

# Nat'l policy soon for dev of poultry sector

## Livestock adviser tells seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Fisheries and Livestock Adviser CS Karim yesterday said the government will formulate a national poultry policy soon for sustainable development of poultry sector in the country.

"A committee has already been set up to formulate the policy," he said while addressing a seminar in the city.

The seminar titled 'Avian influenza: Impact on poultry industry and its prevention' was organised by Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) at its auditorium.

Terming the growth of poultry industry unregulated, Karim said the government will strengthen security system at the import points to check entering any avian influenza-infected chicks from abroad.

He said apart from state-run Biman poultry, other private sector farms are also responsible for spreading avian influenza in the country.

"It is said Biman poultry spread

avian influenza. But, the virus was also spread by many other farms which imported avian influenza-infected chicks from countries from where chick import is banned," he added.

"We have the list of those farms, but I don't want to disclose their names," the adviser said.

"We will find out a working plan to help or compensate the affected poultry farm owners. But, the compensation policy will be focused on small farmers," he added.

The adviser said so far the government has detected avian influenza in 21 farms of seven districts out of three lakh farms across the country and culled some 75,000 fowls.

"It's a lesson for us. Let us learn and march forward to support the industry for a sustainable development," he added.

Addressing the function, DCCI Acting President M Shahjahan Khan said the poultry sector is an emerging sector where around Tk

8000 crore has already been invested and some 60 lakh people are involved in this industry directly and indirectly.

Other speakers at the seminar urged the government to formulate a national poultry policy and national planning to save the industry.

They said along with awareness, laboratory facilities to diagnose the diseases should be increased.

The immune status of the poultry workers also needs to be upgraded, they added.

Dr Priya Mohan Das, professor of Bangladesh Agriculture University, presented a keynote paper while Dr Abul Kalam Azad, national consultant of Food and Agriculture Organisation, Kazi Zahedul Hasan, managing director of M/s Kazi Farms Limited, and Moshir Rahman, president of World Poultry Association-Bangladesh, spoke at the seminar.

## Extortion case against Hasina protested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Several organisations yesterday protested and condemned the filing of an extortion case against Awami League President Sheikh Hasina.

In separate statements, they demanded withdrawal of the case, saying that the case is false and part of a conspiracy.

Bangladesh Krishak League President Dr Mirza Jalil and General Secretary Motahar Hossain said this 'pre-planned' case came as a shock to the nation as even the immediate-past BNP government had failed to malign Hasina despite all their efforts.

Jatir Janak Adarsha Parishad said the case is part of a 'deep-rooted conspiracy'. It also poses a threat to the people and justice as well, it added.

Muktijoddha Paribar Kalyan Sangsad and Jatiya Gonotantrik League also condemned the filing of the case.

## 5 CPA officials suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Five high officials of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) and one Mercantile Marine Department (MMD) principal officer were suspended on charges of corrupt practice, irregularities and inefficiency yesterday evening.

CPA Chairman Moslehuddin issued a notice suspending the CPA officials yesterday evening.

The officials are CPA Director (Traffic) Ansanul Kabir, Chief Hydrographer Habibur Rahman Khan, Project Director (Equipments) Khairul Mostafa, Terminal Manager Mashur Rahman Beg and Deputy Director (Estate) Zillur Rahman.

At the same time Director General of MMD issued a separate suspension order against the MMD Principal Officer Captain Habibur Rahman.

Immediately after their suspension, members of the joint forces took them to Chittagong Cantonment for interrogation, unofficial sources said.

CPA Director (Traffic) Ansanul Kabir was released after interrogation at night, sources added.



PHOTO: PID

Newly appointed Air Chief Air Vice Marshal Shah M Ziaur Rahman made a courtesy call on President Iajuddin Ahmed at Bangabhaban in the city yesterday.

## NAT'L CONFCE ON ALLERGY

# '25 pc people suffer from allergic diseases'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

About 25 percent people in the country suffer from allergic diseases mainly due to growing environmental pollution that needs to be addressed properly, speakers at the Fourth National Conference on Allergy and Immunology said yesterday.

Bangladesh Society for Allergy and Immunology (BANSAL) organised the conference at the auditorium of Bangladesh College of Physicians and Surgeons (BCPS) with National Professor MR Khan in the chair.

