

Proper laws needed to check food adulteration

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Upgradation of moral values, raising mass awareness, and formulation of proper laws and their strict implementation are the imperatives to check food adulteration in the country, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

They urged the government to take punitive actions against those involved in the production and sale of adulterated food and run the anti-adulteration drive frequently to save the nation from ruin.

The seminar titled 'Adulteration-free food: Present situation and our duties' was organised jointly by Paribesh Bachao Andolan (PBA) (Save Environment Movement) and the Institute of Food and Science Technology (IFST) at the seminar

hall of Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) in the city.

Presenting a keynote paper, Dr K M Fajmul Haque, acting director of BCSIR, said every consumer has the right to get safe and toxic-free food but we are all deprived of the right.

He said it has been found in research that harmful chemicals like calcium carbide are being used to ripen the monsoon fruits like mango, pineapple, banana and papaya.

At the same time textile colour, which is being used in vegetables to make them fresh and attractive, can cause cancer, he said, adding after examining the sample of mustard oil in the IFST laboratory, chemical elements have been found in it.

Dr Haque said highly toxic chemicals DDT and heptachlor are being

used in dried fish.

Around two lakh people are affected by cancer every year due to intake of adulterated food, he added.

BCSIR Chairman Dr Chowdhury Mahmud Hasan said the main problem behind all these misdeeds is the degradation of moral values.

"A person is cheating another as both of them are involved in the act, and in the long run both of them are putting their own as well as their next generations at risk," he added.

Changes in the mindset and raising mass awareness are must to stop adulteration, he said, suggesting an increase in the number of people who will monitor food adulteration.

Columnist and Bishmukta Khadya Andolan Convener Syed

Abul Maksud said there are many laws in the country but nobody wants to obey them.

The nation will be 'dead one' if the government does not take stringent measures to check food adulteration, he said.

Fahima Rokhana, director of IFST, said a section of vested businessmen are putting the future of the next generation on the verge of destruction for their petty interest.

She suggested regular monitoring even at upazila level to check food adulteration.

PBA President Abu Naser Khan demanded proper implementation of the consumer act.

He said media has an immense role in carrying out the movement for stopping adulteration of food ahead.



Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed holds talks with Bikalpa Dhara Bangladesh (BDB), left, and Workers' Party of Bangladesh, right, on the first day of formal dialogues with different political parties at his office in the city yesterday.

BOAT CAPSIZE Bodies of mother, 2 children recovered

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the floating bodies of the mother and her two children in the last two days who drowned in the Buriganga on Tuesday night.

The deceased were identified as Firoza Begum Lucky, 30, her five-and-a-half-year-old daughter Farzana and two-and-a-half-year-old son Firoz.

They met the tragic death while they were returning home at Kholamora of Keraniganj by the boat after attending a function at Kamrangirchar on that night.

Local people informed the police after they saw the bodies of the mother and her daughter floating near the spot at around 9:00pm on Wednesday. Police recovered the floating bodies.

Meanwhile, the body of the boy Firoz was floating at 10:00am yesterday. On information, police recovered the body.

The boat that was carrying around 12 people sunk in mid-river after a sand-laden trawler hit it around 8:00pm, leaving the three missing.

The rest of the travellers including the boatman, however, managed to swim ashore.

A team of divers from the Fire Brigade and Civil Defence failed to recover the bodies despite their six-hour hectic efforts.

NIKO GRAFT CASE Hearing on Khaleda's petition resumes Sunday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) for the second consecutive day yesterday heard the petition filed by former prime minister Khaleda Zia for quashing the proceedings against her in Niko graft case.

The HC bench comprising Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Mashuque Hossain Ahmed adjourned the hearing and fixed 2:00pm on Sunday for further proceedings.

Advocate Khondker Mahub Uddin Ahmed, counsel for the petitioner, submitted before the court that when Khaleda was the prime minister she had taken many decisions for running the

government, and she might have committed mistakes in doing her routine works, but never committed any corruption.

He said there was no specific allegation against her in the first information report (FIR) of the case. But on December 9 of last year, the ACC filed the case with Tejgaon Police Station against the BNP chairperson and several others on charge of abusing power in awarding a gas exploration and extraction deal to Canadian company Niko.

