Jute: A Suicidal Policy

The closure of four established jute mills and the dismissal of the employees are depressing. I am apprehensive about this because my father was also an employee of Bangladesh Jute Corporation. I clearly remember the struggle my father had to go through to make ends meet. Because of the ceaseless endeavour from my parents I am studying in Dhaka University, and my sister in Rajshahi University. We are lucky.

But a few days ago I got a shock while watching a CSB news report. A girl of class VIII was crying out about how the government's decision which led to her father's dismissal would cause a financial chaos in her family and destroy her ambition of ever becoming a doctor.

Where UN announced 2009 as "International Natural Fibre Year" the closure of four established mills is extremely harmful for the economy. Apparently 64 jute mills have now been closed out of 82 in Bangladesh, whereas the number of jute mills in West Bengal is increasing. the situation in our country increasingly seems like an international conspiracy. I hope the government will do something very soon to end this situation.

Md Rafi
DU



Ripening of Fruits with Calcium Carbide & its impact on the human body

Fruits play an important role in keeping the human body healthy. But if chemically adulterated fruits are taken it only causes complicated diseases that may eventually lead to death. The fruits available in the market these days are not natural but tainted with hazardous chemicals. This unethical practice is being carried out by a bunch of greedy businessmen.

Nowadays a chemical, calcium carbide, (CaC2) is being widely used in ripening immature fruits. It is normally used in desulphurisation of iron. When it is used in fruits it releases acetylene that ripens fruits within a very short time and works in a similar way as the natural fruit ripening agent, ethylene. Ethylene oxide is safe for health but calcium carbide is seriously harmful for the human body, according to the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services.

The people of Bangladesh have been consuming these adulterated fruits unknowingly and this leads to serious health hazards in the long run. For the prospect of a healthy nation these businessmen who ripen fruits with chemicals must be immediately arrested. At this point I would also like to draw the attention of the respective authorities to find out more about the matter and take necessary actions immediately.

Md. Zakir Hossain
By email

Vacant Universities

It is really necessary that exams for the graduate and post-graduate courses be held as soon as possible. The two Eids are coming up and the vacations may end up causing a half-year session jam. I urge the honourable advisers of the government to pay their kind attention to this issue. They should open the student halls at the soonest so that the students can go back to their studies in full swing. To solve the session jam problem we need to re-open public universities as soon as we can.

Al-Istiak-Ur-Rahman
By email

Reform of BTV is Needed

Previously days people could not understand the good or bad sides of Bangladesh Television due to unavailability of other channels. Now the country has numerous private television channels, which have already become quite popular. People are much more conscious about what is happening around the world now. But BTV is still working by its old tradition. Every day they telecast talk shows, *uchchango sangeet, nazrul sangeet, rabindra sangeet* as well as some meaningless programmes while so many things are happening all over the world. They also present the news in the most archaic way. BTV needs to reform just like the political parties. It is essential to modernise BTV as it represents the people's media.

Md. Ebrahim Khalil Milon
New Govt Degree College, Rajshahi