

Toxic milk

FROM PAGE 1
Plasma Plus also carried out tests on samples of some of the branded powdered milk and found the toxic element in only Yashili 1.

But confusions arose as the BSTI itself could not rely on any of the laboratory tests.

Plasma Plus in a press release said yesterday that the BSTI provided it with four coded samples of powdered milk without their brand names for tests to detect melamine. It claimed that it never gave test reports on any particular brand.

DU chemistry department Chairperson Prof Tajmeri SA Islam blamed the BSTI for creating confusions. "There would not have been any confusion if the BSTI had talked with all the laboratories, set a testing method and finally crosschecked the results," she said.

The BSTI itself is confused about which result to rely on, she added.

The levels of melamine found in these eight imported brands of powdered milk are much higher than the tolerable level, according to the DU chemistry department tests.

BSTI scientists said presence of up to 0.001mg of melamine per gram milk consumed would be considered safe for children. For adults, this would be 0.0025mg per gram milk.

About doubts over the results of the tests conducted by the DU chemistry department, Dr Tajmeri said, "We do not care if anybody rejects the results or has doubts about them. We are sure that our process, method and testing instruments are hundred percent correct."

She said the manufacturers of these samples of powdered milk use melamine to enhance protein level in their products but melamine is a toxic chemical and cannot be digested after a certain level.

Dr Nahar said, "We took a long time for the tests and we checked and rechecked our results before confirming them."

At a press conference at the chemistry department auditorium yesterday, she said they used the High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC) method, terming it a high quality method, and the GC-MS machine.

"We would not have disclosed the results without being hundred percent sure as both babies and businessmen who trade powdered milk are equally important," she

China to help

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slapped on Pakistan after it detonated its first nuclear charges in 1998 in response to similar tests by India.

The sanctions were eased after Musharraf agreed to help Washington hunt down al-Qaeda terrorists responsible for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States.

But the revelation in 2004 that the architect of Islamabad's nuclear program, Abdul Qadeer Khan, had passed nuclear secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea set back Pakistan's hopes of becoming a trusted member of the world's exclusive nuclear club.

The US-India deal allows American businesses to sell nuclear fuel, technology and reactors to India in exchange for safeguards and UN inspections of India's civilian but not military nuclear plants.

Boucher told reporters earlier this month that the pact with India was "unique" and that a similar agreement with Pakistan was "just not on the table."

He said Washington would help Pakistan where chronic power shortages are contributing to a gathering economic crisis develop its huge coal reserves, expand hydroelectric power generation and build wind farms on its Arabian Sea coast.

Pakistan, the Islamic world's only known nuclear weapons state, began operating its first nuclear power station with Canadian assistance near the southern port city of Karachi in 1972.

Subrata Bain

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"We have shown our sincerity by sending back seven Bangladeshi miscreants, but the Bangladeshi authorities have not yet handed over 10 Indian separatists to Indian authorities."

The Indian government this time wants to sign a bilateral accord with Bangladesh government regarding the handover of Subrata Bain, said the envoy.

The two neighbouring countries do not have any extradition treaty between them. So such exchanges take place informally, often through pushback or deportation.

On holding national election under the state of emergency in Bangladesh, the Indian envoy said, "Emergency is no obstacle to holding an acceptable election."

He however suggested further relaxing the emergency rules.

He dismissed allegations that foreigners are interfering in the internal affairs of Bangladesh.

On duty-free trade facilities, Pinak Ranjan said Bangladesh's commodities, barring those on negative list, have access to the Indian market, which resulted in growth of Bangladesh's exports.

Re-demarcation

FROM PAGE 1
The HC bench of justices Mir Hasmat Ali and Shamim Hasnain on October 13 fixed today for hearing the writ petition that challenged the legality of the EC's gazette notification finalising fresh demarcation of the constituencies.

EC's counsel Dr Shaheen Malik yesterday told The Daily Star that it might take two or three days to complete the hearing on the writ petition against the re-demarcation of the constituencies.

The EC on October 14 took back from the HC bench of justices Syed Mahmud Hossain and Quamrul Islam Siddiqui its petition for vacating the court order that stayed the re-demarcation of parliamentary constituencies as the writ petition was pending with an HC bench of justices Mir Hasmat Ali and Shamim Hasnain.