On May 5, the ACC pressed charges against Khaleda and 10 others in the case.

On May 18, Khaleda filed the petition with the HC.

'Ensure supply of diesel to jute yarn mills'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Jute Spinners Association yesterday urged the government to ensure regular supply of diesel to operate standby generators for uninterrupted production at jute yarn mills in the southern region of the country.

These industries will be closed down if the government fails to ensure diesel supply properly, and it will raise discontent among the labourers hampering the export earnings of the country, says a press release of the association.

Out of total 55 jute yarn mills, 32 are located in this region and these are hundred percent export-oriented.

As these industries do not get direct supply of electricity from the national grid, they keep their mills operative through standby generators.

But the acute crisis of diesel in this region is posing threat to the industries as the diesel traders have started storing diesel following the government's hint that it may raise oil price.

Ex-BNP lawmaker Joynal held at jail gate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former BNP lawmaker Joynal Abedin Faruk was arrested yesterday afternoon at the Dhaka Central Jail gate soon after his release from the jail.

Deputy Inspector General of Prisons (DIG Prisons) Maj Shamsul Haider Siddique told The Daily Star, "The former lawmaker released from the jail at around 5:00pm."

"He is accused in eight cases and was released on bail," he said.

Sources said Ramna police arrested Joynal soon after he came out of the jail.

However, Officer-in-Charge of Ramna Police Station AKM Doulat Akbar said, "We arrested him from Magbazar area under emergency power rules (EPR)."

Death anniversary

Tomorrow is the first death anniversary of Aminul Huq Tipu, founder chairman and managing director of Amin Group, says a press release.

On the occasion, a doa mahfil will be held at his residence at Plot-63, Block-E, Road-17 at Banani in the city after Asr prayers today (Friday).

His relatives, friends and admirers have been requested to attend the doa mahfil to pray for his eternal peace and salvation.



Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed gives away the lifetime achievement award 2008 to singer Ferdousi Rahman at the Meril-Prothom Alo Award ceremony at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the city yesterday.

MERIL-PROTHOM ALO AWARD Ferdousi receives lifetime achievement award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Renowned singer Ferdousi Rahman received the lifetime achievement award 2008 at the Meril-Prothom Alo Award ceremony yesterday for her outstanding contribution to Bangla music.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, chairman of Biswa Sahitya Kendra, gave away the award to Ferdousi Rahman at the gala award ceremony at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital.

Receiving the award, Ferdousi donated the prize money -- Tk one lakh -- to the Prothom Alo fund for acid victims.

The Meril-Prothom Alo Award-2007 for best singer went to Bappa Muzumder while Balam won the best male singer award and Fahmida Nahi best female singer award. LRB walked off with the award for best band.

Imon won the award for best male model while Monalisa for best female model.

US embassy closed May 25

UNB, Dhaka

The American Embassy, including the Consular Section and the Public Affairs Section with the Archer K Blood American Centre Library and the Student Advising Centre, will remain closed on May 25 on the occasion of Memorial Day, an American national holiday.

Barisal FF body executives

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad has formed a new convening committee of its Barisal District Unit Command dissolving the existing convening committee.

Commander Reza-e-Sattar and Khalequzzaman have been made convenor and joint convenor of the 11-member committee, a press release of the Sangsad said here yesterday.

Abdul Moyeen Khan was made member-secretary while the members are M Ajuddin Ahmed Bir Pratik, Commander M Abdul Wadud Sardar, Anichur Rahman Chowdhury, Kamaluddin Khan, KM Kamal Uddin, ABM Azizul Haque Khan, Sirajul Alam and Nurul Alam Gias.

Prof Harun made PSTU VC

Prof Dr Md Harun-or-Rashid, dean of agriculture faculty, has been appointed vice-chancellor of Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU).

Prior to his new assignment, he served as hall provost, departmental chairman, and head of different committees, says a press release.

