



The department of consumer rights protection raids a wholesale banana market in Tangail in April and destroyed chemically tainted fruits. Inset, chemically treated bananas are being heated up in an earthen pot in Bogra so that they ripe faster.

PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH/FILE

Profit, more profit

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toxic chemical.

Traders of litchis, another summer delight available for only a few weeks, take part in such practices.

In Dinajpur, the home of tasty litchis, a significant number of orchard owners spray the fruits with toxic chemicals just days before shipping them off to the market.

According to experts, growers should stop spraying chemicals at least two weeks before harvest.

In 2012, 14 children died in Dinajpur and Thakurgaon with almost identical symptoms. Experts investigating the deaths believed that pesti-

cides used in litchis could have been the cause.

Azibor Rahman, a litchi trader in Dinajpur, claimed that traders outside the district use formalin in litchis at their wholesale stores.

He said some farmers had to use chemicals on litchis and delay harvest due to transport strikes in the north.

He said traders at Shyamoli and Kakrail in Dhaka and in Chittagong, Barisal, Gazipur and Tangail were the main buyers of litchis from Dinajpur.

Vegetables are not safe either.

Experts had detected formalin-tainted tomatoes in the capital's kitchen markets several years ago.

Many growers in Panchagarh use calcium carbide in tomatoes to make them look reddish and fresh.

Atahar Ali, a wholesaler in the district, said they use different types of chemicals to ripen tomatoes only in the winter, as tomatoes ripe naturally in the summer.

Wholesale traders also use formalin to preserve the perishable vegetables to avoid losses, as there is no cold storage in the district, he said, adding that there were eight to 10 wholesalers in Panchagarh.

Contamination has crept into poultry as well.

Scientists have found excessive

amount of chromium in chicken meat, bone and liver. Over consumption of chromium could lead to cancer.

Further research suggested that chickens, which eat feed produced from tannery leather dust, contain excessive amounts of chromium.

During a recent visit to the capital's Hazaribagh tannery industry area, it was found that a four-ring chain was involved in chromium-contaminated poultry feed business.

The chain consists of some tannery owners, unauthorised meat-bone producing factories, unauthorised poultry feed producing factories and traders.

Over 80 unauthorised factories are involved in meat bone business, according to locals.

Traders from Chittagong, Gazipur and Dhaka's Savar purchase meat bone from the area to produce poultry feed, said a meat bone factory owner.

Requesting not to be named, he said he buys leather dust from tanneries.

Executive Magistrate Anwar Pasha, who has been engaged in efforts to combat food adulteration for several years, said wholesalers were found guilty of fruit adulteration while many vegetable growers were also found using harmful chemicals.

"Formalin-tainted apples were

found in the capital's fruit shops during drives, while in some cases the shop-owners admitted their involvement in the adulteration," he added.

Rashid-e-Mahbub, chairman of the National Committee on Health Rights Movement, a non-government platform, said that in fruit and vegetable businesses, wholesalers are mainly responsible for adulteration.

"Only a few cold storages are there to preserve perishable fruits. This may prompt wholesalers to find an illegal way like using formalin," he said.

Our correspondents from Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Chapainawabganj and Panchagarh contributed to this report.

Subhan was with Pak army

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with the victims' families had prepared a list of 170 to 175 victims of the massacre.

Earlier, several prosecution witnesses linked Subhan, the then ameer of Pabna unit Jamaat, to the mass killing committed in several villages under Satbaria union in Sujanagar upazila.

Subhan, a nayeb-e-ameer of Jamaat, faces nine charges including genocide committed in Pabna during the nine-month-long war. The octogenarian accused, however, pleads not guilty before the court.

Fazlul, former principal of Satbaria College, said he was the chief of Satbaria Union Sangram Committee, a pro-liberation platform, and had motivated the youth to join the war.

Subhan was the general secretary of Pabna Peace Committee, an anti-liberation platform and Pakistani army Captain Jayedi was its chairman, he said, adding that Subhan became its vice-chairman later.

"Moulana Subhan was very fluent in Urdu and Arabic, which helped him establish a good rapport with the Pakistani army," said the 74-year-old witness.

He added Subhan along with

around 300 Pakistani army men on May 12 launched an attack on several villages in their union.

Panicked, he was fleeing from his Nishchintapur village towards Kacuri village when he had seen a white vehicle and several army vehicles in front of Kuripara Primary School, said Fazlul.

"I saw Moulana Subhan talking with Pakistani army near the white vehicle. I also saw 30 to 40 people including Khandkar Obaidullah, Seken and Entaz detained and tied," he added.

The witness said after some time he had heard gunshots and when the Pakistani army left, he found bullet-hit Seken, Mani and Entaz lying in front of the school.

Fazlul said he had left the area for Chinakbara village and returned to Satbaria the next day. He had also visited several attacked villages and prepared a list of 170/175 victims, said the witness, adding, "We could not enlist the unidentified victims."

Defence counsel Mizanul Islam had begun cross-examining the witness before the three-member tribunal led by Justice Obaidul Hassan with member Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Md Shahinur Islam adjourned the proceedings.

Fazlul is set to face further cross-examination today.

