

DEAN'S LECTURE SERIES 2007 'Govt support needed to promote DNA technology'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the DNA technology has become an all-important tool in criminal investigation in many countries, the head of the National Forensic DNA Profiling Laboratory yesterday stressed the need for the government's financial commitment to bring the technology within the reach of common people.

"Bangladesh is still lagging behind many countries in terms of the use of DNA technology," National Technical Adviser to the laboratory Prof Sharif Akhteruzzaman told reporters after delivering a lecture on 'DNA Technology in Criminal Investigation' at the Teacher-Student Centre auditorium in the city.

Although the DNA profiling was introduced in many countries over two decades ago, Bangladesh has introduced it last year, he said.

"We need to make concerted and sincere efforts to close the gap between the developed countries and our country with regard to the use of DNA technology," he observed.

The lecture was the first of a series of Dean's Lecture 2007 organised jointly by the faculty of biological sciences, Dhaka University, and The Daily Star, with an aim to popularise modern biological sciences as 'the science of the 21st century' in mother language.

DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz attended the programme as the chief guest while Editor and

Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam was present as special guest. Dean of the faculty of biological sciences Prof M Anwar Hossain delivered the welcome speech.

In his keynote speech, Prof Sharif elaborately focused on DNA technology in criminal investigation and its impacts.

He said DNA or Deoxyribonucleic Acid is the fundamental building block of an individual's entire genetic makeup. It is the hereditary blueprint passed on to children by their parents.

Prof Sharif said the key insight came from the discovery of a technique called DNA fingerprinting, first described by a British scientist Sir Alec Jeffreys in 1985.

A conventional fingerprint, though unique, can be changed by plastic surgery, but a DNA fingerprint, which can simply be called the genetic photograph of an individual, is the same for every cell of an individual and cannot be altered by any known treatment, he said.

By using modern molecular biological techniques, it is now possible to generate a DNA fingerprint of an individual from any trace of biological samples such as blood, hair, semen, saliva, tissue, bone and teeth in the laboratory in 24 hours, Prof Sharif said.

He said forensic DNA profiling usually involves comparing DNA evidence (i.e. DNA extracted from a biological sample left at a crime scene) with the suspect DNA (i.e. DNA extracted from the sample taken from the suspect).

The practical applications of DNA fingerprinting can help find out personal identification, which is particularly useful in resolving criminal cases like murder, rape, theft or burglary, he added.

Besides, DNA fingerprinting can also help resolve paternity and inheritance dispute through identifying parents or heirs of an individual. Identity of disaster victims can also be confirmed through this technology, Prof Sharif said.

Prof SMA Faiz called on the scientists to evolve newer technologies through research and practice of science.

He also said the teachers of Dhaka University are trying to take the country and its people ahead through research and development.

The Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam stressed the need to introduce the students to modern sciences in Bangla, saying that practising science in mother language more and more will enhance the people's capacity to understand science easily and help expand the science education.

He called on teachers to carry out more researches on sciences and present them in simple language and interesting style.

He also suggested translating the stories of invention into Bangla.

Mahfuz Anam suggested organising talk show on television on different issues of science at least once a month. He also proposed observing a day as the 'National Science Day' to popularise science.

SIRAJDIKHAN ROBBERY 4 cops closed to Munshiganj Police Line

A CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Four policemen, who were captured by local villagers, were closed to Munshiganj Police Line yesterday for allegedly providing assistance to a robbery.

They were identified as Nayek Imraj Uddin and constables Rajon Sheikh, Manik Bare and Neptahur Chakma of Sirajdikhan Shekhor Nagar police camp.

Sources said the villagers captured them at around 2:00am on Tuesday night at Galkhali village under Sirajdikhan upazila when the robbery was being committed at three houses there.

Officer-in-charge (OC) of Sirajdikhan Police Station rescued the four policemen on Wednesday morning after assuring the villagers that due investigation will be carried out against them.

Later the OC sent the four policemen to Munshiganj Police Line.

Afzal Hossain, police super of Munshiganj, said thorough investigation will be conducted to probe whether they were involved in any kind of wrongdoing.

He said they have already arrested a robber named Mukul in connection with the robbery.

"We are now searching for others who committed the robbery," Afzal added.

The family of Anupam Chandra Mandal, who was struck by the robbers, said his condition is still critical.

A case of robbery has been lodged with Sirajdikhan Police Station in this connection.