Ruby Pawankar, a professor of Nippon Medical School in Tokyo, presented the keynote paper on 'Revisiting the link between rhinitis and asthma.'

Rhinitis is an allergic disease, which is mostly neglected and a major risk factor for asthma. Epidemiologically, up to 40 percent of patients with allergic rhinitis also have asthma.

The presentation also covered common triggers of allergy, asthma-related resource utilisation, allergic rhinitis and its impact on asthma and socio-economic impact of rhinitis.

"Management of allergic rhinitis comprises patient education, allergen avoidance, pharmacotherapy and validated allergen specific immunotherapy," she said, adding that successful management of both rhinitis and asthma require an integrated view of the airways and an integrated approach of treatment.

Prof MR Khan said Bangladesh has been facing shortage of doctors as well as experts on allergy and a huge number of people have been suffering from allergy and allergic diseases.

"Around 25 percent of people in the country suffer from allergic diseases while around 70 lakh people suffer from asthma," he said, adding that environmental pollution, excessive fume emission from diesel-run vehicles and factories, unplanned urban-

sation and unplanned use of chemical fertilisers lead to an increase in allergic diseases.

"Raising awareness in society and modern scientific treatment are important in this regard," he said.

The speakers said avoidance of allergen is the primary objective to treat patients with allergic diseases. Patients should understand the role of specific allergens causing symptoms and take measures to prevent exposure to allergens.

President of BANSAL Prof MN Amin, Vice-President Mostafizur Rahman, Treasurer Ali Hossain, Prof Rashidul Hassan and Asif Mujtaba Mahmud of National Institute for Diseases of Chest and Hospital (NIDC&H) also spoke at the inaugural session of the conference.

## Govt won't allow new construction on Begunbari canal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government will not allow construction of any new structures on the Begunbari canal in the city.

LGRD and Cooperatives Adviser Anwarul Iqbal said this at a meeting with leaders of Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers' and Exporters' Association (BGMEA) at his office yesterday.

He said the government has a plan to construct a four-lane road from Bijoy Sarani to Rampura and to convert the 265-acre canal into a lake.

"We want to ensure smooth traffic movement," he said, adding that "We would not bow to the pressure from any forces, however powerful they may be."

The adviser also said the fate of the Rangs building at Bijoy Sarani would be decided on Thursday.

He also hinted that the government might halt the proposed plan for the extension of Hotel Sonargaon.

Responding to BGMEA leaders' appeal to reconsider the government decision on the BGMEA building, allegedly built on the canal, the adviser said, "The government is pondering over the issue."

## Flight Cadet Faisal buried

Flight cadet Faisal Mahmood, who died on Monday in a BAF plane accident, was buried with full military honour at BAF graveyard, Tejgaon in the city yesterday, says an ISPR press release.

Earlier, his namaz-e-janaza was held at BAF Base Bashar, Dhaka Cantonment in the afternoon.

Before the janaza, Chief of Air Staff Air Vice Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman placed wreath at the coffin of Faisal Mahmood. On behalf of Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Moeen U Ahmed, Adjutant General of Bangladesh Army Major General Md Matiur Rahman also placed wreath at the coffin of the deceased.

His qukhwani will be held at his residence at 120/D, Shahjahanpur, Benjir Bagan in the city after Asr prayers on Friday.

## Road crash kills one

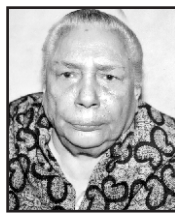
UNB, Dhaka

Agitated mob put up barricade on Dhaka-Chittagong highway for half an hour and damaged vehicles following a road accident at Matuail in Jatrabari area in the city yesterday that killed one.

Police said Dhaka-bound bus crushed an unidentified man near Matuail Matri Sadan at about 10:00am when he was crossing the road.

Later, members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

## Obituary



Dr Asia Khatun, an eminent gynaecologist, passed away due to old-age ailments at the Medical Centre of Central Georgia Hospital, USA, on April 9 at the age of 84, says a press release.

Dr Asia, wife of late Nizam Uddin Haider, a lawyer of the Supreme Court, left behind her two daughters and one son.

A milad mahfil will be held at 3/1303 Eastern Tower, New Eskaton, after Asr prayers tomorrow.

# Addl secy, divisional commissioners empowered to give nod to EPR cases

UNB, Dhaka

Home ministry additional secretary and divisional commissioners have been empowered to give government approval to EPR cases and public-interest suits.

