

CONTROVERSIAL NATIONAL BROADCAST POLICY

To usher in autocracy

Say political analysts, civil society members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Political analysts and civil society members yesterday warned that the National Broadcast Policy would ultimately lead to autocracy and violence in the country.

It is part of the government's political blueprint to suppress people's voice and cling to power for a longer period, they said, urging an immediate review of the policy for the interest of democracy, good governance, and human rights.

"If we allow the policy, bureaucracy will be able to evade accountability. If torture by police or Rab is not published in newspapers, can you think what will happen?" said Dr Dilara Chowdhury, former professor of government and politics at Jahangirnagar University. She alluded to a provision, which imposes restriction on broadcasts "demeaning" the armed forces, law enforcement agencies, and government officials. "Police in general have a negative attitude

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Harbinger of one-party rule

RU discussion told

RU CORRESPONDENT

The government is trying to establish a one-party rule by implementing the "undemocratic" National Broadcast Policy, speakers told a discussion at Rajshahi University yesterday.

They demanded immediate cancellation of the policy, which they said ran counter to the Right to Information Act and the constitution.

"It is a black law," said Ruhul Amin Gazi, former president of a faction of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), while addressing the discussion,

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HC refuses to hear 'premature' challenge

Also does the same to another petition on a bill empowering JS to impeach SC judges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two separate vacation benches of the High Court yesterday declined to hear three petitions, two of them challenging the legality of the National Broadcast Policy and the government's move to empower parliament to impeach Supreme Court judges and the other seeking the court's directives for action against eight government officials for their failure to protect the lives of the Pinak-6 launch passengers.

The court dropped all the three from the list of petitions to be heard on different grounds.

The bench of Justice Sheikh Hassan Arif and Justice Abu Taher Md Saifur Rahman called the two former petitions "premature", as it said no law was formulated over the policy, and the constitution was not amended over SC

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OBITUARY



Mrs. Habiba Islam
(1941-2014)

Mrs. Habiba Islam (former Country Representative of Louis Berger International Inc.) passed away at her residence in Dhaka on August 14, 2014. Her Namaz-e-Janaza was held at Gulshan Azad Mosque and her body was buried at Banani graveyard the same day. Family members, friends and well-wishers are requested to pray for the departed soul.

~~ Family members ~~

C-745



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Govt trying to 'lure away' BNP leaders

Claims Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

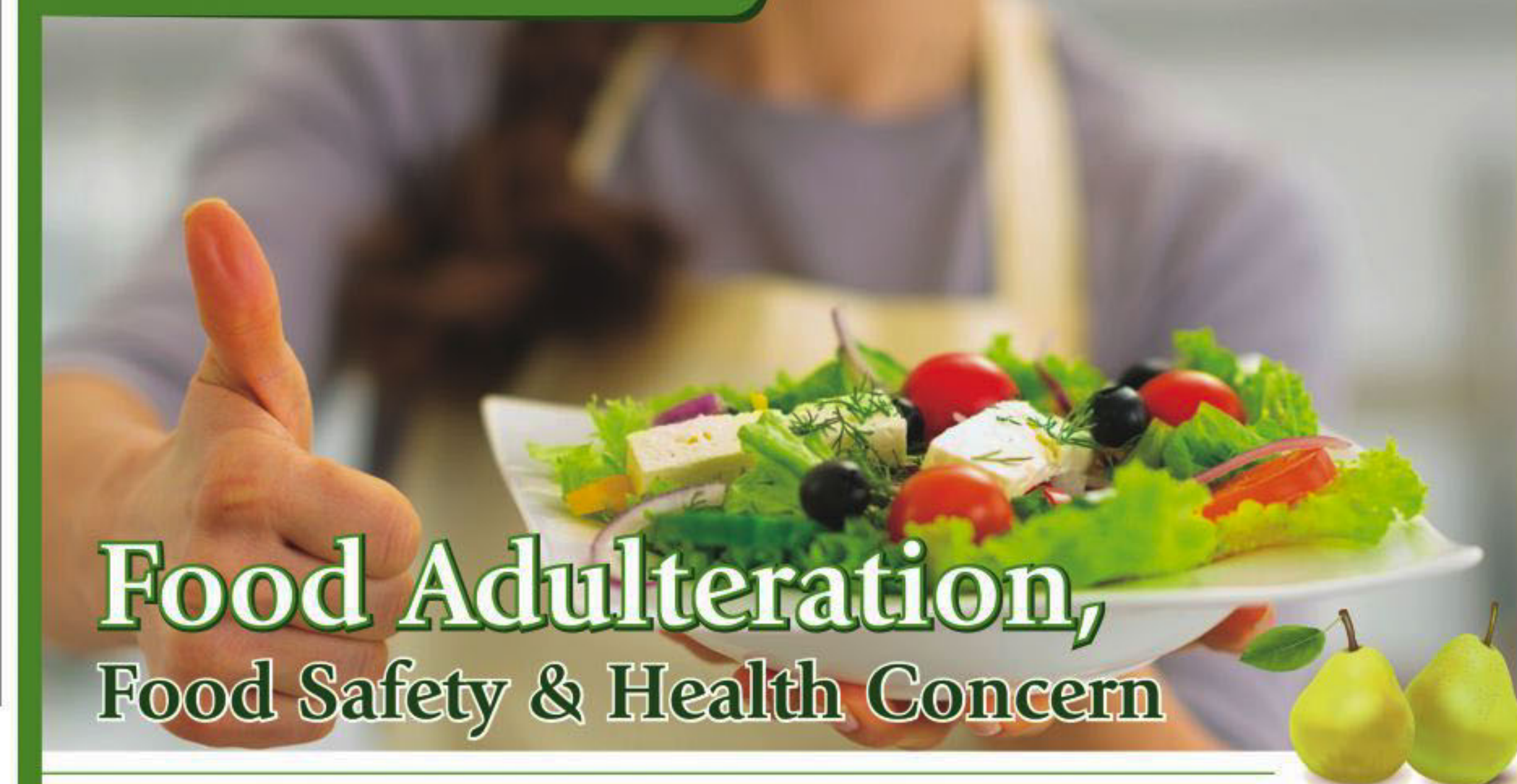
BNP spokesperson Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday accused the government of hatching a conspiracy to split his party to stop the ongoing anti-government movement.

