

Proper policy a must to ensure poison-free food

Experts tell roundtable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a roundtable yesterday stressed the need for a well-thought food policy that would meet country's increasing demand for food and ensure poison-free food for all.

"Unless we ensure poison-free food for our children, the next generation might be physically abnormal and very likely to suffer from intellectual backwardness", said paediatrics specialist Dr Lenin Chowdhury.

The roundtable titled "Poisonous Vegetables: Our Health Problem" organised by Nirapad Khadya Andolon, a civil society initiative to ensure safe food, was held at the National Press Club in the city.

Executive Member of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (Bapa) Dr Md Abdul Hye Majumdar in his keynote paper focused on the disastrous effects of using chemical fertilisers and pesticides on the environment as well as on human body.

"In most cases vegetables and foods are sold and consumed long before the period of intoxicating effects of pesticides that is usually seven to ten days is over and this multiplies health hazards of common people", said Dr Majumdar.

He said using chemicals of organo-phosphate group like methyl parathion and ethyl parathion for rat control is very dangerous to environment. These chemicals are components of nerve gas and mastered gas, he added.

Pointing to the reasons of excessive use of chemicals and fertilisers, Dr Majumdar said due to catchy advertisements of multinational companies, farmers began cultivating high yielding varieties of crops that demand huge fertilisers and pesticides.

Dr Lenin expressed concern saying that apart from having effects on the next generation, people are being increasingly affected by heart,

kidney, brain and blood related diseases in these days due to consumption of intoxicated vegetables and food items.

Quoting a study in the USA, Executive Director of Ubiniq Farida Akhter said young children who are exposed to the chemicals used as pesticides cannot remember lessons properly.

Dr Ferdous Ahmed Koreshi presided over the discussion while former President of Bangladesh Economic Association Manowar Hossain, former MP Kamrunnahar Jafar, President of Bangladesh Manobadhikar Bastobayon Parishad AMM Noman, journalist Ershadul Majumdar, President of Bangladesh Hotel and Restaurant Owners Association Khondkar Ruhul Amin also spoke on the occasion.

Dhaka shocked at BJP chief's comments

Indian diplomat summoned

UNB, Dhaka

A foreign ministry spokesman yesterday expressed deep shock and surprise at Indian BJP president's comments that India should launch an attack to dismantle 'terrorist hideouts inside Bangladesh.'

The Indian deputy high commissioner in Dhaka was summoned to the foreign ministry yesterday afternoon to convey Bangladesh's strong protest and condemnation against the comments.

On August 12, BJP President Rajnath Singh made the remark in Goa.

He also said Bangladesh and some other neighbouring countries have virtually developed into a 'terrorist hub,' causing grave danger to the security of India.

"Bangladesh government is appalled at such outrageous comments and found them completely uncalled for and highly irresponsible as they came from the president of a leading political party in India," the spokesman said.

He dismissed the accusations made against Bangladesh by the BJP chief as "baseless, fabricated and intended evidently to foment anti-Bangladesh sentiments in India."

The comments made by the BJP leader were deeply disturbing and worked against the cause of friendly relations existing between the two neighbours, the spokesman noted.

The spokesman recalled that Rajanath Singh had made similar comments in Assam on July 20 this year.

He said the government strongly condemned his remarks and hoped that the Indian government would do everything possible to prevent such "provocative comments."

The government of Bangladesh also hopes that all concerned would refrain from such "outlandish and shocking suggestion," the spokesman added.

One dies in Ctg wall collapse

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A person was killed and another injured as a wall collapsed on them at West Bakalia in the port city yesterday morning.

The victim was identified as Abdul Latif, 22, son of late Zamir Ahmad, police said.

Witnesses said the accident occurred at around 8.30am yesterday when a portion of a boundary wall, adjacent to a under construction road near Mazidia Madrasa of Noornagar, suddenly fell on pedestrians Abdul Latif and another unidentified person.

Latif succumbed to his injuries while he was being taken to the Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH). The unidentified man was undergoing treatment at the hospital till filing of this report.

15 illegal structures bulldozed in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A mobile court here yesterday bulldozed at least 15 illegal structures including a century-old sweetmeat house at Nandankanan area under Kotwali Police Station.

The structures had long been under illegal occupation and the owners had ignored several notices issued by the Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) to vacate them, sources said.

The last notice was served about four months back by Tehara Ferdous, first class magistrate of CDA, who conducted the daylong eviction drive, but it was also ignored by illegal occupants.

The magistrate, accompanied by CDA engineers, eviction staffs, and a team of police started the demolition work at around 10.00am and completed it by 3.00pm.

The structures included Bose Brothers, a reputed sweetmeat house built in 1921.

ARMS Comilla reunion Aug 16

Bss, Dhaka

Associates of Residential Model School (ARMS), Comilla will hold its annual reunion at Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) of Dhaka University on August 16.

