

'Stop mixing toxicants with food'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a rally yesterday called on the government to take immediate steps to stop unabated mixing of toxic substances with food items during the holy month of Ramadan.

They also urged the government to combat the price hike of essentials which have created untold sufferings for the common people.

The rally was organised by Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA), an environmental organisation, at Shahbagh in the city to press home their demands.

The speakers said on one hand the life of the people is stifled by price spiral, and on the other hand they are forced to buy poisonous foods at high prices.

Our future generation is emerging with ill health as our mothers are forced to take adulterated foods, they added.

BAPA President Prof Mozaffar Ahmed called for raising mass awareness to stop mixing toxicants with foods.

"Besides public awareness, government agencies concerned should perform their duties properly, otherwise such malpractice will not be stopped," he asserted.

"Mixing toxic substances with food items is a violation of human rights as well as cheating with customers," the BAPA president added.

Abdul Hye Majumdar, advisor of the Peace, a non-government organisation, termed the practice of mixing toxicants with foods as an attempt to murder, and identified those persons as the killers of people.

"So they must be brought to justice by awarding exemplary punishment that a killer deserves," he asserted.

BAPA General Secretary Mufidul Haque Khan said seasonal fruits and vegetables are now available in the markets throughout the year, but they are not good for health as they are produced by using harmful chemicals.

Such fruits and vegetables are causing various diseases including cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure and heart diseases, he added.

Environmentalist Jahidur Rahman, Dr Kazi Saleh Ahmed, Dr Shahidul Islam, Prof Golam Mawla, Nazmunnahar, Syed Amirul Islam, Abdul Latif and Firoj Ahmed also spoke at the rally.

Earlier, the BAPA formed a human chain demanding a ban on the use of toxicants in preparing food items.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon organised a citizens' rally at Shahbagh in the city yesterday protesting unabated mixing of toxic substances with food and price spiral of essentials.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain mainly dry over the country till 6.00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period, Met Office said.

Highest temperature 34.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Cox's Bazar and lowest 19.7 degree Celsius at Srimangal.

The sun sets in the capital at 5:26pm today and rises at 6.00am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.1	21.8	62	64
Chittagong	33.8	23.4	62	68
Rajshahi	31.7	21.2	74	76
Khulna	32.5	22.6	68	79
Barisal	32.5	22.8	83	92
Sylhet	32.5	21.0	67	79
Cox's Bazar	34.0	25.8	78	--

BSF returns body of Bangladeshi youth

BSS, Tentulia

The Border Security Forces (BSF) returned the body of Bangladeshi youth to the Bangladesh authorities after a flag meeting with Bangladesh Rifles yesterday.

BDR company commander Subedar Abdus Sattar under Panchagarh 22 Rifles Battalion and BSF company commander Inspector Mishra under 118 BSF Battalion led their respective side in the meeting that ended through handing over of the body at about 5.30 pm yesterday.

Tentulia thana police received the body in presence of the relatives of victim Foyezur Rahman, 24, son of Mohammad Hanif. Foyezur was killed by BSF troops of Hatiram BSF camp near pillar No 731 about 100 yards inside Bangladesh on Thursday and BSF took away the body to India.

Bidisha made JP presidium member

UNB, Dhaka

Bidisha Ershad, political adviser to Jatiya Party chairman and coordinator of Jatiya Mohila Party, has been made a presidium member of Jatiya Party (Ershad).

Besides, Jatiya Party vice-chairman SMM Alam and organising secretary Mazharul Haq Shah Chowdhury were appointed presidium member and vice-chairman respectively.

Jatiya Party chairman Hussain Muhammad Ershad made the appointments on recommendation from party secretary general with immediate effect, said a party press release yesterday.

Death anniversary



The 5th death anniversary of Justice Amin-ur Rahman Khan, former law secretary and member of the law commission, will be observed tomorrow, says a press release.

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Rituparno Ghosh retrospective
Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies will screen three films by renowned Bengali filmmaker Rituparno Ghosh. These are 'Shuvo Mohurat', 'Chokher Bali', 'Utsab' and 'Chokher Bali'. Time: 10.00am, 12.30pm, 3.00pm, and 6.30pm.

