

Weight thieves in Rab custody



RAIHAN SABUKTAGIN

Consumers in Dhaka city are deprived of their rights on getting accurate weight from the sellers. Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) conducted drives at Mohammadpur Krishi Market, Town Hall market and at Karwan Bazar in Tejgaon area against cheating public with faulty weights yesterday.

At least 30 traders were caught red handed with the faulty weights and scales. Captain Zahangir Alam led the group of Rab and police told Star City that these sellers are cheating the consumers by using faulty weights and scales. He said that most of these sellers possess two or three kinds of weights.

"I found 1 kilogram weights which are in fact 850 gram each in reality," he said.

According to Bangladesh Standard Testing Institute, at least 20 companies are legally producing weights in the country and two of these companies lost their licences for producing faulty weights.

Mizan, a shopkeeper at Karwan Bazar said that faulty weights are more popular to the shopkeepers in spite of its higher price.

Usually a set of weight costs Tk 450 but faulty weights costs more than Tk 600 and these are available in the market.

Both government and private hospitals are facing acute shortage of skilled manpower when unemployment remains a pressing problem in the country.

The shortage of nurses and technicians is 30 to 40 percent while the shortage of skilled technicians is around 50 percent, said Dr ABM Harun, owner of Samarit Hospital, one of the leading private hospitals.

He said the number of radiographers, lab technicians and image technicians in the city's hospitals is quite inadequate. The problem is so acute that the private hospitals always try to woo skilled manpower from other hospitals.

Human resource manager of Square Hospital said it takes several years for a nurse or a technician to complete his or her studies and gather experiences. So, this problem cannot be solved overnight.

"Some of the modern machines we have cannot be



A medical technologist operating a machine at recently opened Square Hospital.

and 18 private institutes for health technologists where 2,224 students are enrolled every year to study various disciplines such as lab medicine, radiology, physiotherapy, radiotherapy and pharmacy.

The Institute of Health Technology (IHT) in Mohakhali is one of the two government institutes in the country that trains medical technologists. Another one is in Rajshahi. Out of the 18 private institutes for health technologists, 11 are located in the capital.

The IHT, which is supposed to provide skilled medical technicians to the hospitals, itself is in a bad shape. It is facing manpower shortage as no new posts were created in IHT since its inception in 1963.

At the time of inception the number of students in this institute was 50. Now there are around 320 students in seven faculties but the manpower remains the same. Moreover, two posts were abolished in 1985, said IHT sources.

The seven faculties of this institute are: sanitary inspector, lab medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, radiography and imaging, radiotherapy and physiotherapy. Radiotherapy was opened in 2005 with 20 seats. Other faculties have 50 seats each. The students are taught 9 subjects in the first year, 4 subjects in the second year and 3 subjects in the third year.

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SHORTAGE OF SKILLED MANPOWER 1

Wanted: Medical technologists

Acute shortage of medical technologists is forcing top executives in the sector to head-hunt with added incentives

DURDANA GHIAS

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WEEK AHEAD

Weekly weather forecast for the city

Today	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Low: 16 °C High: 24 °C Sunshine and nice	Low: 15 °C High: 26 °C Sunny and beautiful	Low: 14 °C High: 23 °C Mostly sunny and pleasant	Low: 16 °C High: 25 °C Mostly sunny	Low: 16 °C High: 25 °C Mostly sunny	Low: 16 °C High: 27 °C Plenty of	Low: 17 °C High: 26 °C Mostly sunny

hellodhaka

source: accuweather.com

e-mail: starcity@theluckystar.net

Faulty electrical accessories flood market

RIZANUZZAMAN LASKAR

Majority of the electrical accessories available in the market are highly hazardous and sub-standard in quality. This exposes millions of city dwellers to the risk of electrocution, burns and even short circuit.

Most of these accessories, although carry the 'BSTI [Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution] approved' imprint on them, are unsafe and poor in quality with flimsy durability.

Use of substandard electric accessories is also harmful for expensive electric appliances used in thousands of households in the city everyday. Chinese made look-alikes of popular brands and locally made poor quality material are glutting the market making electrical accessories the worst victims.

A visit in the market revealed hundreds of substandard electrical accessories including household power plugs, sock-

ets, circuit breakers, electrical cables, power extension cords, multi-plugs and numerous other peripherals being sold openly, most of which appears to be look-alikes of major brands.