Former students and teachers of the school have been requested to join the daylong programme to be started at 10:00am.

An ARMS press release yesterday also requested all to complete their registration for the event.

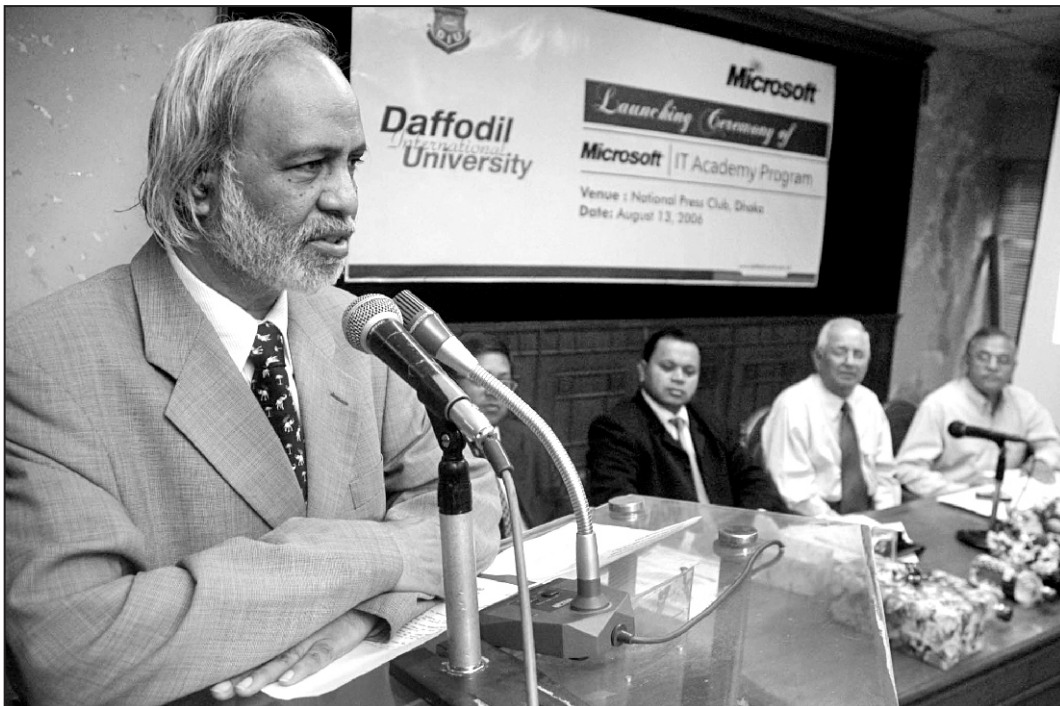


PHOTO: STAR

Information and Communication Technology Minister Moyeen Khan speaks at the launching ceremony of Microsoft IT Academy Programme organised by Daffodil University at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

JAMAL UDDIN MURDER

IO begs unconditional apology to court

Cu CORRESPONDENT

A Criminal Investigation Department (CID) Inspector Anwar Hossain, also the Investigation Officer (IO) of the sensational abduction and murder of Chittagong business magnet and BNP leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed, submitted his response yesterday begging unconditional apology to the court.

He submitted a one-page response to the Government Record Officer (GRO) at around 5:00pm.

The court will pass an order on it on August 30, sources said.

Earlier on Thursday, the court of Chittagong Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammed Akram Hossain issued a show cause upon Anwar as his response to the previous show cause was not satisfactory and did not accept the charge sheet submitted by the IO.

The magistrate reprimanded Anwar and ordered to respond against the show cause within three days.

The court also ordered the additional inspector general of CID to appoint an honest and unbiased officer as the IO for the case.

The IO submitted his response to the previous show cause on July 23 issued on July 17 for not including Kala Mahabub as an approver, court sources said.

The IO pressed charges on July 10 against 16 accused, including prime suspects Kashem Chairman, Shahid Chairman and Kala Mahbub.

Drug peddler held with 1kg heroin in Joydevpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested a drug peddler and seized one kilogram of heroin from a shop at Teknagpara of Joydevpur.

Acting on a tip off, Rab officials of Gazipur went to Bhai Bhai Decorator in guise of heroin buyers.

The salesman, Mustafizur Rahman, denied of having heroin in the beginning, yet later agreed to sell it for Tk 5 lakh.

As soon as he brought out the packet, the Rab team led by Major Maksud seized it and arrested him.

Orphanage teacher gets 8 yrs' RI for raping girl

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chittagong court here yesterday awarded eight years' rigorous imprisonment to a teacher of an orphanage for violating a minor girl.

Metropolitan Magistrate Sheikh Mohammad Mobarak Hossain handed down the sentence in presence of Hafez Mohammad Harunur Rashid, 26, a teacher of Dakshin Bandar Azizia Taiyabia Ethimkhana under Karnaphuli Police Station, court sources said.

