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has become imperative, writer argues

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US president of the last 25 years

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## Kit itself unfit

Mobile courts, cops using wrong device to  
detect formalin in fruits, food; destruction  
of fruits comes under serious question

PORIMOL PALMA and SUMAN SAHA

The manager of a superstore in Dhaka bought Formaldehyde Meter Z-300 at the instruction of mobile courts. He was surprised when the kit detected upto 30ppm "formalin" in honeydew melon (Bangi), berries and pineapples.

"Instantly, I withdrew the fruits from the store and sent those to the Science Laboratory for tests. No formalin was found," he said, wishing not to be named.

Mobile courts have been using Formaldehyde Meter Z-300 over the last two years for detecting formalin in fish, fruits and vegetables.

But food scientists say the kit is meant to measure chemicals or gases in the air of laboratories, not in food items. It is not used for detecting formalin in food in the US, the origin of the instrument.

"Apart from formalin, this machine can read other chemicals containing aldehyde, ketone or hydroxyl groups," said Dr Monirul Islam, director (nutrition) at Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC).

He has assessed the detector while conducting a study on food adulteration.

"Even if some amount of ripening agent ethephon is present in food, the instrument will read that too. So, its reading can never be precise at all," he said.

Aldehyde and ketones are widespread in nature. They also exist in



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This makeshift fruit stall in Rampura shuts down yesterday from fear that mobile courts will penalize it for selling chemical tainted fruits. The banner still touts its mangoes from Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj as being 100 percent formalin free.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## It's poorly planned

Agriculturists question  
anti-formalin drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recent drive against "contaminated fruits" was poorly planned and was executed without any consideration for producers and people's nutrition, said agriculturists and ministry officials.

"What is happening in the name of formalin [drive] cannot happen in a civilised country. The way the fruits are being destroyed without any consideration is not acceptable," said Anwar Faruque, additional secretary of the agriculture ministry.

The observations were made at a seminar on the occasion of a two-weeklong campaign on plantation of fruit-bearing trees organised by the Ministry of

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## Mueller mashes Portugal

AFP, Salvador

Striker Thomas Mueller scored a hat-trick as Germany opened their World Cup campaign on Monday with a 4-0 rout of 10-man Portugal with Cristiano Ronaldo enduring an afternoon to forget.

A decisive first-half saw Germany race into 3-0 lead as Mueller converted a penalty, then fired home their third on the stroke of half-time after a Mats Hummels header had also hit the target.

Portugal played almost an hour with a man

**GERMANY 4 (Mueller 12-pen, 45+1, 78, Hummels 32) PORTUGAL 0**

down after defender Pepe was red-carded for aiming a head-butt at Mueller.

World Player of the Year Ronaldo played the full 90 minutes of the Group G opener despite recent injuries, but the Portugal captain was powerless to prevent his side being over-run.

The Portuguese suffered the same fate at Salvador's Arena Fonte Nova as their Iberian

neighbours Spain last Friday when the holders were routed 5-1 by the Dutch.

Germany continue their domination of Portugal by adding Brazil 2014 to their list of recent wins over Ronaldo's side which includes the 2006 World Cup, plus the 2008 and 2012 European championships.

The result capped a remarkable day for Germany, in front of Chancellor Angela Merkel, just hours after news broke that ex-Formula One champion Michael Schumacher has come out of

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Germany striker Thomas Mueller is ecstatic after scoring his second goal against Portugal during their 2014 World Cup Group G match in Salvador yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS



## Magical Messi



AGENCIES, Undated

The flashbulbs burst. The Argentina fans chanted with such gusto and energy that it fit the occasion of World Cup football returning to the Maracana. But for a while, it was all a bit sterile.

Then in the 65th minute, the man that everyone came to see put his mark on this tournament. Lionel Messi scored a stunning goal which eventually proved the winner in Argentina's 2-1 win over Bosnia & Herzegovina. Exchanging passes with Gonzalo Higuain before swerving through challenges and curling into the corner, the Argentina talisman scored what was just his second goal at the World Cup, but may well be one of the best he ever scored.

This was, of course, his big build-up. Messi at the Maracana - that is where iconic football moments are made. And for a long time it was weighing not

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## Japan provides \$1.18b loan

Funds for Matarbari coal-fired  
power plant, 4 other projects

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Japan yesterday gave Bangladesh \$1.18 billion in loans for Matarbari coal-fired power plant and four other projects as the Asian economic giant seeks to deepen its ties with the country.

Of the amount, \$406 million will be spent only to build the power plant, part of a \$4.4 billion project on the Matarbari Island of Cox's Bazar, according to a deal signed between Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) and the Economic Relations Division (ERD).

Jica will lend Bangladesh \$3.74 billion in phases for the mega project in fulfilling an earlier commitment.

Bangladesh and Jica have identified Matarbari, located 60km south of Chittagong city, as the tipping point for carrying out the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt Initiative (BIG-B).

"This island and the surrounding area have all the potential to become completely transformed into an integrated industrial and trading hub, as well as a central energy base," said Jica President Akihiko Tanaka at the loan-signing ceremony at Sonargaon Hotel in the capital.

The project has two components: a 1,200MW power plant, which, according to him, will be the world's most efficient and environment-friendly plant, and the first ever deep sea port in Bangladesh.

"Eventual expansion of the Matarbari plant will likely include power plants adjacent to the planned units, construction of coal centres to service other coal-fired power plants and even construction of an LNG (liquefied natural gas) terminal," Tanaka said.

Besides, Bangladesh and Jica are in talks to make a comprehensive master plan of the area, including Chittagong and Cox's Bazar.

"This will further materialise the shape of BIG-B," the Jica chief said.

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