Quran exhibition
The inaugural function of an exhibition on the Holy Quran, organised by Iranian Cultural Centre, will be held. Venue: Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Museum. Time: 3.00pm. The exhibition will continue till October 28.

Discussion
Doctors Association of Bangladesh will hold a discussion on Ramadan with LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan as chief guest. Venue: Sangsad Plaza, Sangsad Bhaban. Time: 4.00pm.

Seminar
Worldwide Immigration Consultants Limited will hold a seminar on 'Higher Education in Australia'. Venue: 83, Siddheswari Circular Road, Malibagh. Time: 2.30pm

Rotary meeting
Weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held. Venue: House-14, Road- 28, Dhanmondi. Time: 4.30pm.

Lions Seminar
In observance of the United Nations Day, Lions Club of Dhaka Central organises a seminar on 'UN Today: Where is it heading?' Venue: BTMC Bhaban, Karwan Bazar. Time: 3.30pm.



Bangladesh Debate Federation (BDF) President Bulbul Hasan hands over the Best Debating Institute of the Year to Dhaka University (DU) Vice-Chancellor Professor SMA Faiz, centre, yesterday. DU Proctor Dr Aka Firoz Ahmad, left, was present.

Diarrhoea, pneumonia claim 15 children in Sherpur

UNB, Sherpur

Diarrhoea and pneumonia have broken out in epidemic form in Sherpur district.

A total of 15 children died of the two diseases in the last three days - 11 of diarrhoea and four of pneumonia.

The two diseases affected more than 95 per cent children of the district, sources said.

District Health Department, however, did not admit breakout of diarrhoea and pneumonia in epidemic form. Rather, they often attributed deaths of children from such epidemic in the district to food poisoning or other diseases.

Meanwhile, medical experts said post-flood situation and season change were the main reasons for such an epidemic.

The local Civil Surgeon shared the expert views and admitted a slight rise in the number of patients afflicted with diarrhoea and pneumonia.

Scarcity of oral saline and other life saving drugs in the affected areas further deteriorated the situation, locals alleged. But the Civil Surgeon denied any scarcity of medicines in the government hospitals.

The deaths from pneumonia reported on Thursday include Maya (3 months) of Bhatshala village, Babu (2 days) of Sultanpur village, and Tabir (7 months) of Gopalbari all in Sadar upazila.

Five children, including three of a family, died of diarrhoea on Wednesday.

Medical sources said that on Thursday alone 49 patients with diarrhoea and 21 with pneumonia were admitted to the local hospitals. There was also rush of patients with the two diseases at the chamber of local doctors.

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Obituary

BSS, Dhaka

M Abdul Baki, Deputy Secretary of the Jatiya Sangsad, died of liver cirrhosis at Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 56.

He left behind his wife, two sons and two daughters.

His body was sent to his village home in Noakhali for burial after namaz-e-janaza at the Jatiya Sangsad.

Speaker Barrister Muhammad Jamir Uddin Sircar and Deputy Speaker Akhtar Hamid Siddiqui expressed deep shock and sorrow at the death of Baki.

BDR's Kerat, Ajan competition held

UNB, Dhaka

Constable M Atiqur Rahman of Kushlia sector and lance corporal M Mashiur Rahman of Dhaka sector have secured the first position in Bangladesh Rifles' Kerat and Ajan competition respectively.

Sadar Rifle Battalion of Dhaka emerged champions with a score of 122.50 points while Khagrachhari sector became runners-up with 121.62 points.

The inter-sector Kerat and Ajan competition, 2004 of Bangladesh Rifles was held at Pilkhana Central Mosque here yesterday. State Minister for Home Affairs Lufazzaman Babar attended as chief guest.

Director General of BDR Major General Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury and other high officials were present.

Fifteen BDR members, who achieved outstanding success in the competition, will get opportunity to perform Hajj under BDR management this year.

Thirteen BDR members, including two who secured first position in Kerat and Ajan competition, performed Hajj under the management last year.