Sources said Hafez Harun called a seven-year old girl in his room at the orphanage and raped her in the morning of February 21 in 2005. Inmates of the orphanage and the super rescued the girl and caught Hafez Mohammad Harunur Rashid when she screamed. Later, the culprit was handed him over to police.

A case was also filed the same day in this connection with the Karnaphuli Police Station.

Verdict on graft case against Ershad Aug 27

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court will deliver on August 27 the verdict on the corruption case filed against former president HM Ershad in connection with allotting plots to 49 people when he was president.

After the completion of arguments from the prosecution and the defence, Judge SM Mojibur Rahman of the First Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court yesterday set the date to deliver the verdict.

The court could not complete arguments of the case, as the prosecution and the defence had sought time on different excuses since August 2002.

Additional Public Prosecutor Golam Mostafa Khan argued that the charges brought against Ershad in the FIR (first information report), charge sheet and statements of the prosecution witnesses of the case were primarily proved. So, he prayed for punishment of the accused.

Opposing the arguments of the prosecution, defence lawyer Sheikh Serajul Islam told the court his client had directed authorities concerned to allot the 49 plots maintaining proper procedures. So, his client should be acquitted, the lawyer added.

Earlier, the court had only recorded statements of four prosecution witnesses, even though the trial began on April 23, 1998.

According to the prosecution, Ershad, while in power, violated provisions of the government and the Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakkha (Rajuk) and directed authorities concerned to allot plots in Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Uttara residential areas to 49 people during 1988-1990.

Mohammad Sajjad Hossain, an official of the defunct Bureau of Anti-corruption filed a case against Ershad with Motijheel Police Station on April 22, 1991. The

investigation officer (IO) of the case pressed charges against Ershad and the then chairman of Rajuk Rahamat Ullah on December 9 the same year.

The court framed charges against Ershad and acquitted Rahamat after finding no conclusive evidence against him on March 9, 1992.

Gold Smuggling Case
The same court adjourned the hearing of the gold smuggling case filed against Ershad until August 27 following a time petition filed by the prosecution.

The adjournment came as the prosecution witnesses of the case did not appear before the court yesterday.

According to the prosecution, a team of customs officials picked up four people including two foreign nationals from Zia International Airport (ZIA) on July 17, 1990 when they were attempting to smuggle 3,000 tolas of gold, worth around Tk 2.5 crore, into Bangladesh.

A smuggling case was filed against the arrestees -- Bernhard Rudiger of Germany, David Anthony Chalmers Chaker of England, the then manager of ZIA Major (ret'd) Ashraf Uddin Sekender and a security guard of ZIA Abu Taher -- with Cantonment Police Station on the same day.

During the investigation of the case the IO found evidence of Ershad being involved in the smuggling and his name was included in the charge sheet.

Bernhard, David, Ashraf and Taher were convicted and sent to prison on different terms in connection with the smuggling of the gold bars on May 14, 1992. The trial of this case against Ershad did not start due to a stay order from the higher court.

50 fishermen missing as 11 trawlers sink in Bay

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

About 50 fishermen have been missing in the Bay of Bengal since Saturday after a powerful storm triggered by a depression sank at least 11 trawlers, officials and survivors said yesterday.

Hundreds of people thronged the beach in search of their loved ones after the storm lashed Cox's Bazar and Teknaf shores with high waves yesterday.

Monjur Alam, owner of one of

the missing trawlers, said only four of the 11 men on his boat had made it back home yesterday.

"Huge waves tossed our boat up and suddenly dropped it," Fakrul Islam, a survivor who managed to swim ashore at Cox's Bazar yesterday said from his hospital bed. "Only four of us managed to swim ashore."

The depression is likely to intensify further and pass over the Cox's Bazar coast by this morning, meteorological department said.

BNP men burn Prothom Alo, Janakantha in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Leaders of local Jubo Dal and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal yesterday burnt copies of the daily Prothom Alo and Janakantha for publishing what they say 'false news reports' against State Minister for Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Lutfor Rahman Azad.

Jubo Dal and Chhatra Dal leaders at a meeting also declared local correspondents of the dailies persona non grata and pledged to resist the distribution of the dailies at Tangail.

The daily Prothom Alo and Janakantha recently carried out stories that revealed that Azad bought properties of Islamic Trade and Commerce Limited (ITCL) for a nominal price. The government closed the ITCL for unauthorised banking activities few years back.

Ali Imam Tapan presided over the meeting held at district BNP office.

Prior to the rally, the ruling party men also beat Abdul Khayer, a local newspaper agent.

FREQUENT POWER OUTAGE

Tongi Palli Bidyut office besieged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Locals laid siege to the Palli Bidyut office of Tongi zone and blocked Dhaka-Mymensingh highway for an hour in protest of frequent power snaps and load shedding in the area.

