.

Death in road accident sparks violence in Jhenidah

From Our Correspondent

JHENIDAH, Jan 10: A mob went berserk and damaged about 35 vehicles yesterday following a death in road accident at Amtala bus stand in the district.

A pedestrian, Gohar Ali, 50, of village Muraridah died on the spot when a speeding truck ran over him at around 10:30 am.

Angered by the accident, the people put a barricade on the road and started damaging the vehicles disrupting the traffic for about three hours. One police officer was also injured during the incident.

Police lobbed tear gas shell to bring the situation under control.

A case has been filed. The body was sent to hospital for autopsy.

Micro-credit

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example for emulation by other countries since it has succeeded in reaching credit to the people in the lowest segments of society, who were previously not considered credit-worthy by lending institutions.

Talking to The Daily Star, Prof Mohammad Yunus, chief of the Grameen Bank, said he was happy that the micro-credit summit was taking place and hoped that it would be able to generate enthusiasm among different tiers of international opinion makers.

Prof Yunus said the experience of the Grameen Bank and other similar organisations would be highlighted for the benefit of others at the micro-credit summit.

The Grameen Bank operations are presently replicated in some 56 countries including several developed nations like the US, Norway, France and Canada.

Khaleda

From Page 1

Tk 500 although we did not launch any programme during the last six months," she added.

The BNP Chairperson once again criticised the move to form a sub-regional forum within the SAARC. She questioned as to why the other three countries are left out.

"We must resist it at any cost. People from all walks of life will come to the street to protest the move."

Addressing the meeting, BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan said BNP does not care about Ershad, because "he died politically in 1990."

He said during the fall of Ershad, the people wanted to eliminate him and his accomplices, but they didn't do it following Begum Zia's speech. "It was our mistake," he added.

Chairman of the Jatiya Tarun Sangha Fazlul Huq also addressed the function.

AL observes home-coming day of Bangabandhu

The 26th anniversary of home-coming of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was observed yesterday throughout the country in a befitting manner, reports UNB.

On this day in 1972, Bangabandhu returned to independent Bangladesh from Pakistan's jail where he was imprisoned after military crackdown by Pakistani occupation forces on the night of March 25, 1971.

To mark the day, Awami League and its front organisations chalked out elaborate programmes which include hoisting of national and party flags, placing wreaths to the portrait of Bangabandhu and discussion meeting.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placed wreaths to the portrait of father of the nation at Bangabandhu Bhaban at 8 am. Awami League's front organisations Sramik League, Jubo League, Mahila Awami League, Krishak League and Chhatra League also paid tribute to father of the nation.

Sheikh Hasina addressed a discussion meeting organised by the Awami League at the Engineers' Institute.

The programme was attended, among others, by Abdus Samad Azad, Begum Sajeda Chowdhury, Amir Hossain

Amu, Abdur Razzak, Tofael Ahmed, Mohammad Nasim, Mohammad Hanif, Mozaffar Hossain Palto, Motia Chowdhury, ASHK Sadek and Rafiqul Islam.

While Bangladesh Chhatra League and Sramik League had their separate programmes, the Muktioddha Sanghati Parishad brought out a procession from the park adjacent to SAARC fountain in the city yesterday morning. The procession chanting 'Joy Bangla and Joy Bangabandhu' was led by Parishad's chairman Col. (ret'd) Sawkat Ali MP. The processionists marched upto the Bangabandhu Bhaban and placed wreaths at the portrait of Bangabandhu.

A solo painting exhibition by Muraduzzaman Murad was opened in observance of the day at the Bangabandhu Museum yesterday morning.

Bangabandhu Parishad has also held a rally in front of the Bangabandhu Bhaban and the leaders and members of the parishad placed wreaths at the portrait of the Father of the Nation.

Bangladesh Television and Bangladesh Betar has also put up day-long special programmes marking the significance of the day.

15 policemen hurt as trucks collide

By Staff Correspondent

At least 15 policemen were injured when two trucks, one carrying the police personnel, collided head on at Dainik Bangla crossing in the city yesterday afternoon.

Eight of the injured policemen were admitted to the Police Hospital while the others were released after first aid, police said.

Around 30 policemen from Rajarbagh police lines in a requisitioned truck were going to their duty spot near the crossing when they met the accident at about 1:30 pm.

Ramadan

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Allah has glorified this month by sending the first revelations of the Holy Quran in this month.

Justice Shahabuddin said this month is important for arduous practice for achieving restraints and self-purification for wellfare, here and the life after.

The President said we have to strive to establish peace, amity and brotherhood in society by uprooting disharmony, hate and greed from it.

He said everyone should be sincere in the efforts to uphold the dignity and holiness of this month.

"I believe that the attitude of benevolence and fraternity towards each other will strengthen our spirit of national solidarity," the President said.

Sheikh Hasina has called upon the people to discharge their moral and religious duties properly in maintaining the sanctity of the holy Ramadan.