DHAKA TODAY

<p>Conference</p> <p>The inaugural ceremony of the 13th Annual Conference of Lions Clubs International District 315 AJ will be held. Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. Time: 10:00am.</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>ntv and Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FCCI) jointly organise a discussion on 'What sort of budget do we want?'. Venue: Hotel Sonargaon. Time: 7:30pm.</p> <p>Seminar</p> <p>Labour Resource Centre (LRC) organises a seminar titled 'Food sovereignty: Land reforms, climate change and agro-fuel'. Venue: WVA auditorium. Time: 10:00am.</p> <p>Literary meeting</p> <p>Somy... organises a literary meeting with writers Ayesha Foyez and Selina Hossain and the readers. Venue: The Cafe C Square, Plaza AR, Dhanmondi. Time: 5:00pm.</p> <p>Prize giving ceremony</p> <p>Aria Food organises the prize giving ceremony of Dano Chora Lekho Aar Chobi Aka Contest. Venue: ICMAB auditorium, Nilkhet. Time: 3:30pm.</p> <p>Memorial meeting</p> <p>A memorial meeting will be held to pay tribute to former assistant editor of the daily Jugantar Gulshan Akhtar. Venue: National Press Club. Time: 3:30pm.</p> <p>Musical soiree</p> <p>Alliance Francaise de Dacca organises a solo musical soiree of Abdus Shakoor. Venue: La Galerie, Alliance Francaise. Time: 6:30pm.</p>	<p>Festival</p> <p>Kendriya Kachi Kancha Mela organises Rabindra-Nazrul-Sukanta Festival in memory of the three great poets. Venue: Kachi Kancha auditorium. Time: 10:00am.</p> <p>Photographic exhibition</p> <p>A solo photographic exhibition of Mir Shamsul Alam Babu begins today. Venue: Dhaka Photographic Institute. Time: 4:00pm.</p> <p>Seminar</p> <p>Singapore School Kinderland organises a seminar on 'Early childhood care and education'. Venue: Flambe Restaurant, Gulshan-2. Time: 10:00am.</p> <p>Musical programme</p> <p>Bangladesh Loko Sangeet Parishad organises its 88th regular monthly programme. Venue: Public Library seminar hall. Time: 5:30pm.</p> <p>Award giving ceremony</p> <p>Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB) organises 'Gala award ceremony for SME entrepreneurs from rural areas of Bangladesh with cultural show'. Venue: Gulshan Club. Time: 3:00pm.</p> <p>Film show</p> <p>Bangladesh Film Centre will screen 'Hamlet' starring Lawrence Olivier to mark the 111th birth anniversary of the great actor. Venue: Bangladesh Film Centre, 160 Lake Circus, Kalabagan. Time: 4:00pm and 7:00pm.</p>
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Acid survivors to make five documentaries on acid violence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of acid survivors will make five documentaries on acid violence after receiving training in this regard.

Poriprekshit and Acid Survivors Network, with support from ActionAid Bangladesh, have jointly taken the initiative to involve women acid survivors in the professional work.

A daylong workshop will be held on May 26 to select seven trainees from the members of Acid Survivors Network.

The seven members will receive training on direction, scripting and camera shooting. The training will continue up to December in phases. Later, they will make documentaries as part of practical training.

The documentaries will be aired on different television channels.

Aga Khan

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knowledge, not on opinion or incorrect reporting. There are lots of misinformation and disinformation about Islam.

He said the academy is being set up here with an aim to build it up as a centre of excellence where quality education will be imparted to brilliant students by qualified teachers.

The curriculum of the academy will be formulated in collaboration with international baccalaureates so the students could be taught in global-standard education system.

In Bangladesh, he said, quality secondary education is important alongside upgrading the quality of teaching.

The academy will integrate each local school with other in the network, sharing ideas and experiences, exchanging students and teachers so that all graduates achieve globally relevant credentials.

Stressing the importance of understanding the rich Islamic civilisation, he said all are concerned about the erosion of ethical values. It is not only important to ensure the ethics in government, but also in the civil society.

He said the civil society can contribute a lot to the development, but if the civil society is undermined by malpractice, one could imagine what would happen.

The academy being established on a 20-acre site at Bashundhara housing estate at a cost of \$50 million will teach pluralism, ethics, free-market economy and Islamic civilisation among other subjects.

Prince Karim said the students with all backgrounds would be selected absolutely on merit basis and poor economic status would not be a bar to any student getting access to the academy.