They said they underwent tremendous sufferings as electricity snaps have been taking place 10 to 15 times everyday over the last 15 days, but the officials took no step to improve the situation.

They demanded cancellation of jobs of the officials concerned for such power snaps.

Obituary



Sadeka Shafiullah, former deputy secretary of ERD and noted litterateur, passed away at 1:00am yesterday at Ranaisons Hospital in the city.

city at the age of 69, says a press release.

Her namaz-e-janaza will be held at her residence at Dhanmondi in the city at 2:00pm today.

She left behind her one son, one daughter and a host of friends and admirers to mourn her death.

MAAhad Chowdhury
Bss, Dhaka

MAAhad Chowdhury, former district and sessions judge, passed away at LabAid Hospital in the city on July 11 at the age of 70.

He is survived by his wife, five sons and one daughter.

He was buried at his family graveyard at Singharan village under Lakhai upazila of Habiganj district.

Sylhet Unnayan Sangram Parishad President Advocate Abed Raja and General Secretary Nazmul Islam condoled the death of Aahad Chowdhury.

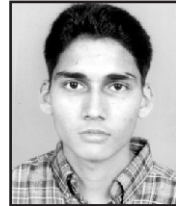
Raja Buni

Raja Buni, wife of Md Syed Ali Sarker and a social worker, passed away at Dhaka Metropolitan Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 82, says a press release.

She left behind her five sons and five daughters.

She was laid to rest after her namaz-e-janaza at Amtoli mosque in the city and at her village home at Tepupdum Shahar in Gaibandha.

Death anniversary



Today is the third death anniversary of Md Omar Faruq, son of former police officer SM Harun.

Omar, a first year student of BBA (Honours) of Chittagong University, died on this day in 2003.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held today at Harun's residence at Maizbandar in Chittagong at noon.

All the relatives, friends and admirers of Omar are requested to join the milad to pray for salvation of the departed soul.

Bazlur Rahman Lasker

Today is the 20th death anniversary of Bazlur Rahman Lasker, a valiant freedom fighter and former vice president of Dhaka City Awami League.

In addition to a commemorative meeting, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held after Asr prayers at his Azimpur residence.

Relatives, friends and admirers are requested to attend the milad mahfil to pray for salvation of the departed soul.



PHOTO: STAR

Nasima Begum, mother of three-year old baby Farzana Faiza Chowdhury Rowshi, who died allegedly due to wrong treatment of doctors in a private clinic, bursts into tears during a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city yesterday.

DEATH DUE TO WRONG TREATMENT Rowshi's relatives demand arrest of docs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Relatives of three-year old baby Farzana Faiza Chowdhury Rowshi, who died allegedly due to wrong treatment of doctors in a private clinic in the city on August 4, yesterday demanded immediate arrest and trial of the involved.

At a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium, Rowshi's relatives alleged that the victim died due to wrong treatment of the doctors and nurses of Pancare Hospital and Diagnostics when she was admitted there with fever on August 3.

Sheikh Tanvir Muhammad Layes, Rowshi's uncle, in his written statement said doctors barred Rowshi's relatives to transfer her to other hospitals, even when physical condition was worsening, the

He also alleged that Rowshi died because of administering 8/9 high-powered anti-biotic injections to her tender body.

Tanvir said "The accused of the case are now threatening the family members to withdraw the case and offering money for settlement."

Rowshi's mother Nasima Begum and other family members were also present at the press conference.

IUTA demands punishment to Shibir cadres

IU CORRESPONDENT

The Islamic University Teachers' Association (IUTA) yesterday demanded exemplary punishment of Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICS) cadres who vandalised the office of the director of the Teacher Student Cultural Centre (TSCC) on Saturday.

The meeting also demanded for investigation into the August 2 vandalism by JCD men on the office of the administrator of the transport office.

The IUTA has formally withdrawn their work abstention programme at a general meeting with new Vice Chancellor Prof Faez Mohammad Serazul Hoque on Thursday.

The classes and examinations of the university remained suspended for 24 days from July 19.

VC Faez yesterday formed a five-member body to probe the TSCC vandalism by ICS men on Saturday and asked to submit its report within 15 days.

WEATHER TODAY

Moderately heavy falls likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong, Barisal, Khulna and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy falls are also likely at places during the period, Met Office said, predicting nearly unchanged day temperature over the country.

Country's highest temperature 34.6 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Dinajpur and lowest 24.9 degree Celsius at Srirongal.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:33pm today and rises at 5:34am 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	33.2	27.6	74	64
Chittagong	32.5	25.5	86	82
Rajshahi	33.8	27.1	81	77
Khulna	32.5	26.4	82	81
Barisal	32.5	25.8	90	--
Sylhet	33.1	25.0	87	72
Cox's Bazar	30.5	25.0	88	83