She congratulated the people of the country and Muslims of the world and said "the holy Ramadan has appeared before us with the message of forgiveness and emancipation."

She said the practice of 'siam' on this holy month purifies soul and health of a person.

BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday urged for praying to Almighty Allah in the holy month of Ramadan for the protection of country's independence and sovereignty, and people's life and property 'in this critical hour' of the nation.

In a message the Leader of the Opposition greeted the Muslims and wished continued progress and prosperity of the country and peace and happiness of the people.

Begum Zia also called upon the people to maintain the sanctity of the holy Ramadan.

Office timing during Ramadan

The government has fixed the office timings for the holy month of Ramadan, an official announcement said yesterday, reports BSS.

The time-table is as follows: Ministries and Divisions at the Secretariat, offices attached with the ministries, directorates and other affiliated offices, autonomous bodies and corporation — from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm with a 15 minute break from 1:15 pm for Zohr prayers.

Divisional, district and thana level offices in and outside Dhaka will be from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm from Saturday to Wednesday with a 15-minute break from 1:15 pm for Zohr prayers while on Thursday from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm without any break.

This time-schedule is applicable for all government offices, agencies and organisations. But the banks, post offices, telephone services, railway, hospitals, state-run industries, mills and other emergency services will follow their own time-tables, the press release added.

Green Panel teachers defy RUTA decision

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 10: The teachers belong to the Green Panel of Rajshahi University at a press conference yesterday announced that they would take classes and examinations from tomorrow defying the RUTA decision.

On January 8, the RUTA at an emergency meeting took a resolution that they would refrain from all academic and administrative activities until the RU Vice-Chancellor Prof M Yousuf Ali was removed. They took the decision following a violent incident at the VC office.

The Green Panel teachers termed the RUTA decision unconstitutional and against the interest of teachers and students. They also blamed the teachers of Yellow Panel for the incident at VC office.

The Green Panel was backed by Pro-Jamaat and a faction of Pro-BNP teachers. Prof Sohrabuddin Ahmed read out the statement at the press conference. Prof M Aminul Islam, Prof M Nazrul Islam, Dr Shamsul Alam Sarker, and Amzad Hussain were also present.

By-elections if BNP fails

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of the House by the BTV and release of arrested party workers.

"Return to the House. Let's discuss how we can make the Jatiya Sangsad more effective. If necessary, we will arrange a second channel of BTV for wide coverage of proceedings," the prime minister said without naming BNP.

Article 67 (1) (b) of the Constitution says, a member of parliament shall vacate his seat if he is absent from Parliament, without the leave of Parliament, for 90 consecutive sitting days. "They are acting like a trade union body in fifth Parliament," they breached commitment of repealing the Indemnity Ordinance. "They were absent this time when the Indemnity Repeal Bill was about to be passed."

"Now all these are over. The infamous ordinance has been repealed. Come back to the House," the AL chief said. About BNP's demand about BTV coverage she said "you yourself compare the BTV coverage of the Fifth Parliament and the present Parliament."

About the sub-regional grouping she categorically said that in no way the concept undermined the SAARC spirit.

Sheikh Hasina advised those who have reservation about the idea to go through the SAARC Charter. According to her, regional and sub-regional cooperations are allowed in the Charter.

"We want speedy uplift of the economy in our country and

that's why we want to increase sub-regional cooperation. It is not in conflict with the SAARC spirit."

She cited a number of examples of sub-regional groupings saying those work well without diminishing the spirit of regional cooperation. She mentioned India Ocean Rim, ECO comprising Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, Scandinavian Guild, grouping among Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, and grouping among France, Luxembourg and Belgium.

Commenting on BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia's observation that the sub-regional grouping would be worse than the 25-year slavery treaty, she said "Prime Minister, the then Foreign Minister had termed the 25-year Indo-Bangla treaty a friendship treaty but, now out of power, they say it slavery treaty."

Without referring to the corruption case filed against Begum Khaleda Zia, the Prime Minister said, "Law shall take its own course. We have no right to interfere. The judiciary and the Anti-Corruption Bureau are functioning independently."

Turning to the recently signed 30-year water treaty with India, Sheikh Hasina said, "There were many dramas and 'political games' using the treaty as an issue. No benefit was derived by staging long-march, holding rallies at Hardinge point or giving lectures at the United Nations. What they could not do in years, we did in



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PHILIPS



Deposed Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto addresses a public rally at Wah, 40 kilometers from Islamabad, during her campaign for the upcoming election, yesterday.

— AFP/UNB photo

2 more flights in Dhaka-Barisal route likely

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Jan 10: The Bangladesh Biman is expected to introduce two more flights a week in Dhaka-Barisal route soon.

Mohammad Ali, district manager, Bangladesh Biman in Barisal, said at present only one flight was operating every Sunday afternoon in this route. Two more flights are likely to operate on Tuesday and Thursday every week, he added.

Biman launched its ATP flight service in this route on December 3 in 1995.