46 cars, bikes stolen in two months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 46 cars and motorcycles were stolen in the last two months in the city while the law enforcing agencies have recovered 29 vehicles during this period.

Of the recovered, Detective Branch (DB) of police recovered 25 cars and motorcycles while the rest four was recovered by Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

Masudur Rahman, additional deputy commissioner (ADC) of DB police, said with a view to resisting carjacking in the city, two special teams of DB led by him were formed on March 19.

He said whenever a car is stolen, police stations forward details of the car to the teams who in turn start searching for the stolen vehicles.

Since their formation, they have recovered eight motorbikes and 17 cars in the last two months, he added.

One crushed under wheels of train

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

One person was crushed under the wheels of a Mymensingh-bound passenger train at about 11:00pm on Wednesday at Thakurakona Rail station under Netrakona Sadar upazila.

The victim identified as Sumon Chandra Biswas, 26, was crushed under the wheel of the train when he was crossing the rail line.

Sumon hailed from Kashobpur village under Kalmakanda upazila in Kushtia.

Taslina's art exhibition begins today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A four-day exhibition of paintings by Taslima Akhter, a student of Vishwabarati University, India, begins in Dhaka today.

Former adviser to the caretaker government Sultana Kamal will inaugurate the exhibition at Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts, at 5:00pm.

Organised by Desh Ekti Sammilita Uchcharan and Focus Bangladesh, the exhibition will remain open from 10:00am to 1:00pm and from 3:00pm to 8:00pm daily up to May 21.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Giasuddin Alamgir Miah, an industrialist and social worker, will be held after Juma prayers today.

On this occasion, recitations from the holy Quran and a doa mahfil will be held at his Muslim Para residence and Hazi Iskander Ali Mosque and Madrasa Complex in Bhola.

Giasuddin passed away on April 8. He left behind his wife, two sons, one daughter and a host of relatives to mourn his death.



South Korean Ambassador Park Suk-Bum calls on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed at his office yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

HUNDRED PERCENT SANITATION Public awareness at grassroots level a must to achieve target

MOON MOON SULTANA, back from Mymensingh

Speakers at two workshops have called for strengthening public awareness campaign at the grassroots level in order to achieve hundred percent sanitation across the country by 2010.

They also called for collaboration between the government and non-government organisations for achieving the goal.

They said if it is accomplished then two other goals of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - reducing child mortality and ensuring sustainable environment - will also be achieved.

The workshops titled 'Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Programme of Brac' were jointly organised by local government, upazila parishad and Brac at Trishal and Mymensingh sadar upazilas on Tuesday and Wednesday.

At Trishal, the speakers observed that although the target of achieving 100 percent sanitation is going on in full swing, significant number of people still suffer from water-related diseases due to indifference to practice of hygiene.

Around one lakh children under five die each year due to diarrhoea, said AB Siddik, deputy assistant

engineer of Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE) of Trishal Upazila, while presenting a paper titled 'Bangladesh: Safe water and sanitation programme'.

He said sanitation not only means providing sanitary latrine to every family but also ensuring the proper usage of latrines and hygiene practice.

Around Tk 500 crore is spent each year in health sector for treating water transmitted diseases including diarrhoea, typhoid and jaundice caused by the absence of hygiene practice, he added.

Siddik underscored the need for utilising media to raise awareness about the importance of hygiene practice. While presenting a paper on WASH Programme, Bishwajit Sarker, regional health coordinator, Mymensingh said the programme aims at eliminating the practice of using unhygienic latrine and water among rural and underprivileged people through the change of behaviour.

He said the community leaders including local government representatives, ansar and VDP members, retired teachers, religious leaders and small entrepreneurs can play the advocacy role in implementing the WASH

Programme.

Dr Rashida Akhter, Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer (UHFPO) of Trishal, said people suffer from various diseases due to lack of knowledge about sanitation and hygiene despite having sanitary latrine.

Khandaker Mustafizur Rahman, chairman of Bailor Union Parishad, pointed out that scarcity of safe water in the area is the major obstacle to sanitation and practice of hygiene.

Speaking at the workshop in Mymensingh, UHFPO MA Aziz called for the provision of punishment in order to stop using of unhygienic water and adopt sanitation practice by the people.

He pointed out that some rural people show reluctance to construct sanitary latrine even after getting them free of cost from the government.

Alamgir Hossain, senior regional manager of Brac Health Programme, was the chief guest at the workshop moderated by Ruhul Amin, manager of Brac Advocacy and Human Rights Unit.