The government is trying to "lure away" leaders from the BNP, he said, adding that all these ill-motives would end up in failure like the past, and the people would resist these.

Addressing a discussion at the capital's Jatiya Press Club, the BNP acting secretary general warned, "If

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

Thought for food



It is a matter of great concern for all that unsafe food serves as a growth medium for bacteria that can cause food poisoning. Foodborne diseases may turn fatal and even cause death.

There is lead in turmeric, formalin in fish, fruits, vegetables and milk. High concentration of pesticides and chemical preservatives are found in fresh produce. Studies show that farmers use a concoction of toxic chemicals to fight pests and they indiscriminately use chemicals in crops to extend shelf life without showing any concern for the health of consumers. We also know of contamination by microorganisms leading to acute food poisoning.

Food safety is a scientific discipline involving safe production, handling, preparation and storage of food in ways that prevent contamination and growth of bacteria. It is done to prevent foodborne diseases. Therefore, it is the responsibility of those who handle and prepare food commercially and at the same time of consumers to ensure the food is safe for consumption.

Contaminated foods can carry harmful contaminants, chemicals, parasites and toxins. Application of excessive and unauthorised additives and colours for making food items tasty and attractive can be lethal as many such chemicals may cause cancer and other life threatening ailments. Millions of people of our country become ill from food borne pathogens each year. On the basis of a survey done from 2010 to 2013, the Public Health Institute stated that 50% of all food items were found to be adulterated. Greed for fast profit among food traders has led to today's alarming situation.

Poisonous residues in food items leave the worst impact on children's mental and physical growth and women's reproductive system including fertility. They cause cancer and damage vital human organs like liver, kidney and heart. Frequent reuse of oil in cooking food items release carcinogenic materials which may lead to cancer. Now a day, formalin is one of the burning topics of discussion. Though many food items contain naturally occurring formaldehyde but that level is permissible for human consumption. When formaldehyde is found in excess amount it becomes a source of health concern. Formalin applied on fish, fruit, meat and milk causes cancer, childhood asthma, skin disease etc. So the government monitoring agencies must ensure judicious use of formalin in food items.

The relevant government agencies for food safety have a role to play in consumer protection. They need to educate producers on how to produce safe food, and at the same time punish people who deliberately sell unsafe food. The Bangladesh Food Safety Authority was incorporated in 2013 as an Act to help coordinate food control and consumer protection activities across the country. FAO is providing technical assistance to the Ministry of Food in this regard. But there is also the need for political will to devote sufficient public resources to make the system operational and effective in the longer term.

Dr. Shahed Imran

HMO, Dhaka Medical College Hospital

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The Daily Star



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