

PM seeks stern action against food adulteration, orders formation of committee

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Online Desk : Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on Monday sought stronger action against food adulteration, directing the formation of a three-member high-level committee to identify the challenges facing the relevant agencies and recommend measures to make them more effective. He gave the directive at a meeting at his office in the Secretariat with officials involved in food safety, product quality control, anti-adulteration drives and mobile courts, said Prime Minister's Deputy Press Secretary Md Suzauddhowla Sujon.

The committee will be comprised of Prime Minister's Public Administration Adviser Ismail Zabiullah, State Minister for Public Administration Abdul Bari and Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Ghani. During the meeting, officials from the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection, the Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA), the Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) and the city corporations highlighted a number of challenges they face in carrying out anti-adulteration drives.

They sought more manpower at the district level, better laboratory facilities, modern equipment for field operations and greater powers for mobile courts. The officials also said they often face security risks while taking action against influential people and organised syndicates involved in food adulteration and other irregularities. The Prime Minister listened carefully to their concerns and assured them that the government will take steps to address the problems.

"Problems will always exist. Even then, we must move forward despite those challenges. We cannot afford to sit idle," Sujon quoted the Prime Minister as saying. Tarique Rahman noted that many countries that were once less developed than Bangladesh have made remarkable progress. "We also have to move forward. If everyone works together sincerely, it is certainly possible. Everyone must be more responsible and conscious for the sake of the country," Sujon quoted the Prime Minister as saying.

Highlighting the importance of public awareness, Tarique Rahman referred to the condition of Gulshan Lake. "Many of our lakes are being filled with waste. Sadly, much of this waste is dumped by educated people in our society. Those who should be the most aware are often not. To change the country, government initiatives alone are not enough. Citizens must also show goodwill and act responsibly," he told the meeting. Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister ABM Abdus Sattar, Commerce Secretary Aatur Rahman Khan, Prime Minister's Additional Press Secretary Atikur Rahman Rumon, BSTI Director General Kazi Imdadul Haque and senior officials of the relevant agencies attended the meeting.