"If more time is required for disposing the writ petition, the commission will move its petition to another High Court bench for vacating the High Court order that stayed the EC's re-demarcation of parliamentary constituencies," he said.

Former BNP state minister Abdul Mannan filed the writ petition on August 6 challenging legality of the EC's gazette notification finalising fresh demarcation of the constituencies.

The next day, the HC bench of justices Khademul Islam Chowdhury and Mashuque Hossain Ahmed stayed operation of the notification for three months, and directed the government and the EC to explain within two weeks why the notification should not be declared unconstitutional and illegal.

Another HC bench of justices Sheikh Rezaul Ali and Md Rais Uddin deferred until today the hearing on the writ petitions filed by Hasina for quashing the proceedings of Niko and barge-mounted power plant corruption cases against her.

The HC on July 7 stayed for two months the proceedings of the cases filed by the Anti-corruption Commission (ACC) against Hasina.

The HC also issued separate rulings asking the ACC and the government to explain why the proceedings against Hasina should not be quashed.

Following an application on August 27, the HC extended for three months the stay orders and fixed October 14 for hearing of the rulings.

Sources said counsels for Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojahid move petition on his behalf before an HC bench today for his bail in the Barapukuria coalmine corruption case.

BNP tells
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year to stop the ninth parliamentary polls then scheduled for January 22.

Coming out of the two hours long discussions that began at 9:00am, UN Resident Coordinator in Dhaka Renata Lok Dessallien said they hope the political parties including Awami League (AL) and BNP will participate in the election.

The meeting was held preparatory to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's visit to Bangladesh early November to observe situation in the lead-up to the December 18 election.

Members of the UN advanced mission led by Hitoki Den, head of the UN team on political affairs for South Asia, Asia and the Pacific region, accompanied Dessallien at the talks.

"We told them that the foreign diplomats should not make any comments that go against our national interests and violate the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations," Delwar told reporters after the meet.

"They must not try to dictate how our election should be conducted," he added.

At the meeting, the UN delegation enquired about BNP's stance on registration with the Election Commission (EC) and the prospect of December 18 polls being held under the state of emergency.

"We said BNP is always an election-oriented organisation and it wants to contest the upcoming polls as well," Delwar continued.

"We also told them we want to get registered with the Election Commission, but all barriers in this regard will have to be removed."

The BNP leaders told Dessallien that they would not participate in any election with the state of emergency in force.

The UN resident coordinator told reporters they have a good grasp of the situation ahead of Ban Ki-moon's visit.

"We certainly want all political parties to participate in the election," she said.

She observed that particularly participation of the two major parties—AL and BNP—is crucial.

Dessallien said the next government will have to contend with a number of problems including food price hike and the fallout from global economic meltdown.

She said she hopes the opposition parties will play a useful role in parliament.

BNP senior leaders RA Gani, Tanbir Ahmed Siddiqui, Shamsul Islam, MK Anwar and Nazrul Islam Khan were present at the meeting.

Asian women

FROM PAGE 16
These women and their families. By empowering women to become leaders in the society, AUW is creating an important force for positive change in the world.

These women, once out of the university, will contribute to the community.

This is the first time that Bangladesh has been able to offer such a window of opportunity in the region. So far many students had to leave the country and go to other countries to get first grade education.

Now, in addition to offering its own women a chance to get world class education, the nation will also offer such a grand opportunity to its neighbours.

One said she felt it was a great opportunity for her to be in this university, which brings together students from different countries and cultures in Asia and creates an environment where all will learn from each other in ways different from traditional methods of learning.

Women from underserved communities are often left uneducated and are unaware of how they can serve both personal and community development with their superior education.

AUW provides a critical pathway to leadership development, economic progress, and social and political equality, said another student.

The university programmes promise to educate promising young women from diverse cultural, religious, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds from across South and South East Asia with particular emphasis on the inclusion of women from poor, rural, and refugee populations.

Nepalese student Dipa Awali says she was not aware of how Muslims observe Ramadan until she came to study here. Here she also joined Eid and Durga Puja festivities in groups with other students and gained invaluable experience.

"Joining these festivals was just fabulous. We enjoyed ourselves so

much and also learnt so many things we were not aware of before," she said.

Dipa -- pointing out that the university aims at preparing leaders said, "I think one cannot be a leader unless they learn about other cultures."

