

Biofuel production a threat to food security

Expert tells discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Production of biofuel from plants and food grains will be a threat to food security as well as environment, said an environmentalist and biodiversity expert at a discussion yesterday.

The discussion titled 'Bio-fuel: Threats to environment and food production' was organised by Ubinig, an NGO, at the National Press Club in the city.

Shalini Bhutani of India said in the face of global energy crisis, many countries of America, Europe and Asia are producing fuel from grains and plants.

Such efforts by the giant companies are going to bring disastrous effects on human life, as there is already a shortage of arable land and food crops, she said.

Shalini, coordinator of Delhi office of GRAIN, an international NGO working on biodiversity, said biofuel is most commonly used for transportation and heating replacing oil.

Ethanol, butanol, methanol,

biodiesel are various types of agrofuel that are produced from corn and soy bean in the USA, wheat, rapeseed, sugar beet in Europe, sugar cane in Brazil, palm oil in South East Asia, coconut oil in the Philippines and jatropa, pongamia and sugar beet in India, she noted.

"Interestingly, a few giant multinational companies that control the energy markets will also dominate the food grains or plants for producing biofuel. Thus, food prices will be hiked due to shortage of food," Shalini said.

Such technology will only contribute to setting up of more industries and usages of automobile that will emit more green house gas, she added.

"Current push to expand the use of biofuel is creating tensions that will disrupt markets without generating significant environmental benefits," Shalini said quoting from a summit of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Ubining Executive Director Farida

Akhter said they got to know that a Japanese firm Honda Denki Co has expressed its interest to invest \$1 billion in biofuel and sugar sector, and Bangladesh was quite happy to the offer.

"Such kind of investment must not be accepted without analysing the consequences," she said, adding that food grains that are used for human being must not be allowed to be used for fuel that in turn is destroying the environment of the earth.

"We urge the government to reduce the use of private cars and stop their imports," Farida Akhter said, adding that global warming, which has already become a serious threat to climate, should be stopped.

The USA having 30 percent of the world's vehicles contributes to the 45 percent of carbon dioxide emission, she said.

Ubining Managing Director Farhad Mazhar said people in the developing countries would be the worst victims at the cost of biofuel production.

STUDENTS-LOCALS CLASH AT ASHULIA

Injured trader succumbs to injuries

UNB, Savar

A trader, who sustained injuries in a clash between the students of a training centre and local people at Berun in Ashulia on Thursday night, succumbed to his injuries at a local clinic yesterday.

The victim was identified as Ibrahim, a shop owner of Mollah Market at Berun.

Around 50 people were injured and at least 40 shops of Mollah Market were ransacked in the fierce clash that ensued between the students of Fonda Global Training Centre (locally known as Singapore Training) and local people over a trifling matter on Thursday night, police said.

Of the injured, one was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital while 11 others, including Ibrahim, were admitted to local hospital and clinics. Ibrahim succumbed to his injuries at Enam clinic at about 1:30pm.



PHOTO: STAR

People throng Chwakhazar in the city yesterday, the first day of Ramadan, to buy iftar items.

'Tourism industry can help expedite development'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference have underscored the need for boosting up tourism industry for rapid development of the country.

They said though 35 years have already passed, the country is yet to develop its tourism industry properly.

The Institute of Catering and Hotel Management Ltd organised the press conference at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre on Thursday to honour its diploma students for their outstanding results in Summer 2007

Examination.

Out of 12 students who appeared in the examination on Food Preparation and Culinary Art, seven secured distinctions (A+) while the rest got credit (A).

Those who secured distinctions are Rafiquezzaman Ashrafi, Sheikh Mosharrar Hossain, Abul Qasem, Liton Marma, Philip Sudip Mondol, Didarul Alam and Nure Alam.

The examination was held under City and Guilds International, London.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairman of the institute Hakim Ali said tourism industry will have to be

geared up to expedite the development of the country.

Principal of the institute Xavier Gomez said there is a huge potential for growth in tourism and hospitality sector in the country.

He said the institute, approved by the City and Guilds International of London, started its journey in July 2005.

Managing Director of the institute Mamtazuddin Bhuiyan, Finance Director Maj Badrul Alam, Chief Instructor Albin Alex Rozario and Instructor Nasreen Alam Fortune were present at the conference.



PHOTO: STAR

(Left) Dr Zubaida Rahman, wife of Tarique Rahman, and Sharmila Rahman, wife of Arafat Rahman Koko, arrive at the sub-jail to visit their mother-in-law Khaleda Zia yesterday, the first day of Ramadan. (Right) Relatives of Awami League President Sheikh Hasina bring iftar items for her at the sub-jail.

INSA essay competition

Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP) is going to organise an essay competition for the students of class VIII to XII under the auspices of Imagine a New South Asia (INSA).

The topic of the competition is 'Envisioning South Asia: The youth perspectives', says a press release.

The programme was launched at a meeting of INSA working group on popular movement at BUP conference room recently.

Entries must reach INSA Secretariat: Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP), House # 50, Road # 08, Block-D, Niketon, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212 on or before October 31.

Entries should be submitted in hardcopy by post/courier in English or Bangla.