Official talks

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two premiers will be held this morning at the Prime Minister's office. The talks will focus on boosting further British investment in Bangladesh, particularly in industrial and energy sectors.

Discussions will also be held on further boosting Bangladesh's exports to Britain. Dhaka sells readymade garments, jute and fish products and buys mainly machinery and chemicals from that country.

Dhaka, it is learnt, would seek further British investments and would offer incentives for relocation of 'sunset' industries.

During the official talks Dhaka will also stress further simplifying immigration procedures for family members of the large number of Bangladeshis residing in Britain and also raise the problems faced by Bangladeshi immigrants there.

The British premier will visit a BRAC project in Manikganj, partly funded by the British Overseas Development Administration. Major will address a gathering of local business leaders organised by the FBCCI today.

John Major will be hosted a banquet by Sheikh Hasina tonight at state guest house Jamuna. He will visit the national memorial at Savar to pay homage to the Liberation war martyrs.

Major will call on President Shahabuddin Ahmed. He is also likely to meet Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia.

The British Prime Minister, who leaves Dhaka tomorrow (Sunday) morning, will address a press conference prior to his departure at 10 am.

Bearish trend prevails in stock markets

Star Report

A bearish trend prevailed in the two stock markets in the country almost everyday last week pushing their major market indicators down, market sources said.

The All Share Price Index in Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) declined by 349.63 points to 2100.96 points on Thursday, the closing day of the week, from the previous week's 2450.59 points, the sources added.

Market capitalisation of the bourse decreased by Tk 2,527.93 crore last week and stood at Tk 15,192.07 crore, as against previous week's Tk 17,720.00 crore. The All Share Price Index and market capitalisation of Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) declined by 186.70 points and Tk 4046 crore respectively.

The CSE price index went down to 976.60 points from previous week's 1163.30 points while market capitalisation stood at Tk 10,179.25 crore as against Tk 14,226.08 crore in the previous week.

On the DSE floor, prices of 65 companies' shares declined everyday, only 17 issues gained while 2 remained unchanged.

Ctg Mayor

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Referring to the deteriorating law and order, the mayor blamed a section of police for providing support to terrorists in creating violence and extortion tolls.

Chowdhury also called upon the terrorists to surrender before the city administration or police.

Nagorik Committee arranged the grand rally attended by over 10,000 people representing different political parties, professional groups and socio-cultural organisations.

The mayor also called for boycotting the families of terrorists, forming a task force in every thana, headed by an assistant commissioner, and constituting civic committee in every ward.

Presided over by educationist Principal A Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, the rally was addressed by college teacher Prof Kazi Shamsur Rahman, Advocate Ibrahim, NAP leader Abul Momen Bhuiyan, JSD (Rab) Indu Nanda Dutt, CPB leader Shah Alam, JSD (Inu) Advocate Abul Kalam Azad and Awami League leader Mahtab Uddin Chowdhury.

Tangail: Armed elements

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The DC said that some unscrupulous officials in the administration leaked out information prior to police operation. Some recent raids failed because of this, he said.

Asked why the Special Powers Act was being applied against those while there were specific charges against them, the Deputy Commissioner said, "Their activities fall under the purview of the Act."

A police officer said Ghorabipol, in his statement also revealed that there were various ranks among the "cadres." "Some get a percentage from the toll money while others are hired on part time basis. Those who are not provided with fire arms," the police officer quoted Ghorabipol as saying.

Police quoting the statements of Insan, said that he (Insan) wanted to return to normal life but the "top leaders" of the gang "forcibly brought him back to the gang."

Another police official quoted one of the "top gang leaders" told this correspondent that his group collected Tk 24 lakh every month as toll money of which Tk 18 lakh was spent for maintaining the cadre.

Another police official said, "Ghorabipol confessed that the cadres are provided with arms only during the period of particular job." Those are taken back by the leaders of the gang.

The primary sources of toll money are transports that ply on various routes in the dis-

last week. The average number of traded issues was 80. Although the circuit breaker was relaxed to revitalise the market, trading did not increase significantly in volume and value. On an average, 1.85 lakh shares and debentures valued at Tk 5.96 crore exchanged hands every day during the week, the sources pointed out.

30 shanties

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following a conflict between two rival groups led by one Mozammel and one Deputy Miah. Police said that the groups were in conflict over a disputed land where the makeshift thatched houses were built.

Demra police picked up 16 people from the spot for their alleged involvement in attacking the slum. However, no complaint was lodged with the Demra police till last night.

Police forces were deployed in the area following the attack.

Ctg: Arms

From Page 1

Chittagong Port jetty by an intelligence agency personnel about two years ago, which even escaped the notice of press people, some well informed sources claimed. The arms were secretly handed over to a 'particular force' and the then BNP government stopped investigation in this regard due to mysterious reasons. These were imported under a false declaration as machinery spares, the sources alleged.

A senior port official, when asked, confirmed this but declined