

AMATEUR CHEF COOK-OFF

Two more finalists chosen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The second and third finalists of the Rupchanda-Star Lifestyle Amateur Chef Cook-Off were determined after the second and third sessions of the third round at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

The second session focused on appetisers and the cook-off was conducted under the eye of Chef Abdullah Tareq, who adjudicated the cooking contest yesterday. Abdullah got his culinary degree from the University of Toulouse and specialises in French cuisine. He is also the head chef and co-owner of Cilantro.

The appetiser cook-off was won by academic administrator Tanzeela Amin Aureen, who prepared a dish of chicken liver fritters. The third session which dealt with main course items was won by Reema Islam, a development practitioner, for her Mexican Ensemble.

There are two sessions of the third round left—regional specialties and creative cooking—which will take place at the same venue today. The five finalists will then face off for the title tomorrow.



Three contestants busy cooking their dishes at the third round of Rupchanda-Star Lifestyle Amateur Chef Cook-Off at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

BCL, SHIBIR FACE-OFF

Police raid RU dorms

RU CORRESPONDENT

Against the backdrop of processions and counter processions by pro-Awami League student organisation Bangladesh Chhatra League and Jamaat-backed Islami Chhatra Shibir, police made pre-emptive raids in different residential halls of Rajshahi University early yesterday to avert any possible untoward incident.

Six students were detained from Nawab Abdul Latif and Habibur Rahman halls during the raids around 1:00am, as they could not show their residential identity cards. Later, they were freed, Motihar police said.

Four outsiders were also detained during separate drives at different places on the campus around 12:30pm, they said.

Meanwhile, RU authorities have decided to impose restrictions on all types of political meetings and processions on the campus, said RU Proctor Prof Tarikul Hasan.

The decision was taken at a meeting at RU vice-chancellor's office, he said adding that the authorities also decided not to allow any student to stay at residential halls if they do not have residential status.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

Inclusion in mainstream rights movement urged

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a views-exchange meeting yesterday urged the rights activists to include the issues of women with disabilities in the mainstream women's rights movement.

Creating more employment opportunities for the women with disabilities both in government and private sectors will help them join the movement, they said.

The development of women with disabilities, especially in remote areas, is still lagging behind, they added.

National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD), and Steps Towards Development, with the assistance of Manusher Jonno Foundation, organised the meeting on "Participation of women with disabilities in the mainstream women's rights

movement" in the capital's LGED building.

Nasimun Ara Haque Minu, president of Nari Sangbadik Kendra, urged the media to publish more success stories of women with disabilities.

In the developed countries, people usually call an individual with disabilities as "special"; and common people show a positive attitude towards the person. Such positive attitude is required in the society, said Minu.

Nijera Kori Coordinator Khushi Kabir said women with disabilities should be included in all the sections in the mainstream women's rights movement.

NFOWD Member Mahua Paul said women with disabilities could prove their efficiency if they got proper opportunities.

Farzana Majid, gender specialist, ICDDR,B, also spoke among others.

Ticfa to widen scope for trade talks with US

Says NBR chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement (Ticfa) will widen Bangladesh's opportunity to discuss different trade issues with the United States, said National Board of Revenue (NBR) Chairman Md Ghulam Hussain yesterday.

"It [Ticfa] will be an effective platform where the two countries could talk on bilateral trade issues for once or more in a year," he said.

He was addressing as chief guest at a seminar on "Deployment of ASYCUDA World: Single Window in Bangladesh Customs" organised by NBR at a hotel in Chittagong city.

The installation of an updated software version named ASYCUDA World would simplify the operations of customs clearance, and reduce hassles and expenses of all stakeholders, Hussain said.

Initially, ASYCUDA World, the latest in the series of automated system for customs data, would be introduced in Dhaka and Chittagong customs offices, from July 1 on trial basis, NBR sources said. With technical support from UNCTAD, Bangladesh government will implement the project with its own fund costing around US\$ 8.50 million, they said.

Commonwealth wants continuation of democracy

Sharma tells BNP team

UNB, Dhaka

Visiting Commonwealth Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma yesterday said they want to see the continuation of democratic process in Bangladesh reflecting the hopes and aspirations of its people.

He expressed the desire during a meeting with a BNP-delegation, led by its acting Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, at his hotel suite in the capital.

The four-member BNP delegation met Sharma and discussed various issues, including the role of the Commonwealth in political and socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

BNP Vice Chairman Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury, who was also present at the meeting, briefed reporters.

Terming the ties between Bangladesh and Commonwealth historic, Sharma said they at the meeting assessed the persisting relations and hoped that it will further be consolidated for the betterment of Bangladesh's people.

Asked whether the next general election issue came up for discussion at the meeting, Mobin said there was no specific discussion on the issue.

BNP Chairperson's adviser Riaz Rahman and Sabihuddin Ahmed were also present.

Sharma, now in Dhaka to attend the 10th Commonwealth Women Affairs Ministers' Meeting (10 WAMM), also appreciated Bangladesh success in strengthening democracy, containing terrorism and militancy, and in upholding human rights.

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