Academic activity of the university, situated in Chittagong, has begun in April this year with 130 students from six Asian countries—India, Pakistan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Reputed academics from across the globe have already joined the university and are developing an international standard curriculum to prepare Asian women as leaders.

The university begins its undergraduate programmes in July next year. In the beginning it will enroll 500 students annually. The university has decided to reserve half of the seats for students who are the first in their families to ever go to a university.

"We spend time together, have different activities and discuss issues relating to different countries. We have clubs for public speaking, community development, and we also go to villages to teach English," a Cambodian student said.

"We not only improve our own English but also teach people in the villages. So when we return to our countries, we can teach others too," Jyoti Shrestha, another Nepalese student at AUW, said.

Students from different cultures learn to respect each other's values and cultures by living and studying together. This makes them more tolerant of each other, Jyoti said.

Anushka Yaddeni, a student from Sri Lanka, said the university would play a great role in empowering women as most women in Asia are deprived of opportunities.

"We who are studying here, feel privileged. We must help others who are not able to find such facilities," she remarked.

"AUW is a university that will help us spread our wings in the sky," One Endear said.

An Asian dream

FROM PAGE 16
East, with particular emphasis on inclusion of women from poor, rural and refugee populations.

The AWW's commitment to be open to students from different backgrounds is significant, the caretaker government chief said.

"The result is not just fairness of opportunity but also the ability to harness new talents in the service of our communities."

He said no sustainable development could occur without half of the people (women) fully engaging in uplift activities of the nation. A university dedicated to the education and empowerment of women will not only change the landscape of higher education but also unleash the potential of half of the population.

Dr Yunus said, "The university is a melting pot for Asia and the world. It will be an example of an institution where students will not be confined in buildings, but will go to villages and learn from struggles of people. Such programmes should be part of curriculum."

The Grameen Bank founder and managing director hoped that young and bright women from across Asia will learn from each other at the AUW and help reduce gaps that cause conflicts.

Jack Meyer said women in the world, particularly in this part of the world, are deprived of due rights for various socio-cultural reasons. But it is good education that can turn them into leaders to shape the value system and bring revolutionary changes in their own societies, he added.

Hoon Eng Khoo said a practice in the region is that women in families take heavy burden but get less benefits.

Educated at the new international standard university, the women can surely take part in political leadership and cultural movements for changes, she noted.

Stanford University, California, will send two post doctoral fellows to serve at the AUW, while Aalborg University, Denmark, has entered an agreement to collaborate on establishing a graduate programme in Information & Communication Technology at the AUW, according to a press release.

BNP, allies wait
FROM PAGE 1
of the two parties who then said they would register after holding talks with the caretaker government.

They sat in separate talks with Chief Adviser Fakhrudin Ahmed on October 14 and later said they will meet with the government again before the deadline for registration expires on October 20.

"We hope the government will hold the second round of talks with us before October 20," BNP Secretary General Khandaker Delwar Hossain yesterday told reporters.

"We hope our proposals as to registration will be accepted so the BNP can register," Delwar said.

Asked whether the BNP will apply for registration if the government does not hold talks with them before October 20, he said they will decide on it.

Sources in the BNP said some senior party leaders yesterday discussed the registration issue and were supposed to consult their party Chairperson Khaleda Zia last night.

The BNP constitution empowers the chairperson to bring amendments to it in an emergency. Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Mohammad Kamaruzzaman told The Daily Star that they have almost completed the preparatory tasks for registration.

"We'll sit today to discuss the registration and dialogue issues," he said.

IOJ Secretary General Abdul Latif Nezami said they were making preparations for registration.

"We'll submit applications after the four-party alliance reaches a decision," he told The Daily Star.

Twenty-nine political parties applied to the EC for registration as of Thursday. The commission has so far given out 180 application forms.

The EC will have to complete the registration work by October as it plans to announce the schedule for the December 18 parliamentary polls on November 1 or 2.

Mojahid
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of Uttara Police Station, said, "We raided his house several times but did not find him there. We have been trying to trace him, and will arrest him wherever we find him."

He however denied presence of Jamaat men at the place during the raids.

In reply to a question, he said, "It is not known to us whether he went to Sangram office."

Meantime, eminent citizens and lawyers sharply reacted to Mojahid's presence at his party's dialogue with the government on Tuesday while police reported to the trial court that he is a fugitive.