Essays should not be longer than 10 pages (3000 words maximum) and 1.5 line-spaced.

The first, second and third position winning entries will be awarded and INSA will take initiative to publish the selected essays, the release added.

Appeal for help

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh



A poor but brilliant student is fighting for life as both of his kidneys have been damaged. Doctors at National Kidney Institute and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University have suggested transplantation of his kidneys which will cost around Tk 10 lakh.

Poor Mizanur Rahman Khan, 30, lost his father when he was only six-month old and he was brought up by his poor brothers who live at Gabergonj village under Madarganj upazila in Jamalpur district.

Mizan passed his SSC and HSC examinations in 1993 and 1995 securing Star Marks and First Division respectively.

When he was a third-year student of Chittagong University, he suffered a massive heart attack which was followed by a stroke in 2005 that made him paralyzed.

The poor family members of Mizan have no more ability to bear his treatment cost as they have already spent what they had.

So they have sought financial assistance from the generous people of the society to save the life of Mizan.

Contributions can be sent to Kawsar Mahmud Khan, Savings Account No 7236, Sonali Bank, Melandah Branch, Jamalpur.

College student dies as brick falls on him

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A college student died when a brick fell on his head from an under-construction building in the city yesterday.

He was identified as Mohammad Selim, 23, an honours student of Sheikh Borhanuddin Post-graduate College in the old part of the city.

Victim's father Mohammad

Pearu said Selim was returning to his Gopibagh residence after Juma prayers at RK Mission Road at around 2:30pm when the brick fell on his head from the rooftop of the building.

Locals rushed him to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where the on-duty doctors declared him dead.

Expedition to Mera Peak in Himalayas starts Sep 20

DU CORRESPONDENT

A team of Bangla Mountaineering and Trekking Club (BMTCC) is set to start an expedition to 21830-foot Mera Peak in the Himalayas, the highest peak likely to be conquered by Bangladeshis.

The five-member team led by MA Muhiut will leave the capital on September 18 for Nepal and start its expedition from Lukla on September 20.

The other members of the team are Sajal Khaled, Noor Mohammad, Riaz Ahmed and Nishat Majumder, the lone female member.

All the team members have training on various duration and mountaineering experiences.

This was stated by the founder of BMTCC Inam Al Haq at a press conference at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, former adviser to caretaker government Akbar Ali Khan said the government should take steps to raise awareness among the young generation for such expeditions to mountains, oceans and space which are known as common treasures.

He wished all the success of the team in the forthcoming expedition and hoped that someday Bangladesh will conquer the Mount Everest.

Nature lover and botanist Dwijen Sharma, General Manager of Transcom Beverages Co Khurshid Irfan Chowdhury and members of the mountaineering team were present on the occasion.

BBC Bangladesh Sanglap today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The eighth edition of BBC Bangladesh Sanglap will be held at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city at 1:45pm today.

Former adviser to the caretaker government Dr Akbar Ali Khan, former whip and expelled BNP Joint Secretary General Ashraf Hossain, Awami League Advisory Council Member Maj Gen (retd) Shubid Ali Bhuiyan, and writer Selina Hossain will feature in today's Sanglap.

Kamal Ahmed of BBC Bangla Service will moderate the programme produced by Waliur Rahman Miraz.

The programme will be aired on BBC Bangla Radio at 8:00pm on Sunday and on Channel i at 8:00pm on Monday.

BSS, Rangpur

A total of 1.57 lakh eligible citizens were registered as voters in Rangpur pourashabha as the pilot project preparing a voters' list with photographs and National Identity Cards (NICs) completed its task here on Thursday.

Officials said verification, re-verification, checking and cross-checking of some 500 filled-up voters' registration forms are still continuing and the total number of voters might go higher. The voters' registration began here on August 19.

Expert technical teams of the Bangladesh Army led by Commanding Officer of the 5 Signal Battalion of the 66 Infantry Division Lt Colonel Shahriar Ahmed Chowdhury extended all necessary supports to the Election Commission to conducting the registration process here.

Talking to BSS yesterday, Lt Colonel Shahriar said the registration process completed in the pourashabha area on schedule and became possible due to the dedicated, sincere and united efforts of all including about 1,000 people directly involved with the

project.

The pilot project will begin its works in 11 union parishads under Sadar upazila on September 24 to register about 2,61,000 voters and the enumerators will start door-to-door visit in the villages for collecting data from September 20.

A total of 892 enumerators, 11 assistant registration officers, 17 supervisors and the required number of trained personnel of the armed forces will conduct the whole registration process in Sadar upazila to enroll the eligible voters till October 25, officials said.



PHOTO: STAR

Former adviser to the caretaker government Akbar Ali Khan speaks at a press conference on an expedition to Mera Peak in the Himalayas by a team of Bangla Mountaineering and Trekking Club (BMTCC) at National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Obituary



Prof. Latifa Khatun, former chairman of Bangla department at Jagannath University College, passed away on September 8 at the age of 62, says a press release.

She also served in Tangail Kumudini Government College and AM College in Mymensingh.

She is survived by her husband, Prof. Khandaker Mobarak Ali, and one son.