In response to a question, Aga Khan said they will explore investment prospects in infrastructure, agro-based industry, IT and training of nurses with the participation of international development partners and financial institutions.

Daily Star Editor Mahfuz Anam, Observer Editor Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, BSS Chief Editor Zaglul A Chowdhury, AP Bureau Chief Farid Hossain, Press Club President Shawkat Mahmud and UNB Chief of Correspondents Shamim Ahmad joined the roundtable.

Prince Karim, who left Dhaka yesterday for Paris, also laid the foundation stone of permanent jamaat khana for Shia Ismaili Muslims at Bashundhara.

During his visit, marked by the golden jubilee of his imamati, the prince called on President Iajuddin Ahmed, Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed, advisers to the caretaker government and members of the Shia Ismaili community.

Qulkhwani

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Mohiuddin, a brother-in-law of former post and telecommunications minister Barrister Aminul Haque (absconding for long) belonged to pro BNP-Jamaat teachers' alliance at RU while three other killers were Shibir adherents, the case documents say.

Public Prosecutor (PP) Jahangir Alam briefed journalists after delivery of the judgement as they were not allowed in the courtroom.

Security was stepped up in around the court with two platoons of policemen deployed from morning.

The PP said the court was convinced that Mohiuddin had become hostile to his senior colleague Taher as the latter's honesty was a barrier to his promotion.

The court was also convinced that Mohiuddin was involved in preparing his research papers since he tried even to befool the court submitting forged papers.

Taher never behaved ill with Mohiuddin, the PP quoted the judge as saying. Taher's findings of piracy were enough to prevent Mohiuddin's promotion, he added.

About Salehi's acquittal, the judge explained that although he was named in judicial confessions, the prosecution could not substantiate that with evidence.

Moreover, Salehi was said to have pressed pillow on Taher's face causing his death, but medical reports and depositions of doctors concerned revealed his death was not due to suffocation, the PP said.

Azimuddin was accused in the case for knowing that Jahangir had

EC for constitutional review commission

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that they cannot contest elections.

"We have already incorporated in the electoral laws provisions to that end. But the war criminals would have to be convicted if they are to be adjudged disqualified from the polls," he observed.

The election commissioner said political parties raised the issues and made suggestions during the dialogue with the EC between September last year and February.

In its report on the talks, the EC has made a set of recommendations in line with what had been discussed with the political parties.

Those include the one for amending article 70 of the constitution that says a lawmaker from a political party shall vacate his seat if he resigns from the party or votes against it in parliament.

Defending the proposal, Sohul said the lawmakers should have freedom to express opinion in parliament without fear of losing membership.

He added, "Article 70 has long

been blamed for preventing lawmakers from playing due role in parliament. So, it should be amended in consultation with the constitutional experts."

Explaining their stance in favour of increasing the number of parliamentary seats, he said back when the number of parliamentary seats was fixed at 300 the country's population was 7.50 crore. Over the years, the population has doubled warranting a rise in constituencies to ensure proper representation of the electorate.

Similarly, Sohul said, the number of women reserved seats should be increased with a direct election system in place to help empowerment of women.

Besides, he said, the government can also consider introducing bi-cameral parliament and proportional representation, a system in which political parties are represented in parliament in proportion to percentage of the vote they get in polls.

He however did not elaborate on re-structuring of power between the

highest constitutional posts.

The issue regarding a balance of power between the president and prime minister has been much-talked in the last few months.

Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed in his address to the nation on May 12 stressed the need for power re-structuring among the highest constitutional posts.

In response to criticism that the EC is stepping beyond its jurisdiction by making the recommendations to the government, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) ATM Shamsul Huda has earlier said they have not done anything outside their domain.

"It is well within our jurisdiction to make recommendations to the government on issues relating to ensuring free, fair and credible elections," he said on February 27.

Citing examples from the Indian EC's practices, he said the CEC there has made 58 recommendations to their prime minister including the ones for amending the constitution.

RU teacher, 3 others sentenced to death

FROM PAGE 1

kept in his house the knife used in the murder.