Madrasa students

FROM PAGE 16
"It was unimaginable what they did here today, such an incident never happened before in the history of the university. They should be arrested for the offence," Prof Faiz told reporters at a news briefing following the vandalism.

He said the attackers started ransacking his office in front of him, when he told them that the university authorities' decision is final and there is no chance of changing it now.

The attackers threatened him saying they will not let the university run normally, if they cannot get admission, the VC added.

Prof Faiz however assured the irate madrasa graduates that the university authorities will discuss the matter in future considering their grievances, but the current decision is final for this year.

The VC expressed his astonishment at the fact that the vandals left the office and the DU campus without any resistance after the vandalism.

"I immediately contacted the police and that was the very first time I ever called them to take action, as it was too much," Prof Faiz added.

When asked whether the attackers were DU students or outsiders, Prof Faiz said, "They came to me as students -- I couldn't specifically identify anybody."

But other DU sources said the attackers were from different madrasas of the city who were accompanied by some DU students who had also studied in madrasas before getting admitted to the university.

Some student leaders however alleged that the attackers were brought in, supported and escorted by Islami Chhatra Shibir, student wing of Islamist political party Jamaat-e-Islami.

Sources in the VC office said the attackers went to the office in the afternoon and submitted two memorandums to Prof Faiz under the banners of Bangladesh Madrasa Chhatra Andolon Parishad, and Madrasa Chhatra Odhikar Sangrahalan.

"Stern actions will be taken according to the university rules if the vandals are identified as university students," Prof Faiz said adding that they will seek legal action to the full extent against the perpetrators, if they turn out to be outsiders.

The university syndicate last night formed a four-member committee headed by Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam to investigate the incident.

The committee was asked to submit its report in seven days' time.

Strongly condemning the attacks, the syndicate recommended that the two students who signed the memorandums be expelled if found to be DU students.

Replying to a question regarding whether the incident was the result of a conspiracy to close the university, Prof Faiz said, "I am surprised -- such a motive might have been behind it."

He said the DU authorities will not let that happen, adding, "We will resist such attempts all together."

He called on all related to the university to cooperate with the DU authorities, so no more unexpected incident occurs on the campus.

Prof Faiz confirmed that sales and submission of admission forms will continue today according to the schedule.

The 5.7-per cent unemployment rate was the highest since the three months to March, 2000.

Iraqis stage

FROM PAGE 16
the roads leading to the square. Giant Iraqi flags covered nearby buildings.

One banner in English said "We refuse the existence of the US in Iraq."

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government and the Bush administration have hammered out a draft agreement after months of bitter negotiations.

But the Iraqi parliament must ratify the deal and Iraq's pre-eminent cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani has said any accord must have national consensus.

Al-Maliki, a Shia, could be politically isolated if he tries to win parliament's backing in the face of wide-spread opposition.

Several Sunni and Shia clerics, who wield considerable influence in shaping public opinion, also spoke out during Friday prayer services against the draft, complaining that the Iraqi public knows little about the terms.

A copy of the draft accord obtained by The Associated Press specifies that US troops must leave Iraqi cities by the end of June and be gone by 2012. It gives Iraq limited authority over off-duty, off-base US soldiers who commit crimes.

US Congressional approval is not required for the pact to take effect, but the administration is trying to build maximum political support anyway.

The march was called by al-Sadr after he had to postpone a mass demonstration on April 9 to mark the fifth anniversary of the US capture of Baghdad. That march had been postponed after many of his followers complained they were not allowed to enter the capital amid fears of violence.

Also on Saturday, Bahrain's foreign minister arrived in Iraq's capital Saturday for a one-day visit aimed at improving bilateral relations between the countries, the latest high-level visit by a senior Arab dignitary.

Tough agitation

FROM PAGE 16
sculptures of Lalou Shah and the Swadhinata 'statue oin' Dhaka University campus.

The AL leader was speaking at a discussion meeting titled 'Bangabandhu - Bangladesh and the Present Political Perspective' organised by Narsingdi District AL at its Eid-ur-rezwan at the Public Library auditorium in the city.

"The polls must be held on December 18, and in an atmosphere conducive to holding it in a free and fair manner," he said.

He demanded that the state of emergency is withdrawn and party chief Sheikh Hasina is released unconditionally.

