

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 environmental 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 food crops, she said.

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.

Ubinig Executive Director Farida

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 jatropha, 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 Cooperation and Development (OECD).

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

Akther 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 Akther 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.

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Farhad Mazhar said in Enam clinic at about 1:30pm.

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.



People throng Chawkbazar in the city yesterday, the first day of Ramadan, to buy Iftar items.

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 Moinul Hosein 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 Mela, 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.

'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 Rafiquzzaman Ashrafi, Sheikh Mosharrif Hossain, Abul Qasem, Liton Marma, Philip Sudip Mondol, Dildar 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 Mamtauddin Bhuiyan, Finance Director Maj Badru Alam, Chief Instructor Albin Alex Rozario and Instructor Nasreen Alam Fortune were present at the conference.

1.57 lakh people registered as voters in Rangpur Pourasabha

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 parishes 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, 197 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.



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 (BMTC) at National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Obituary



Prof. Latifa Khatun, former chairman of Bangla department at Jagan Nath 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.

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

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 Walid

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.

Members of the Dhaka Club

expressed deep shock at his death.

Protection of Children at Risk (PCAR)

project of the Ministry of Social Welfare

organises a roundtable titled 'Tsunami

threat in the coastal areas of Bangladesh

and our responsibilities'.

Venue: 58/1 Kalabagan (first lane).

Time: 11:00am.

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.

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.

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

The regular meeting of Rotary Club of

Dhaka Central will be held.

Venue: Conference Room, Faisal Investment Foundation.

Time: 4:30pm.

Rotary Dhaka Central

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Time: 4:00pm.