As per clause 14 of the Emergency Power Rules 2007, following its third amendment, all such cases filed in the city since January 12 to April 7 will be given retrospective endorsement.

The additional secretary will give the nod to these and the cases to be registered in future, according to a

Home Ministry order issued yesterday.

The additional secretary is also authorised to give approval to the cases of public interest filed across the country on April 8 and to be lodged in the future," says the order.

It said all divisional commissioners, excepting Dhaka Metropolitan area, were empowered within their respective jurisdiction to give approval to similar cases lodged across the country since January 12 until April 7 "with retrospective effect".

## 4 muggers arrested in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested four muggers at Sutrapur and Sangsad Bhaban area in the city.

Sources said Rab-10 members caught two muggers red handed at around 1:45pm while they were trying to snatch away Tk two lakh from one Chowdhury Shahidul Islam in Farashganj area at Sutrapur in the city.

Shahidul drew the amount from a bank to pay the employees of Nesar

Uddin Garment.

The arrestees have been identified as Md Ratan, 28, of Demra, Dhaka and Md Sharif Uddin of Chagol Bera in Faridpur.

Meanwhile, Rab-10 members arrested another two muggers with Tk 2000 from South Plaza of Sangsad Bhaban area.

The arrestees have been identified as Md Hanif Miah, 30 and his accomplice Md Rabiul Awal, 28.

Rab personnel also recovered three mobile sets and two revenue stamps from their possession.

# Two jail guards arrested for concealing identities

A CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

The joint forces yesterday arrested two jail guards of Noakhali District Jail for concealing their identities to take the advantage of the district quota system during the recruitment.

The two, who actually hail from Comilla, identified themselves as Kamal Hossain and Abu Zaher of Banshkhalil and Anwara in Chittagong respectively and got appointment as the jail guards. The two have been serving at Noakhali jail since 2004 and 2006 respectively. But their acts of fraud came to light when Deputy Commissioner Md Habibul Kabir Chowdhury visited the jail yesterday noon.

During the exchange of greetings, the deputy commissioner (DC) started to speak in Chittagong dialect as the two guards told him that they

hail from Chittagong, sources said. But the suspicion of the DC aroused when the guards failed to reply in the same dialect. The DC immediately asked the district magistrate to investigate the matter.

The guards were then handed over to Sudharan police.

During the interrogation by additional district magistrate in the afternoon, guard Kamal said his real name is Shafikul Islam and he hails from Uttarteta Bhumil in Comilla while guard Jaher admitted that his real name is Habibur Rahman and he hails from Sabuj Para village in Brahmanpara in Comilla.

They also said that they gave bribes to a jail guard at Sylhet to get appointment and then joined Naokhalil jail as jail guards.

## Butenis in Khulna on 3-day visit

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

US Ambassador in Bangladesh Patricia A Butenis arrived in Khulna yesterday afternoon.

She attended a meeting of cross section of people in the evening at the auditorium of Rupantar, an NGO, said an official source.

Butenis is supposed to meet local journalists and civil society members separately this morning before leaving for Bagerhat.

In Bagerhat, the US Ambassador is supposed to visit some projects aided by her country and run by Rupantar, exchange views with UP chairman and visit the holy shrine of Hazrat Khanjahan Ali (RA). Besides, she will visit the Sundarbans before returning to Khulna.

The US envoy is also likely to visit some shrimp processing factories in Khulna during her three-day visit.

## CNG driver arrested on rape charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Police arrested a CNG auto-rickshaw driver in the port city yesterday on charge of raping a minor girl.

The arrestee was identified as Md Tofayel alias Tofayyellah, 34, of Noapara Chowdhuryhat under Raozan upazila.

Sources said the victim, a nine-year-old daughter of a widow beggar, was working as a domestic help at the house of Tofayel, a tenant of one Kalu Sowdagar at Tekbazarpul area of Mohara under Chandgaon Police Station.

The alleged, father of four children, raped the minor girl forcefully on Friday night at his house. His wife along with the children went to their village home on the same morning, police said quoting the victim.

On information, police sent the victim to the One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC) of Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) on Monday.

Police raided Tekbazarpul area and held Tofayel from his house yesterday morning.

A rape case was filed with the concerned police station in this connection.