With a view to help achieving MDGs, Brac launched WASH programme at 150 upazilas in May 2006 in collaboration with the government and other NGOs.

Debate festival begins in Kushtia today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A two-day national debate competition titled '3rd National NDF-BRB Cables Debate Festival 07' begins in Kushtia today.

Pro-Vice-chancellor of Dhaka University Prof AFM Yusuf Haider will inaugurate the festival as the chief guest at Kushtia Zila School by hoisting the national flag.

The NDF (National Debate Federation) has organised the festival.

The inaugural function is expected to be attended by Chairman of BRB cables Mozibur Rahman, former president of BGMEA Anisul Haq, Country Director of Al-Falaha Bank Mazedur Rahman, Chairman of Biswas Group Mainuddin Biswas Babu, Managing Director of Ambition Pass Consultant Enamul Haq, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University Prof Mamunul Keramat, Director of News of Channel i Shykh Siraj, General Secretary of Bangladesh Arthaniti Samity Prof Abul Barakat, Kushtia Police Super Moinul Hossain, writer Anisul Haq, Managing Director of BRB cables Parvez Rahman, Headmistress of Kushtia Zila School Nibha Rani Pathak and NDF Secretary General Safayat Hossain.

Editor of The Bangladesh Observer Iqbal Sobhan Choudhury will attend the programme on the second day as the chief guest.

According to the organisers, some 2,000 participants from across the country are expected to take part in

Doa mahfil

Engineer Asadul Hakim, son of Khan Bahadur Abdul Hakim, passed away in Bedford, England, on May 3, says a press release.

A doa and milad mahfil will be held at his sister's residence at Sonargaon Road in Dhanmondi after Asr prayers today for the salvation of the departed soul.

Aga Khan council team calls on CA

UNB, Dhaka

A delegation of Prince Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Council for Bangladesh yesterday called on Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed and apprised him of their socio-economic activities in the country.

The delegation, led by its President Habib Hirji, informed the chief adviser that they would set up a standard Aga Khan educational institution in the city's Bashundhara area on 20 acres of land.

They also briefed the chief adviser about their activities in different areas like education, rural development, healthcare, and helping the poor people.

The delegation informed that the 50th anniversary of Aga Khan's leadership would be celebrated from June 2007-June 2008 and they hoped the spiritual leader of Aga Khan Community would visit Bangladesh on the occasion.

The delegation included Aga Khan Foundation Chief Executive Officer Amir Ali and its Chairman of Education Service Solaiman Azani.

Valuables, cash looted in Gazipur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

Robbers looted valuables and Tk 20000 in cash from a house in Vitipara in Sripur in Gazipur.

Locals said that a group of seven to eight robbers broke into the house of one Saiful Islam and looted Tk 20000 in cash, gold ornaments and a cellphone.

Obituary

Brig Gen (Retd) Muhammad Mahbubul Karim passed away due to brain stroke at Combined Military Hospital in Dhaka on Wednesday at the age of 65, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, sons, daughters and a host of admirers to mourn his death.

He was buried at his family graveyard at Farhadabad at Hathazari in Chittagong.

Engineer Azharuddin Ahmad

Engineer Azharuddin Ahmad, director of Bangladesh Development Corporation (BDC), a concern of Islam Group, passed

away due to a massive cardiac arrest yesterday at the age of 58, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one son and a daughter.

He was buried at the Jurain graveyard after namaz-e-janaza at Azad Mosque at Gulshan after Zohr prayers.

M Majibur Rahman

M Majibur Rahman, a freedom fighter and former additional director of Jamuna Multi Purpose Bridge, passed away due to a cardiac arrest at Lab Aid Hospital in the city yesterday at the age of 58, says a press release.

He left behind his wife, one son and three daughters to mourn his death.

His Namaz-e-janaza will be held at Goshairhat School field of south Mahkali village in Munshiganj Sadar after Juma prayers today.

Alhaj Matiur Rahman

Alhaj Matiur Rahman, father of Taufiq Rahman, general manager of broadcast operations and engineering department of the Ekushey Television (ETV), passed away due to heart related complications at the Apollo Hospitals in the city yesterday at the age of 67, says a press release.

Death anniversary

Today is the fifth death anniversary of Dr Shirin Quazi, an eminent health scientist and poet, says a press release.

She passed away on this day in 2002 at Birdem Hospital in the city.

