

DOWN TO EARTH

City's Environmental Damage from Industrial Wastes

By A S M Nurunnabi

The environment of the city is facing a constant threat from the poisonous wastes from the tanneries.

Everyday huge quantities of untreated wastes from such tanneries in the city fall into nearby river waters and areas, poisoning the atmosphere of the adjoining neighbourhoods. These wastes make adjoining water bodies dangerously unsuitable in the aquatic sense and cause the spread of water-borne diseases.

The neighbouring areas with a population of 20 lakh are daily affected by the malodorous atmosphere created by these tannery wastes.

The main centre of tannery industries in Dhaka is located in the Hazaribagh area. The tannery industries developed in this area from the early sixties because of the available advantage of discharging their wastes into the nearby Buriganga. At present there are about 170 tanneries big and small in this area. These tanneries are highly outdated and do not possess waste treatment facilities.

For the processing of leather, many chemicals are used, such as chromosol, sodium chloride, sodium sulphate, lime and other acid compounds. It is estimated that from each tannery in this area, about two thousand five hundred gallons of liquid wastes fall into the Buriganga river every day. On this basis, 2000 to 2500 cubic metres of liquid wastes go into the river water daily. From sources in the Environment Department, it is understood that besides chromium, the wastes contain arsenic, a large quantity of biological waste, leather, animal

hairs, bloods, oil, grease, diluted and undiluted salt, etc. For preservation of aquatic life, the level of diluted oxygen (DO) should not be over 5 ppm. But in the Buriganga and other water bodies adjacent to the tanneries, the level of DO has been found to be between 7 to 38 ppm.

During the monsoon, the low level areas at Hazaribagh go under water. As a result, the tannery wastes spread widely through the drains and manholes. Even the Dhanmandi lake is not free from this pollution. The level of chromium in the river water which is increasing may cause cancer in human body. Besides, the river bed is being silted up with the high volume of wastes thereby making use of the river water more dangerous for health.

The big casualties of this lethal practice have been the fish resources of the river. Fishermen, who in the past caught *ruhi, katla, pangash, shoal*, etc from parts of the river near Dhaka, hardly ever net these species nowadays. Many fishermen who lived on the banks of Buriganga changed profession and became manual labourers or turned into destitutes.

The wastes have also polluted the environment of the adjoining residential areas. The sodium sulphate used for processing leather turns into hydrogen sulphide which makes the air malodorous at all times in an area of 10 sq. miles. These wastes also create sulphuric and sulphurous acids which cause a process of erosion on the neighbouring buildings and habitats.

The other worst polluters of Buriganga are the large number of sewer lines which emit into the river. Sewerage lines

from Wiseghat, Postogola Farashgong Ghat, Mitford, Badamali ghat etc regularly discharge untreated putrid substances into the river.

On the shores of Buriganga live a tenth of the nation's 120 million population. And a fair share of the nation's industries uses its water and return to it thousands of tons of poisonous effluents regularly every day. For want of any sewerage treatment plant, close to 9 million ton of pollutants finds its way to the small river direct from the bathing and laundry facilities every day.

Most of the factories and industrial units along the river banks have no waste treatment plants. Industrial wastes are being dumped into its water from different salt factories at Kamrangirchar areas. Other polluting agents include mixed soap, soda and bleaching powder used by washers at Chandnighat. At Swarighat and Sadarghat, chemicals from different jewellery shops, ice factories and bilge and oil from the river vessels are released into the river. From Sadarghat to Pagla Bazar, different cold storages and brick kilns dump solid and liquid wastes into the river.

The result of all this is that we are now living on a dead river. The cleaning of the Buriganga river on all counts has, therefore, become an urgent task. The pollution needs to be stopped by banning industries of all sizes and kinds from emptying any waste into the river without due treatment processes. In the event of our failure to take remedial steps on an urgent basis, we shall be living on a stinking cesspool.

Rahman Biswas had expressed his deep shock and sorrow at the sudden demise of Dr Sirajul Haq.

In a condolence message, President Biswas said that Sirajul Haq was a dedicated political leader and an experienced parliamentarian who always fought for the cause of people.

President Biswas conveyed his heart-felt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has also expressed deep shock at the death of Dr Sirajul Haq.

In his death, Begum Zia said, the country lost an experienced parliamentarian and public leader. She recalled his contribution to nation building activities and strengthening the party.

The Prime Minister expressed her sympathy for the members of the bereaved family and prayed for the departed soul.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukder expressed his profound grief at the sudden death of Dr Haq.

In a condolence message, the BNP Secretary General recalled Dr. Haq's contribution in different democratic movements of the past and his service to the nation and the party.

Talukder said in the death of Dr. Haq the nation had lost a noted parliamentarian and the party a dedicated and sincere leader.