## Rtv resumes transmission on Apr 14

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rtv, a private satellite television channel, will resume its transmission on April 14, says a press release.

The television channel, which started its journey on December 26, 2005, went off the air on February 26 after a devastating fire swept through the BSEC building at Karwan Bazar, which housed the TV station.

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centres must be dismantled for making the local government stronger. There is no need to keep the power concentrated in the secretariat and PMO."

"Only the planning commission will exist to prepare vision statements," he said participating in the discussion.

Shujan President Prof Muzaffer Ahmad chaired the discussion moderated by ex-judge Quazi Ebadul Haque.

Former adviser to a caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan said the lawmakers must be de-linked from the local government activities. He lamented that though Awami League (AL) and BNP could never reach a consensus on any other issues, they were united on cancellation of the upazila system.

He observed that none of the previous governments was committed to developing the local government bodies. He added, "The system [local government] worked well during the British rule but we could not utilise it."

AL presidium member Abdur Razzaq said, "Instead of being occupied with development work, the lawmakers should rather be busy making laws."

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The people too should be made aware that the parliament members are not merely responsible for development in the constituencies, he added.

Former minister and Jatiya Party leader Anisul Islam Mahmud underscored the need for a social movement to develop public awareness about the role of legislature and the local government bodies.

He pointed out that the members of parliament become involved in the development programmes because people want so. The constituents also want social support from their representatives.

Former lawmaker GM Quader said the local government must be strengthened for giving democracy the true shape. He alleged that successive governments had been keen to centralise power, not the other way around.

He demanded amendment to article 70 in the constitution for more power to parliament members.

Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury of Gonoshasthaya Kendra said the power that had been taken away from the local government would have to be retained. He demanded that the country be divided into several provinces or states as part of the efforts towards decentralisation.

# Power Cell keeps on mishandling

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two years and is yet to take any concrete shape. In the latest development, the Power Cell held a pre-qualification (PQ) meeting amid political turmoil on December 14 last year. Though six companies were short-listed, only three participated in this oddly timed meeting.

Again these three companies — Indian GMR, American AES and Malaysian YTL — filed with the Power Cell a number of written queries about the PQ criterion. Based on the cell's response, these companies are supposed to file their PQ documents. But till date, the cell did not respond to any of these clarifications.

The Power Cell had set April 16 as the date for PQ bid submission. Yesterday, the cell informed the bidders its decision to shift this date to May 16.

The present caretaker government early last month cancelled Meghnaghat-3 project contract for which was being awarded to unknown US-Irish joint venture Cadogan-Manning on the basis of unsolicited negotiations. The Power Cell was handling this negotiation, and the technical director was playing the key role.

As per a directive from the energy ministry last month, the director has now prepared pre-qualification document for Meghnaghat-3 project. This is its document, like in the past, once again allows inexperienced bidders for installation of such a large project.

Sources said the Meghnaghat-3 document allows an inexperienced bidder to qualify by forging a 10 percent partnership deal with an experienced company. This is the same kind of criterion used in Meghnaghat-2 power project, which remains uncertain as it was awarded to scamster Obaidul Karim's Orion Group.

A host of complaints were made regarding the cell's handling of small power schemes. Sources said after the present caretaker government scrapped all small power project tenders last month on grounds of favouritism and breach of tender terms, the cell floated a tender but kept it restricted within the companies listed during the alliance government rule.

The alliance government had tried to award contracts for small power projects to non-professional companies owned by various ex-MPs, ruling party leaders and favoured business groups.

The cell floated tender for installation of power plants at 10 sites with capacities ranging from 10 MW to 30 MW. Due to restrictive nature of the tender, only 18 bids were submitted. Of these, single tenders were submitted for six sites. The cell disqualified six bids on flimsy grounds, and thus qualified only nine bids for nine sites.

Power prices offered by these nine bidders ranged between Tk 3.18 and Tk 3.74 per kilowatt hour, which is much higher than in small power project bids that were cancelled last month.

The sources said the Power Cell has resorted to a power tariff measuring formula that goes against the national interest. For instance, small power projects' tariff was based on 70 percent plant factor whereas Power Development Board (PDB) in its similar tenders in the past had fixed 60 percent plant factor. The cell has doubled gas price compared to the present gas sales rate.

"If these tenders followed pricing criterion of the PDB, price offers of the bidders would have ranged between Tk 2.42 and Tk 2.75 per kilowatt hour," notes a power expert.