ICT-1

The defence of ATM Azharul Islam yesterday completed placing arguments on all six charges brought against their client for his alleged involvement in crimes against humanity and genocide during the war.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice M Enayetur Rahim asked the defence to complete the rest of their arguments by today and said they would hear rebuttal from the prosecution tomorrow.

Azharul, who claims himself innocent during indictment, was produced before the tribunal.

State-appointed defence counsel Mohammad Abul Hasan has meanwhile finished cross-examining the second prosecution witness against fugitive former Jatiya Party lawmaker Abdul Jabbar in a war crimes case against him.

Jabbar, who was the chairman of Mathbaria Peace Committee in Pirojpur, faces five charges for his alleged involvement in killing, mass killing, looting and forced conversion.

Jabbar has been on the run since 2009.

Objects penetrated aircraft from outside

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crew on board.

The black boxes were retrieved intact, with the flight recorders showing a completely normal flight before impact.

Radio communications with Ukrainian air traffic control confirm that no emergency call was made by the cockpit crew.

The pattern of wreckage on the ground suggests that the aircraft split into pieces during flight.

The report shows how easily a different airliner could have met the fate of the doomed plane instead, had the crew of MH17 been able to comply with a controller's request to fly higher in the minutes before it was shot down.

Air traffic controllers were attempting to clear traffic as three other commercial flights, unidentified in the report, were in the vicinity – two other Boeing 777s and one Airbus A330.

At 12.53pm, Ukrainian air traffic controllers at Dnipropetrovsk asked MH17 to climb 2,000 feet to flight level 350 over eastern Ukraine, in accordance with the original flight plan, to clear a "potential separation conflict" with another Boeing 777.

The crew said they were unable to comply, possibly due to weather. Instead, at least one other plane climbed higher.

Just after 1pm the crew, running into bad weather, requested to climb to 34,000 feet – although air traffic control said the plane should keep at the same altitude. At 1.20pm, MH17 exploded in mid-air.

The other plane was not identified by investigators but it is known that a large Singapore Airlines jet, many of which are 777s, was nearby.

Kiev and the west have accused pro-Russia separatists of shooting down the plane with a surface-to-air missile supplied by Moscow. Russia, which denies mounting western claims of direct involvement in the five-month conflict in Ukraine, has blamed government forces for the attack.

Russia, Ukraine, the US, the UK, Malaysia and Australia were all given the politically sensitive report for review, and investigators say they have since amended it before publication.

The report is being issued just days after a ceasefire backed by Kiev and Moscow came into force on Friday to try to end a war that has killed more than 2,700 people and led to at least

half a million fleeing their homes.

Tjibbe Joustra, chairman of the DSB, said: "The MH17 crash has shocked the world and raised many questions. The Dutch Safety Board wishes to determine the cause of the crash, for the sake of the loved ones of the victims and for society at large.

"The initial results of the investigation point towards an external cause of the MH17 crash. More research will be necessary to determine the cause with greater precision. The safety board believes that additional evidence will become available for investigation in the period ahead."

The plane was travelling from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur when it was destroyed. Most of the victims were Dutch, with 193 of the 283 passengers and 15 crew who died coming from the Netherlands.

Last week the Malaysian prime minister, Najib Razak, said he wanted to dispatch more investigators to eastern Ukraine before winter to gather more evidence. The search has been suspended for a month because of the continuing conflict in the area.

The investigators said they are aiming to publish the final report by July 2015.

BCL men

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then locked the main gate, witnesses said.

They burnt some furniture of the college and chanted slogans against the central BCL president and general secretary, demanding immediate annulment of the new committee and a council session for selection of new leaders.

The college authorities opened the gate around 12.15pm after the aggrieved BCL men went to their dormitory.

New college unit BCL president Dollar along with some supporters then entered the campus and hurried out after parading through the premises, witnesses said. Hearing the news, the activists against the new leaders rushed there with sticks and iron rods, looking for them and beat up Shahadat on the college playground.

They also chased students, who had queued up at the administrative building to collect application forms for admission in masters.

Meanwhile, a case was filed with Banani Police Station, accusing 150 to 200 unnamed people, of involvement in the Monday's vandalism.

Those, who had carried out vandalism the day before, staged demonstrations on the campus in the presence of the police but law enforcers did not arrest anyone, witnesses said.

The police did not intervene in the situation inside the campus, but was positioned at the gates to avert vandalism on the road, said Firoz Hossain Mollah, inspector (investigation) of Banani Police Station.

IMPEACHMENT BILL

20-party to hold protest rallies today, tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP-led 20-party alliance yesterday announced a two-day programme protesting the government's move to restore the parliament's authority to impeach judges.

The alliance will bring out processions and hold rallies across the country excluding Dhaka on Wednesday and in the capital on Thursday, said BNP standing committee member Nazrul Islam Khan at a press briefing at the party's Nayapaltan central office.

"The government has taken the decision to keep judges under threat and to establish supremacy over judiciary," the BNP leader said at the press conference.

The government on September 7 placed a constitutional amendment bill in parliament amid widespread criticism to restore the Jatiya Sangsad's

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