Mahfuz, a retailer from Nawabpur, said that they keep items of both superior and lower qualities for the convenience of different kinds of customers.

"We do warn them about the possible shortcomings of using substandard products but most people tend to prefer the cheaper or substandard ones," he said.

While many of these 'look-alikes' are being sold without any seals or brands from the manufacturers, some are sold by using brand names and logos similar to the popular ones.

Shakandar, an Electrician said that popular brands like paradise or BRB can be easily imitated with similar brands like Parapise or BRP.

"With similar names and looks, people tend to get confused. Cheaper prices play a big

role here. To buy genuine products people should collect those directly from the authorised dealers of the popular brands or consult reliable experts," he said.

Saiful Islam, Assistant Director (T&M) CM, BSTI blamed hundreds of unauthorised manufacturers illegally producing faulty electric accessories using the BSTI seals to delude buyers.

"Only 2 or 3 of them actually have proper authorisation for producing electric accessories and peripherals. The rest are producing look-alikes using our seal," said Islam.

He added that huge demand of such products and the wide availability of materials used to produce them makes it possible for people to produce such materials even at home for commercial purposes, with the relevant knowledge and experience.

"Due to the immense household demand, electrical peripherals has a big market and

established itself as quite big a cottage industry, and you can actually find small factories inside people's houses," said Islam.

Sazzadul Bari, Assistant Director (Electricity), BSTI said that BSTI collected Tk 3 crore worth of fine from people penalised for manufacturing and selling substandard electrical accessories and peripherals last year.

"Taking actions against the offenders is difficult as the manufacturers don't leave any seals or imprints on their products, making it difficult for us to trace them, so we usually charge the retailers for selling faulty accessories," he said.

Over the past years, the city has witnessed several fatal catastrophes allegedly sparked by seemingly naïve electrical incidents. The most disastrous ones include fire outbreaks in Bangabazar and several other hawkers' markets, and the ones in slums.

ABM Nurul Haque, Deputy

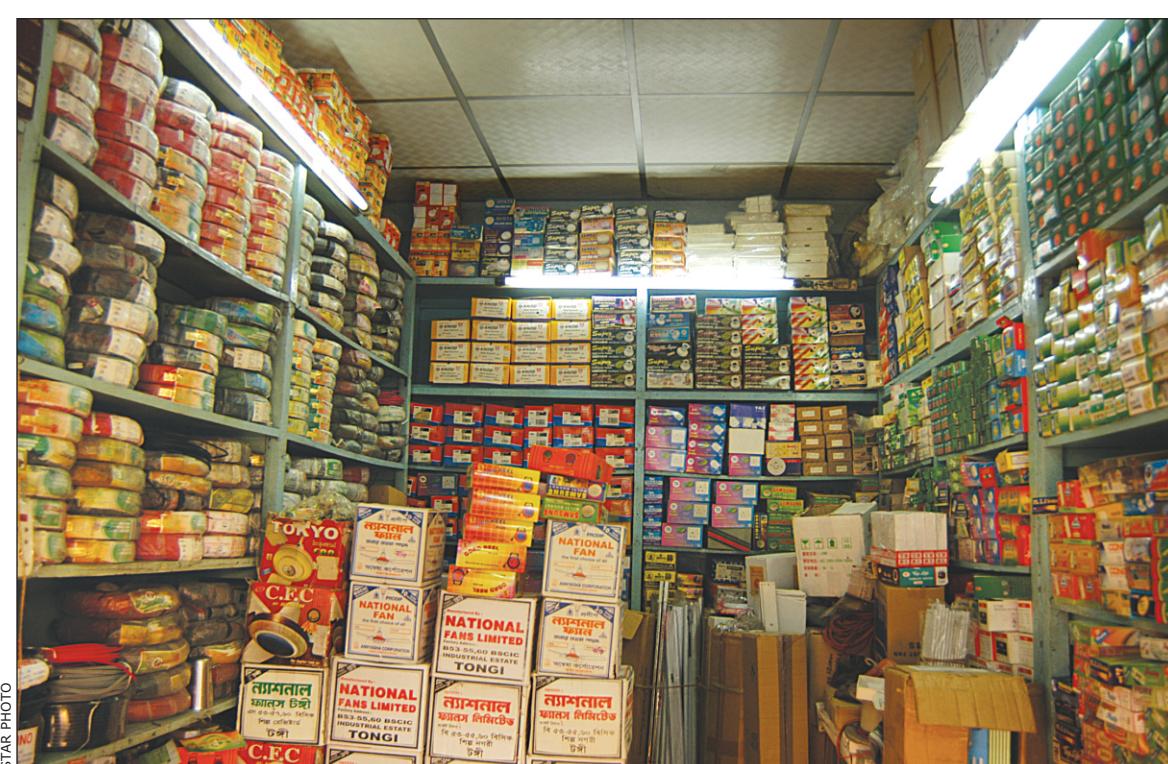
Assistant Director of Dhaka of Fire Service said that most of the fires actually started from short circuits due to faulty electrical lines and accessories and some from unsafe cooking.