The Power Cell also offered bidders exemption of all duties, tax holidays and supply of gas to them at

government expense. The recent PDB tender did not offer any of such facilities.

The PDB tender had given the small power companies three months to install a 10 MW plant and seven months for an 80 MW one. But the cell gave 15 months to 18 months, which is long enough to install a large big power plant.

"This once again is the same old exercise that the caretaker government has cancelled. This is wasteful and the nation can no longer afford such whims of the Power Cell," pointed out a senior official.

The alliance government in April 2005 controversially removed the cell's highly qualified technical director, who had the experience of negotiation on Haripur 360 MW power project among others, and replaced him with the project manager of Westmont power company.

"Salary (of staff) difference between Westmont and Power Cell is very wide, and he is the first instance of a private power project technical employee's leaving job to join government job," comments one official.

Sources said the then prime minister's political secretary Harris Chowdhury prompted this change to pave the way for awarding an unsolicited contract to Cadogan-Manning for the third phase of Meghnaghat 450 MW power plant in violation of rules and policy guidelines of the government.

## Air chief calls on president

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed, also the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, yesterday stressed the need for modernising the Air Force and training of its officials.

The President said this when newly appointed Air Chief Air Vice Marshal Shah M Ziaur Rahman made a courtesy call on him at Bangabhaban.

Air Vice Marshal Shah M Ziaur Rahman expressed his gratitude to the President and sought his cooperation.

The air chief apprised the president of Monday's crash of a training aircraft of Bangladesh Air Force in Jessore as the President wanted to know about the incident.

## ADMISSION FORGERY

# Two DU staffs suspended

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities yesterday suspended one official and one employee for their involvement in admission forgery following the report of an investigation committee.

They are: Deputy Registrar (education-2) AKM Mozammel Haq and head assistant of public administration department Yunus Akond.

The authorities also sent show cause notices to 22 students, who were detected as fake.

Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz told The Daily Star that according to prior decision of syndicate he directed to suspend them.

"We made the decision of suspension and sending off show cause notices on the basis of prior decision of the syndicate," he said.

The probe committee yesterday submitted its findings to the VC.

The authorities also requested law enforcement agencies to take legal actions.

Mozammel could not be reached while Yunus has been on a leave since last month.

## Huge date-expired chemicals confiscated, 2 cos fined in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chief Revenue Officer (CRO) of Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) in a special drive here yesterday confiscated huge date-expired chemicals and reagents and fined two pharmaceutical companies in this connection.

CCC CRO Syeda Sarwar Jahan, also a first class magistrate, confiscated 58 drums of liquid glucose and glycerin in a drive at Therapeutics Pharmaceuticals at Kalurghat FIDC Road, sources said.

The drums containing date-expired chemicals were lying under the open sky, prompting the magistrate to fine the establishment Tk 20000, said the sources.

The magistrate also realised Tk three lakh of Tk 8.93 lakh outstanding CCC tax from the establishment. However, Therapeutics authorities committed to pay the rest of the tax within the next seven days.

The CRO also realised Tk 3.60 lakh of Tk 7.86 lakh outstanding CCC tax from Choice Garments of the same area following its commitment to pay the rest within a week, said a press release last evening.

In another drive in Jamal Khan area the magistrate fined a metal workshop Tk 20000 for running its business inside the residential area ignoring a notice CCC issued against it earlier.

The CRO also fined Biopath Pharmaceuticals of the same area Tk 20000 for keeping date-expired reagents.

### View exchange

Bangladesh Heritage Foundation will hold a view exchange meeting on 'Militancy in Bangladesh: Against the spirit of democracy, rule of law and the liberation war'. Venue: Bilal auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

### Seminar

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) organises a seminar on 'Poverty and inequality trends in Bangladesh'. Venue: Baridhara campus. Time: 5:30pm.

### Discussion

Campaign for Popular Bangladesh will hold a discussion on 'Financing primary and secondary education in Bangladesh'. Venue: BIDS auditorium. Time: 3:00pm.

### Fair

National Handicraft and Pottery Trade Fair 2007 will be held. Venue: Shishu Academy. Time: 11:00am.

### Book launching

The launching of a poetry book by Sinha MA Sayeed and a spring poetry recital organised by Bangladesh Writers Foundation will be held. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 4:00pm.