She was buried at her family graveyard at Karatia in Tangail.

Humayun Kabir Khandaker

Humayun Kabir Khandaker, managing director of Bengal Pipe and Sanitary Industries Ltd and vice-chairman and sponsor director of Nitel Insurance Company Ltd, passed away on September 8 at the age of 66, says a press release.

Kabir, also a member of Dhaka Club, is survived by his wife and one son.

Members of the Dhaka Club expressed deep shock at his death.

Flats for low-income group to be constructed

UNB, Dhaka

Flats for low-income group will be constructed at Dattapara near Tongi under the supervision of National Housing Authority.

It was decided at a meeting presided over by Information and Housing Adviser Moynul Hossain on Thursday.

A press release said that 250 to 300 sq feet flats would be given to the ownership of low income group people, including those residing there.

Besides, 22,000 flats would be constructed at Mirpur for middle and lower-income group people.

The meeting decided to widen the Bijoy Sarani to 60 feet.

Children's painting contest

The submission deadline for Grameenphone Zainul-Quamrul International Children's Painting Competition 2007 is September 30, says a press release.

Paintings, along with the registration, have to be sent to Gandaria Kisholaya Kachi-Kanchar Meia, 15 Dinanath Sen Road, Gandaria, Dhaka-1204, on or before September 30. Detailed information and registration forms are available at www.gp-zainulquamrul-bd.com.

The competition is open to children aged between 3 to 16.

The competition is divided into four categories according to age level - 3 to 6 years; above 6 years to 9; above 9 years to 12 and above 12 years to 16.

The topic and medium of the painting will also remain open.

Four winners will be awarded gold medals and 84 participants will receive special awards from Grameenphone.

The prize giving ceremony, which will be followed by a three-day exhibition of the paintings, will be held at the National Museum in the first week of December.

15 muggers of 'Malam Party' held in N'ganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, N'ganj

Police arrested nine muggers who allegedly belong to what is popularly known as 'Malam Party' and used to snatch away valuables from people applying ointment on their eyes, at Siddhirganj on Dhaka-Chittagong highway on Thursday night.

The arrestees were identified as Zamal Hossain, Humayun Kabir, Khoka, Babul, Arif, Laizu, Monwara, Sujon and Abu Salam. Police also seized several pots of 'Malam' from their possession.

Police said the gang rubbed Malam into the eyes of one Mohammad Hossain and snatched Tk 8000 and a cellphone from his possession soon after he got off a bus at Shimrail Bus Stand at 10:00pm.

As Hossain shouted for help, locals and police rushed to the spot and arrested the muggers.

'Observe Sept 15 as Language Movement Declaration Day'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nine distinguished personalities, including four language movement veterans, yesterday urged the caretaker government to observe September 15 as Language Movement Declaration Publication Day.

In a statement, they said on that very day the declaration was published from the then Bhasha Adolon office at 19 Azimpur in the city by Principal Abul Kashem.

The declaration later paved the way for our Language Movement in 1952 and the War of Liberation in 1971.

The signatories to the statement are language movement veterans Gaziul Haque, Muhammad Takiullah, Abdul Gafur and Dr Mirza Mazharul Islam, former chief justice Kamaluddin Hossain, National Professor Talukder Maniruzzaman, former director general of Bangla Academy Dr Ashraf Siddique, poet Nirmalendu Goon and Prof Abul Kashem Fazul Haq, chairman of Bangla department, Dhaka University.

Several organisations have chalked out different programmes to mark the day.

Bhasha Adolon Museum will hold a discussion at its office at 4:00pm today.

Students of Ahsania Mission School will gather at Liberation War Museum at 5:00pm where they will recall the memories of the days 1952 and 1971, says a press release.

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Roundtable

Save the Environment Movement organises a roundtable titled 'Tsunami threat in the coastal areas of Bangladesh and our responsibilities'. Venue: 58/1 Kalabagan (first lane). Time: 11:00am.

Seminar

Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) organises a seminar on 'Issues in Bengali sociolinguistics with reference to social research'. Venue: BISR seminar room. Time: 11:00am.

DCCI Discussion

The Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) in cooperation with Oxfam will hold a discussion on 'Aid for trade and supply side constraints faced by SMEs'. Venue: DCCI auditorium. Time: 10:30am.

View exchange meeting

Campaign on Citizen's Right to Information organises a view exchange meeting on international financial institutions. Venue: Dhaka Reporters' Unity. Time: 10:00am.

Workshop

Protection of Children at Risk (PCAR) project of the Ministry of Social Welfare organises a three-day workshop on social reintegration of children living on the street and without parental care beginning from today. Venue: LGED auditorium. Time: 9:30am.

Discussion

Nagarik Sanghati will hold a discussion on jute resources. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 10:30am.

Certificate distribution ceremony

The concluding and certificate distribution ceremony of a workshop on digital filmmaking conducted by the Academy of Film and Media will be held. Venue: Bishwa Sahitya Kendra. Time: 3:00pm.

Rotary Dhaka Central

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka Central will be held. Venue: Conference Room, Faisal Investment Foundation. Time: 4:30pm.