BNP MP killed

From Page 1 Col 7
Medical College Hospital in a critical condition.

The body of Sirajul Haq was taken to MMCH at around 1:30pm, where local people held a Namaj-e-Janaza in the evening.

Dr. Haq was elected MP from the Sreebardi-Jhingati constituency (Sherpur-3) as a BNP candidate in 1991.

He left behind his wife, three sons and a daughter.

On hearing the news of Dr. Haq's death, State Minister for Health and Family Planning Sirajul Haq, ruling party Whip M A Karim, Mosharrif Hossain and several hundred supporters and admirers of the late MP rushed to Mymensingh. They attended the Namaj-e-Janaza at the MMCH premises in the evening.

The body has been taken to Sherpur where a Namaj-e-Janaza will be held tomorrow morning. Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali and some other BNP MPs are likely to attend the Janaza at the Sherpur Town Hall premises. Dr Haq will be buried at his family graveyard at Halgara village under Sreebordi thana.

Sirajul Haq did his MBBS from Dhaka Medical College. He was a member of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and later joined the Bangladesh Nationalist Party during President Ziaur Rahman's time. He was also elected Member of Parliament in 1979, his family sources said.

Condolences

UNB adds: President Abdur

Rahman Biswas had expressed his deep shock and sorrow at the sudden demise of Dr Sirajul Haq.

In a condolence message, President Biswas said that Sirajul Haq was a dedicated political leader and an experienced parliamentarian who always fought for the cause of people.

President Biswas conveyed his heart-felt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for eternal peace of the departed soul.

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukder expressed his profound grief at the sudden death of Dr Haq.

In a condolence message, the BNP Secretary General recalled Dr. Haq's contribution in different democratic movements of the past and his service to the nation and the party.

Talukder said in the death of Dr. Haq the nation had lost a noted parliamentarian and the party a dedicated and sincere leader.

Coup bid: Sihanouk's son sentenced in absentia

PHNOM PENH, Oct 28: A senior Cambodian official was sentenced Friday to 18 years in prison in connection with a coup attempt on July 3. Nine Thais and a Cambodian police chief were also found guilty of involvement but freed under an amnesty granted by King Norodom Sihanouk, reports AP.

The military court also sentenced Sihanouk's son, Prince Norodom Chakrapong, and former Interior Minister Sing Song each to 20 years in prison if they can be caught.

Because of his ties to the royal family, Chakrapong was expelled to France the same day the government crushed the insurrection without firing a shot. Sir Song was arrested but escaped from prison last month and his whereabouts remain unknown.

The two-day trial came more than three months after the nine Thais, Cambodian Undersecretary of State for the

Interior Ministry Sin Sen, and Police Chief Teas Chhoy were arrested in the plot to overthrow the government elected in a UN-organised poll last year.

The case aggravated already bad ties between Cambodia and Thailand, with Bangkok insisting its citizens were being used as scapegoats.

Cambodian authorities arrested 14 Thais attempting to leave Phnom Penh the day after the insurrection but later freed five of them for lack of evidence.

But the court found all 14 Thais guilty of involvement in the plot. Three were sentenced to five years in prison, six to three years, and the five already in Thailand were handed two-year sentences. All of the sentences were suspended, however, under Sihanouk's amnesty.

The court said the Thais were caught with equipment they were to use to cut the capital's electricity and telecommunications system.

"We are very happy that they have been released," Thailand's ambassador to Cambodia, Sakthip Krairiksh, said in an interview.

The court said the Thais were caught with equipment they were to use to cut the capital's electricity and telecommunications system.

"We are very happy that they have been released," Thailand's ambassador to Cambodia, Sakthip Krairiksh, said in an interview.



Mirza Abbas MP, who has been re-elected president of Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Jubabadi, presenting a bouquet to BNP chairperson and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Hare Road Office yesterday

— PID photo

National edn programme should be reviewed'

By Staff Correspondent

A symposium on higher education, youth and economic development yesterday called for reviewing the national education programme and chart a fresh curriculum to keep up with the changing world.

Prompted by the call some students participating in the symposium wanted to know what future do the present education system offer them and why is the system still outdated despite full knowledge of the authorities.

Rotary Clubs of Dhaka Buriganga and Metropolitan Dhaka organised the symposium together with the Independent University of Bangladesh at the BCIC auditorium in the capital.

LGRD Minister Abdus Salam Talukder attended the function as chief guest.

Noted educationist Dr Abdul Majid Khan, Rotarian Iftekharul Alam Chowdhury, University Grants Commission Chairman Professor M Shamsul Huq, noted banker Lutfar Rahman Sarker, Samson H Chowdhury, Chairman of the Square Pharmaceuticals Limited and Rotary District Governor Mosharrif Hossain took part in the discussion.