Tofail said that the BNP-Jamaat alliance wasn't getting registered with the EC because they know they would face a similar fate in the national poll as they faced during the city corporation and Pourashaba polls.

Organised of Narsingdi District AL, the programme was also addressed by former AL lawmakers Nurul Majid Humayun, Meher Afroz Chumki and other local leaders.

RUSSEL'S BIRTHDAY
AL presidium member Matia

Protests

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forces, they said a certain quarter has been using religion for political purposes.

DU teachers and students under the banner of 'General Teachers and Students' held a rally at the foot of Aparajito Bangla at around 11:00am protesting the incident.

Later, around 500 teachers and students brought out a procession with a banner "We are angry at the removal of the sculptures" and marched various streets on the campus.

Meanwhile, leaders and activists of various left-leaning student organisations formed a human chain around 12:00noon stretching from Shabbag intersection to Teacher-Student Centre (TSC) intersection protesting the removal of the sculptures.

After the rally, emeritus professor of DU Dr Serajul Islam Choudhury said a section of the present government might have supported those who staged violent protests demanding removal of the sculptures. Otherwise, it would not be possible for them to do so under the state of emergency, he said.

The present government should give a statement about the removal of the sculptures as the government itself had taken the initiative to erect those in front of Zia International Airport, he said.

University students under the banner of Lalan Bhaskarjya Protisthan Mancha at a press conference at Madhur's Canteen demanded immediate reinstatement of the sculptures.

The students of the faculty of fine arts organised street painting in front of the faculty in the evening protesting the incident.

Chowdhury said that for the first time, parents are not sending their children to school but sending them to earn their livelihood instead.

She was addressing a discussion held on the Bangabandhu Museum premises in Dhamondi to mark the 44th birth anniversary of Sheikh Russell, youngest son of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Sheikh Russell Jatiya Shishu Kishore Parishad organised the discussion and reception for meritorious students who passed the SSC 2008 successfully and winners of painting competition.

Matia said many children are dying slowly because of starvation in the country at present.

During the programme, two factions of Sheikh Russell Jatiya Shishu-Kishore Parishad locked in clashes twice over slogans and seat sharing, leaving at least two people injured.

Ershad

FROM PAGE 1
[politicians] mindset.

He said the political parties should not consider those convicted or accused of graft for nominations.

The JP boss said his party would not ally itself with BNP even if it fails to forge a grand electoral alliance with Awami League (AL). In that case, JP would contest the upcoming polls on its own.

He said his party will seek at least 60 seats from the AL-led grand alliance.

He said he expects to be the country's president again given the grand alliance's sweeping power in the upcoming election.

Replying to a query, Ershad said he opposes the proposed dialogue between AL President Sheikh Hasina and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

Institutional graft

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The land ministry officials, ranging from assistant secretaries to the secretary, will participate in the meeting. ACC Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury, commissioners Habbur Rahman and Abul Hasan Manjur Mannan will represent the Commission.

Initially, the ACC will hold such meetings with four ministries, where corruption is perceived to be rampant. Following the meeting with the land ministry, meetings will be held with the health and communications ministries and the Local Government Division under the LGRD ministry.

According to ACC senior officials, such meetings will be held with all the ministries and departments in phases.

The ACC thinks that the campaign for rooting out institutional corruption will not be successful without the direct participation of the government officials.

The necessity of involving the senior officials is felt because they know how corruption takes place in their respective departments and which legal and structural weaknesses inspire or force one to indulge in corruption.

ing to the authorities' decision.

He said the DU authorities have urged police to provide necessary security during sales of admission forms at banks on the campus.

DU officers' association, class IV employees' union, and DU teachers association (Duta) in separate news releases condemned the incident and demanded exemplary punishment for the perpetrators.

Duta executive committee is scheduled to meet this morning to discuss yesterday's vandalism.

Officer-in-charge at Shabbag Police Station told The Daily Star that DU security officer Kamrul Hassan filed a case against 150-160 unidentified people last night.

UK plans tougher restrictions on immigration

AFP, London

Britain will impose tougher restrictions on immigration as the global financial crisis lifts unemployment to the highest rate in nearly a decade, the country's new immigration minister said yesterday.

"If people are being made unemployed, the question of immigration becomes extremely thorny," Phil Woolas told The Times newspaper.

"It's been too easy to get into this country in the past and it's going to get harder," he added in an interview.