

9 tonnes date-expired vermicelli seized

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mobile court of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) yesterday seized nine metric tonnes date-expired 'lachha semai' (vermicelli) at a well-known flour mill and fined its owner Tk 1.6 lakh.

During a raid on Nasirabad Industrial Area, Magistrate Shafiqur Rahman found the date-expired vermicelli worth around Tk 5 lakh at the godown of Thareri Flour Mill. He fined the mill owner for illegally stockpiling the unsafe food item.

"The vermicelli produced last year have been stockpiled for marketing in

the holy month of Ramadan," the magistrate said.

Magistrate Shafiqur also fined Madhuban Bakery Tk 25,000 for its unhygienic environment and for not complying with the rules of Bangladesh Standard Testing Institute (BSTI).

He also realised a fine of Tk 3,000 from Savoy Inn Mini-Chinese restaurant for its unhygienic environment.

The Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) and the BSTI assisted the CCC in its drive against food adulteration.

Murder of 2 women condemned

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR) yesterday condemned the murder of two housewives for dowry in the city.

They were Sajeda Akhter Kalpana, 37, of Shyampur and Ila Rani Saha, 23, of Sutrapur.

The society in a statement demanded immediate arrest and trial of the killers.

The signatories to the statement are BSEHR Secretary General Sigma Huda and Executive Director Alina Khan.

8 percent growth possible

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that you have the same great human resources here that your big neighbour in the west has," Wolfowitz told reporters after a meeting with Finance and Planning Minister Saifur Rahman.

"You have wonderful, talented people. But the problem of corruption is a big dragon on your economy," he added.

"Big power projects unfortunately are one of the principal targets for corruption," he cited as an example. This sector needs reform, he pointed out, adding, "We are not imposing harsh conditions... We are just saying we invest in your country and we need some assurance that the investment would go to help the poor people."

Wolfowitz said the WB's future aid for projects including those in the power sector would depend on reducing corruption, because "we cannot commit money unless we are convinced it is going to be spent in the right way."

The WB chief named the 'politics of confrontation' as another major hindrance to the country's development. [If these two major obstacles are removed] he said, "This country probably could be doing 8 percent growth when you have a 5 percent growth."

Wolfowitz arrived in Dhaka at 11:00am yesterday as part of his first South Asia tour. Saifur received him at Zia International Airport, from where they went directly to the meeting at Saifur's planning ministry office.

Saifur agreed with Wolfowitz about confrontational politics hindering development, saying, "Confrontational politics and hostility among the

political parties are spoiling our potential to do better." "But I don't know how this can be resolved," was what he told the WB president, as he later revealed to reporters.

The source of this confrontation lies in 1971, he said, since when the nation has been divided into two camps – the so-called pro-liberation and anti-liberation forces. "It is very difficult to reconcile these feuding sides," Saifur remarked.

The minister said to bring it to an end the top leaders of the two major parties will have to sort things out. "We are trying to convince them that at least for the sake of the country, confrontations should be scaled down," he said. "I am encouraging my top leader and Awami League leaders will have to do the same."

On corruption, the minister said the government has undertaken reform programmes in every sector and once the reforms are made, the scale of corruption will automatically come down.

Wolfowitz in this regard said, "I recognise it is easier to identify problems than to identify the solutions. But I think it is very very important to try to do so." Because, if these issues were addressed, he said, billions of dollars would be added to the GDP and millions of people would come out of the clutch of poverty.

The WB chief however praised Bangladesh's performance in health and education and also appreciated Grameen Bank's activities, which he said, "represents the energy of the

people of this country."

He also had a good word to put in favour of the country's press: "I heard you have a very vibrant press. I believe a free press is very important for development process."

Though the WB president was initially slated to stay in Dhaka for two days, he cut short his visit by one, cancelling a number of scheduled programmes. After the meeting with the finance minister, he called upon the prime minister and the leader of the opposition in parliament.

Wolfowitz left the city yesterday evening by a private aircraft.

Security was tightened at the airport while the entire stretch of the road from the airport to the planning ministry was emptied and police personnel stood on either side of the road under a foolproof security blanket for the high-profile guest's visit.

The visit came just four days after about 500 bombs exploded across the country, raising an intense security alarm. Wolfowitz however refused to be drawn into this issue. He said, "We are a development organisation. We don't get into security issues. It is certainly true the more secure a country is the more stable it is and the more it will grow economically."

Before his departure, at a short press briefing at the airport, he said the WB will continue assisting Bangladesh in its endeavours to reduce poverty.



HEED International School organised its annual art competition on the school premises in the city on Thursday. Renowned artist Rafiqun Nabi inaugurated the event.

SHAMSUR RAHMAN
MURDER

Trial begins on Aug 27

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Trial of Jessore Janakantha Journalist Shamsur Rahman Murder Case will begin on August 27.

Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal Judge Abdus Samad yesterday issued summons asking five out of thirty prosecution witnesses to appear before the tribunal for hearing.

They are Selina Akhter Lucky, complainant and wife of slain journalist, Nuruzzaman, Tasiqul Islam, Abdul Mannan and Alamgir Hossain.

Trial of the case could not begin on the previous date of August 14 as the complainant filed a petition with the tribunal requesting to transfer the case to Jessore Judges' Court for security reason.

After hearing her petition, Judge Abdus Samad asked Selina Akhter Lucky to obtain an order from higher court in this regard within seven days. But she could not do so prompting the judge to begin the trial on August 27.

Two out of 14 FIR-named accused of this case were produced before the tribunal yesterday. They are Pagla Salim and Zahir Badsha.

Among the twelve, four are on bail while eight others are absconding.

Shamsur Rahman was gunned down on the night of January 16, 2001.



Meritorious students of Government Bangla College, who received gold medals at a reception ceremony, pose with Education Minister Dr M Osman Farruk on the college premises in the city after the ceremony yesterday.