Speaking on the occasion, the LGRD minister informed that about 25,000 students passed the HSC examinations this year although the enrollment capacity of all the universities, medical colleges, engineering and agricultural institutions put together does not exceed 13,000.

Talukder said the country with its limited resources can hardly train up these young men. Despite having the world job market open, we cannot compete for employment, he said.

The Minister pointed out

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

Rotarian Governor Mosharrif Hossain in his speech said that time has come to review the national education programmes as well as the role of private educational institutions.

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

Rotarian Governor Mosharrif Hossain in his speech said that time has come to review the national education programmes as well as the role of private educational institutions.

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

Rotarian Governor Mosharrif Hossain in his speech said that time has come to review the national education programmes as well as the role of private educational institutions.

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

Rotarian Governor Mosharrif Hossain in his speech said that time has come to review the national education programmes as well as the role of private educational institutions.

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

Rotarian Governor Mosharrif Hossain in his speech said that time has come to review the national education programmes as well as the role of private educational institutions.

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

Rotarian Governor Mosharrif Hossain in his speech said that time has come to review the national education programmes as well as the role of private educational institutions.

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

The Midnight File

Clinton leaves for S Arabia

KUWAIT, Oct 28: US President Bill Clinton left Kuwait for Saudi Arabia today on the final leg of a Middle East swing after telling Iraq would never again be allowed to threaten the small oil-rich state it invaded in 1990. During a six-hour visit, Clinton met US troops he rushed to Kuwait early this month in response to the massing of Iraqi troops close to the border and told them they could probably expect to be back home for Christmas because Iraq had heard their message, reports Reuter.

2 newsmen held in Gaza

ERUSALEM, Oct 28: Palestinian police arrested two Arab journalists in the Gaza Strip to question them about ties with Islamic militants, officials said Friday. Relatives said that Taher Shreiteh, 34, a correspondent for Reuters in Gaza and his brother Amer Shreiteh, 29, a cameraman for CBS, were held at their office in Gaza City on Wednesday night. They said that the police also confiscated a fax machine and searched the office, reports AP.

Talks resume today

From Page 1 Col 8
on track Thursday with the intervention of Sir Ninian.

Fifteen members from each side took part in the first round of deliberations which began on October 20 in the Parliament Bhaban.

Meanwhile, the Opposition parties in Parliament, which have been boycotting the House demanding a caretaker government to conduct general elections, will hold a meeting at 11 am today to discuss the progress of the dialogue and their next course of action.

Opposition sources said, the leaders would also discuss and finalise a new group of four negotiators with the Deputy Leader as its chief to represent the Opposition in the dialogue.

Moudud Ahmed of the Martyrs' family members announced the launching of the organisation at a conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

Dr Abdul Majid Khan in his speech suggested narrowing the gap between the education programme and the need of the present day society.

He also said that the appropriateness of programme should be determined by the need.

Prof Shamsul Huq in his speech informed that he has proposed to the government to extend the time period for basic education in the country from five hours to eight hours to keep up with the changing economic and social patterns.

Lutfar Rahman Sarker pointed out that the banks and other financial institutions could play a very effective role in increasing the education in the country.

He suggested a separate subsidiary bank — the Self Employment Bank — under a fully supervised credit scheme.

He also called for starting employment savings certificates by the banks.

Rotarian Governor Mosharrif Hossain in his speech said that time has come to review the national education programmes as well as the role of private educational institutions.

It will be a delicate task for Clinton because the Saudi Kingdom and Kuwait are still reluctant, despite mounting pressure from the United States to normalise relations with Israel, he told AFP.

The BSA can only shell Sarajevo by violating a weapons exclusion zone for 20 km around the Bosnian capital which NATO and UNPROFOR have a duty to enforce.

NATO has chafed at being restrained by the UN in a lethal Serb artillery attack on Sarajevo recently was allowed to go unpunished as was an attack on an aid convoy near Gorazde in which a driver was killed.

Clinton will press Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to follow Jordan's example and make peace with Israel during his trip to the Gulf today. US diplomats in the region said, "Clinton will try to convince his close Gulf allies, the Saudis and Kuwaitis, to make peace with Israel," one diplomat said, asking not to be named.

It will be a delicate task for Clinton because the Saudi Kingdom and Kuwait are still reluctant, despite mounting pressure from the United States to normalise relations with Israel, he told AFP.

The BSA can only shell Sarajevo by violating a weapons exclusion zone for 20 km around the Bosnian capital which NATO and UNPROFOR have a duty to enforce.

They said one paramilitary official and a protester were killed in the clash at Gilgit during a demonstration by supporters of the opposition Pakistan Muslim