On the occasion, Dr Shirin Quazi Smriti Parishad has chalked out elaborate programmes.

Qulkhwani

Qulkhwani of Halima Khatun, wife of late Mohammad Abdul Hannan Miah, former Deputy Commissioner of Tax, will be held at her residence

at Shamoli in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Halima Khatun passed away at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital on May 14 at the age of 67.

She left behind her five sons and four daughters.



PHOTO: STAR

Participants at the Dean's Lecture Series 2007, jointly organised by the faculty of biological sciences, Dhaka University, and The Daily Star at the Teacher-Student Centre auditorium in the city yesterday. From left are Prof Sharif Akhteruzzaman, Prof SMA Faiz and Prof M Anwar Hossain.

Road accidents kill seven

STAR REPORT

At least seven people were killed and 30 others injured in separate road accidents in Comilla, Chittagong, Patuakhali and Netrakona yesterday.

A correspondent from Comilla added: At least three people were killed and 25 others injured, eight of them critically, in a road accident at Jagorjuli area near Tajmohal hotel on the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Md Rafiqul Haque Bhuiyan, 48, chairman of Kasba Pourashava in Brahmanbaria, Binoy Sarker, 29, marketing manager of APEX group in Barara upazila in Comilla and Md Shohel Ahmed, 24, son of Ashraf Hossain, bus supervisor of Matuyl village in Demra under Dhaka.

Police said the accident occurred when a Chittagong-bound Volvo coach from Chittagong collided head-on with a cement-laden speeding truck at Jagorjuli area at about 5:30am, leaving three people dead on the spot and 25 others injured.

Chittagong-bound microbus from Dhaka also turned upside down on roadside when its driver tried to give side to the Volvo coach and the truck.

Of the injured, eight were sent to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital in critical condition while 17 given first aid.

Comilla Sadar police recovered the bodies and sent them to Comilla Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Earlier, one person was killed and four others were injured in a separate road accident at Digolgov area on Comilla-Barura road at Baraura upazila.

The dead was identified as Mosharraf Hossain, 40, of Shashayia village of the upazila.

Police said the accident took place when a Dhaka-bound goods-leaden pickup van from Dhaka collided head-on with a passenger tempo, leaving Mosharraf dead on the spot.

Kutwali police sent the body to Comilla Medical College Hospital for autopsy. The injured were admitted to upazila health complex.

Our CU correspondent adds: A truck helper was killed in a road

accident at Nandir Hat area under Hathazari upazila in the district yesterday.

The dead identified as Mohammad Mansur, 25, son of one Abul Kalam of Pahartali area of the upazila.

The accident occurred when a Chittagong city-bound truck collided head-on with another truck at Nandir Hat area on Chittagong-Hathazari road at around 7:00am, leaving Mansur, helper of the city-bound truck, dead on the spot.

Police detained the trucks while the drivers managed to flee.

Our Correspondent from Patuakhali says: A 10-year-old child was killed in a road accident in Patuakhali on Patuakhali-Galachipa road yesterday.

The dead identified as Mizanur Rahman Rubel of Badura village area under Galachipa upazila was

rushed to Patuakhali General Hospital where on-duty doctor declared him dead at 1:30pm.

The accident occurred at about 10:00am when a Patuakhali-bound motorcycle from Galachipa hit the boy when he was crossing the road at Badura village area.

Our Correspondent from Netrakona reports: One girl was killed and her brother injured in a road accident in Netrakona yesterday.

The accident occurred at Garuhatta area in Netrakona town at about 10:00am when a by-cycle collided head-on with a hand trolley, leaving by-cycle passenger Mousumi, 10, of village Bawshi under Barhatha upazila dead on the spot and her brother cycle rider Halaluddin injured.

Helal was rushed to Netrakona Sadar Hospital in critical condition.

WEATHER TODAY				
Rise in temperature likely				
UNB, Dhaka				
Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Barisal, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions in next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.				
Day temperature may rise slightly over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.				
Highest temperature 36.4 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chuadanga and lowest 23.0 degree Celsius at Khulna and Kheupura.				
The sun sets in the capital at 6.35pm today and rises at 5.14am 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	34.2	26.3	68	60
Chittagong	32.5	25.3	69	78
Rajshahi	35.5	25.1	71	73
Khulna	35.3	23.0	75	70
Barisal	32.8	25.5	78	73
Sylhet	33.5	25.4	81	66
Cox's Bazar	32.5	25.0	73	80