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LAW ON FOOD ADULTERATION Punishment reduced in changed draft

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cabinet yesterday approved a new food safety law with lesser punishments than had been proposed initially for food adulterators.

The food safety law, which will replace the Pure Food Ordinance, 1959, was approved with a provision of only five years' imprisonment or Tk5 lakh or both for persons guilty of food adulteration.

On July 1, the cabinet had agreed in principle to the draft of the law, which envisaged a sentence of either seven years' imprisonment or a fine of Tk10 lakh or both for mixing life-threatening chemicals in foods. It was also agreed that if anyone repeated the offence, the punishment would double.

Initially, the draft had proposed the death penalty for such offences. But later the punishment was lowered on recommendations from different stakeholders.

Food ministry officials confirmed that in between the July 1 meeting and yesterday's meeting of the cabinet, the draft of the new food law went through a vetting process in the law ministry. But they could not confirm the reasons for lessening the punishments.

The food safety law has also a provision for the setting up of a unified authority, Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA), to fight food adulteration and take care of other food related concerns of consumers. It proposed forming as many food courts as deemed necessary to prosecute adulterators.

The law proposed controlling the use of various toxic chemicals, formalin, DDT, etc, in food items to ensure quality of food from farm-to-fork, from production to packaging and distribution.

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Nursery students Mithila and Sinthia take this unique but risky ride to school on their uncle's bicycle every morning. The photo was taken in the capital's Dayaganj area around 7:30am yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Adilur again denied bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday once again rejected the bail petition of Odhikar Secretary Adilur Rahman Khan in a case filed for publishing a false report and doctored photos on the death toll of a police crackdown on Hefajat rally in the capital.

Judge (in-charge) Ruhul Amin of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court passed the order after Adilur's lawyer submitted the petition seeking bail for

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BSF strangles Bangladeshi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Indian Border Security Force yesterday strangled a Bangladeshi national on Mohammadpur border at Daulatpur upazila of the district, sources in the Border Guard Bangladesh have said.

The deceased, Bazlur Rahman Rashid, 35, was a farmer in Mohammadpur village.

At about 11:00am, Rashid and three of his fellow men were collecting grass on a sandbank on the Padma just across the border, said Lt Col Kazi Arman, commanding officer of BGB's Battalion-32.

BSF soldiers of Baushmari camp in West Bengal's Murshidabad district rushed in on a motorboat, chased the

SEE PAGE 12 COL 2

No plan to use drones

BSF refutes reports on heightened watch on Bangladesh border

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

The Indian Border Security Force yesterday said it has no plan to deploy unmanned aerial vehicles, popularly known as drone, on the skylines over Bangladesh frontiers.

"We are looking for various technological measures to upgrade security along our borders.

SEE PAGE 12 COL 2

Assad warns US over strike

Moscow says Syria strikes would cause 'outburst of terror'; Russia, Syria push for UN chemical experts' return

AGENCIES

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad warned Washington yesterday to brace for retaliation if US forces attacked his war-torn country, as he denied using chemical weapons against his people, reported AFP.

"You're going to pay the price if you're not wise. There are going to be repercussions," Assad told CBS television's "This Morning."

"It's an area where everything is on the brink of explosion. You have to expect everything."

He also warned of the risks of possible chemical attacks by rebels or "terrorists" if there was outside intervention in Syria.

Assad spoke in what CBS called his first interview since President Barack Obama asked Congress for approval to use military force to punish Assad for his regime's alleged use of chemical weapons in a deadly attack last month.

"You should expect everything... The government's not the only player in this region. You have different parties, different factions, different ideol-

ogies. You have everything in this decision now," Assad said.

Assad denied his forces carried out a deadly chemical weapons attack on August 21 on the outskirts of Damascus, as alleged by the United States and some of its allies.

"How can you talk about what happened if you don't have evidence?" he said in the interview, in which he spoke English.

"We're not like the American administration, we're not like the

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Stacks of fish traps, known as *gui* in the haor areas of Sunamganj district, getting loaded onto boats at Angaruli ghat of Gui village in Bishambharpur upazila. At least 300 families of this village earn their bread selling the fish traps. In monsoon, when most of the haor areas go under water, farmers take to fishing.

PHOTO: STAR

HEFAJAT MAYHEM Wakkas taken on 15-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted a 15-day remand for Hefajat-e Islam leader Mufti Mohammad Wakkas in five cases filed over the group's May 5 mayhem at Shapla Chatter and Paltan areas in the capital.

Detectives picked up Wakkas, a former state minister for religion and social welfare, from the capital's Malibagh area on September 2.

A day after the arrest, the DB police produced Wakkas, Dhaka city unit vice-chairman of the organisation, before a Metropolitan Magistrate's court and sought his remand for 20 days in two cases.

Wakkas's lawyer submitted petitions seeking adjournment of the remand hearing.

The court had fixed yesterday for hearing the petitions and sent Wakkas to jail.

In response to the remand prayer, Metropolitan Magistrate SM Ashiqur Rahman yesterday showed the Hefajat leader arrested in three other cases filed over the

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Hajj flight trouble over

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The backlog of hajj pilgrims created due to flight schedule disruption over the last two days had cleared early today as a leased aircraft yesterday joined the hajj fleet, claimed Biman officials.

The flight disruption and a backlog of 850 pilgrims were created as the leased Boeing 747 aircraft from Kabo had missed two scheduled hajj flights on Saturday and Sunday.

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PRAYER TIMING September 10		
Fajr	4-35	5-10
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-14	6-17
Esha	7-45	8-15

Source: Islamic Foundation

Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you agree with National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Mizanur Rahman that the BSF soldier's acquittal in the Felani murder case by an Indian court showed disrespect for international law?

Yes (95%)
No (05%)

TOTAL VOTES: 194

TODAY'S POLL

Do you agree with National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Chairman Dr Mizanur Rahman that India has staged a drama over the Felani murder trial to enhance its image before the world?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT www.thedailystar.net

RISKY BUILDINGS IN CTG Fresh demolition drive begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

The Chittagong City Corporation began a fresh drive to demolish risky buildings in the port city yesterday.

On the first day of the drive, a team led by Executive Magistrate Najia Shirin directed to evacuate residents of six-storey "Barua Building" in Sadarghat area by this morning.

The CCC will later demolish the illegally extended portion of the building as it had tilted towards an adjacent four-storey building.

Earlier, officials of the building constructing committee of Chittagong

Development Authority (CDA) had sent a notice to the CCC to demolish the building for the safety of the residents of the building and adjacent buildings, said Najia.

Following this, the CCC on June 24 sent a notice to the building owner, Dipak Barua, but he neither evacuated the residents nor demolished its extended portion, she added.

The CDA submitted a list of 64 risky buildings of the city to the CCC, including Barua Building. The CCC is preparing to demolish these buildings gradually, said the magistrate.

Lobsters hold the key to eternal life!

THE TELEGRAPH ONLINE

Lobsters contain a chemical that makes them 'biologically immortal' and may hold the secret to eternal life, scientists believe.

Although they are still susceptible to death by disease or attacks, lobsters can theoretically live forever because getting

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