He said lack of awareness amongst the general people for the electricity-based accidents is also a reason.

"Using substandard quality of accessories and appliances are just part of the picture as the general people are ignorant about faulty electrical installations and how they tend to draw excess power than the sanctioned load ignoring the rules concerning the proper usage of electricity," said Bari.

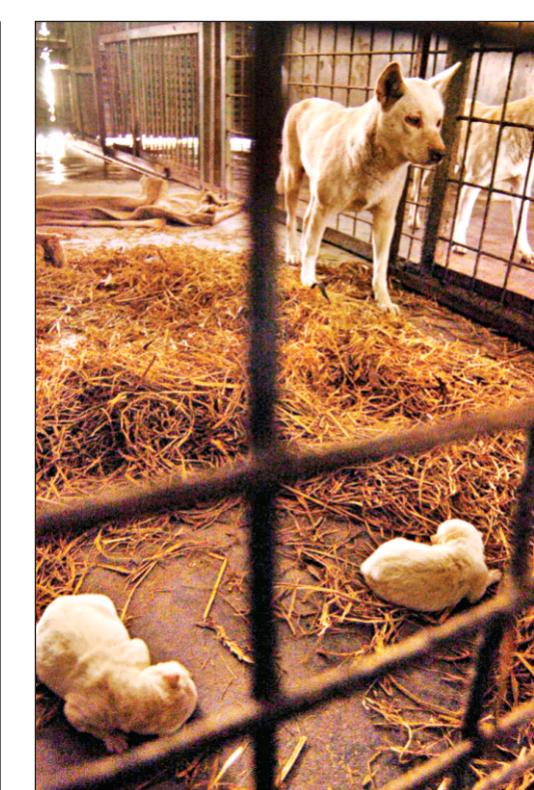
"You don't plug in a 240 volt electric refrigerator into a point that can support 110 to 220 volt of electricity otherwise you may end up damaging your refrigerator," he added.

STAR PHOTO



Substandard electric accessories are widely available.

Most of these accessories, although carry the 'BSTI [Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution] approved' imprint on them, are unsafe and poor in quality with flimsy durability



STAR PHOTO

Baby boom at Dhaka Zoo

WAHIDA MITU

The Dhaka zoo is buzzing with numbers of newborns this time of the year. The cute little residents -- dingo, hanuman, ulluk, nilgai, waterbuck and lion -- are attracting more crowds lately to the largest zoo in the country.

One of the two dingoes, which arrived at Dhaka Zoo from Kuwait Zoo on December 9 last year under an animal exchange programme between the two zoos, gave birth to two puppies on January 8.

"The Kuwait Zoo authority was not aware about the pregnancy of the dingo. And that is why we were not aware of it either. Out of the blue, at 7 in the morning on January 8, it gave birth to two puppies," said Kazi Fazlul Haque, curator of Dhaka Zoo. "However, the puppies are in good health and can take their food properly."

The dingoes in the Dhaka Zoo, a species of wild dog, have a

white coat with long furry tails. "Before giving birth, we noticed that the particular dingo seemed to have a growing appetite and was looking for more food. Each dingo was allotted half a kilogram of meat every day. We then increased her allotment to one kg," said Dr Selim Iqbal, a veterinary surgeon at Dhaka Zoo.

"This (unusual appetite of the female dingo) made us worried and we had her stool tested. Everything turned out perfectly fine. Then I officially recommended providing more food for her. After the Eid holidays, she gave us a big surprise by giving birth to the puppies," he added.

Two species of hanumans at the zoo gave birth to a couple of babies as well in December last year. Four other residents of the zoo -- lion, nilgai, ulluk and waterbuck -- gave birth to a baby each in last few months. A lion gave birth in October, an ulluk and a waterbuck in November, while a nilgai in December

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