Asked why four Shibir men including central office secretary Rejaul Karim and RU unit president Delwar Hossain Sayeedi were allowed in the court while journalists were barred, the PP said, "It was a separate case... All but lawyers and case-related people were not allowed in the court following the judge's order for security."

After the judgement was delivered, Jamaat-Shibir men led by Rajshahi city Jamaat President Ataur Rahman brought out a silent procession on the court premises, and expressed satisfaction. Salehi showed victory signs raising his hands.

Mohiuddin broke down in tears. The three other killers however expressed wrath against some RU teachers shouting that they are victims of their conspiracy.

THE KILLING

Dr S Taher Ahmed, professor of geology and mining, was killed on February 1, 2006 at the age of 59, and police recovered his body from a septic tank well behind his campus residence on February 3.

He was murdered only a year after the killing of RU economics teacher Prof Mohammd Yunus.

According to judicial confessions in the case, both Mohiuddin and Salehi were present during the killing and they had confirmed his death by touching his body in Jahangir's room at Taher's residence.

Then they followed the body while it was being taken to the septic tank for dumping.

MOTIVE BEHIND KILLING

The charges pressed say Mohiuddin planned the murder in

conivance with Salehi, promising money, computers and jobs for hired killers. Mohiuddin did this to avoid damages to his career as Taher had detected 'piracy' in his research papers.

INVESTIGATION AND TRIAL

Within seven days of the killing, police arrested five accused including Mohiuddin.

Salehi remained out of police drag net due to protection by Jamaat-Shibir till a court cancelled his bail in April last year.

Local Jamaat-Shibir leaders staged a big showdown in the city with Salehi present there on February 10, 2006. They asked policemen to arrest Salehi 'if they can'.

Police had to delay pressing charges till May 18 last year because of political pressure although investigation was completed over a year ago (in May 2006).

Trial of the case had started at the public safety tribunal on June 18 last year.

On August 20, Jahangir Alam Mollah, judge of the subtribunal, refused to conduct the case citing "unavoidable circumstances".

The Court of District and Sessions Judge AR Masud on October 7 stayed the case proceedings for an indefinite period following errors in a government gazette notification for shifting the case to the speedy trial tribunal.

After necessary corrections, the trial proceedings started in December last year.

MIXED REACTION

Prof Taher's family members expressed mixed reaction to the judgement while two former RU vice chancellors and many of the

teachers expressed disappointment over it.

But Jamaat-Shibir was quite happy about the verdict as Salehi was acquitted.

Plaintiff of the case and Taher's Sanjid Alvi Ahmed said, "We are happy at the judgment but acquittal of Salehi has disappointed us. We have asked for a copy of judgement so that we can further consult our lawyers."

Taher's wife Sultana Ahmed appeared unhappy at the verdict. "I want to say nothing about the court's decision, our lawyers will deal with it."

Meanwhile, Salehi was freed from Rajshahi Central Jail in the afternoon. Hundreds of Jamaat-Shibir men greeted him at the jail gate and took him away.

When contacted, Sanjid said they would challenge 'part of the verdict' in higher courts.

Their counsel Golam Arif Tipu said Salehi could be punished depending on the judicial confessions as investigators firmly spoke of his involvement in the murder.

PP Jahangir Alam however said Salehi was acquitted giving him the benefit of doubt as there was no prosecution witness or evidence against him.

Litterateur Prof Hasan Azizul Haque said, "I am hurt, agitated and frustrated at the verdict. It proved shortcomings in our legal system where a killer can be saved."

Former RU vice chancellor Dr M Saïdur Rahman Khan said, "I am astonished to see a killer released."

Prof Abdul Khaleque, another former RU VC, and Prof Moly Kumar Bhaoimik expressed similar views.

WEATHER TODAY

Thundershowers likely

UNB, Dhaka

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at one or two places over country's all six divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said in a forecast.

Highest temperature 37.8 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 21.9 degrees Celsius at Sylhet.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:38pm today and rises at 5:12am 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	35.2	27.2	75	75
Chittagong	32.0	26.5	67	76
Rajshahi	37.6	24.9	78	42
Khulna	36.7	27.1	65	55
Barisal	35.5	26.7	70	67
Sylhet	28.0	21.9	96	79
Cox's Bazar	33.5	25.5	72	76