

High content of arsenic found in tubewell water

From our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: The dwellers of Kushtia town are drinking water containing a poisonous element arsenic skin and stomach diseases have already been reported after taking water in many areas.

It is reported that presence of arsenic was found in water, pumped out by hand tubewells of Kushtia sadar and Bheramara Pourashava, according to Public Health Engineering Department source. Many people in Kushtia Pourashava area were attacked with arsenic action which caused their severe illness and skin diseases developed in their bodies, the attending physicians said.

The Executive Engineer Public Health Department, Kushtia was informed of the matter by the physicians suspecting arsenic action in their bodies. He immediately took steps and visited the houses of the victims. They took sample of water from the tubewells. On his initiative public health Regional Research centre sent a team of experts who collected water from 14 such tubewells.

After thorough examination arsenic was found in eight places and the result is given below according to the rate of contents in one liter.

In tubewell of Didar Hossain of Courtpara 0.750 milligram, tubewell of Shamsul Huq, Courtpara had 0.135 milligram, tubewell of Shahaduddin of Paschim Majampur had 0.33 milligram, in tubewell of Am-

lapra had 0.133 milligram of arsenic.

Besides in tubewell of Kashem Ali of Bheramara 0.694 milligram of arsenic was found, in Naitun hat 0.242 milligram in tubewell of Asadul was 0.915 milligram, highest ever was found.

The Executive Engineer also recommended for collecting sample of water from least 15 tubewells in every union.

It may be mentioned that presence of arsenic in one liter of water is considered tolerable up to 0.05 milligram and that also is harmful. The Executive Engineer advised not to use water from those tubewells which contain over 0.05 milligram of arsenic in one liter of water.

According to Public Health Engineering department source, arsenic poison has been found in the water of some deep tubewells in Chuadanga, Kushtia and Meherpur and in Sathkira. As a result public health has been threatened there too. It is gathered from a reliable source that six districts of West Bengal across the border along eastern side of the Padma have been seriously affected with arsenic chlorine and miniworms. The West Bengal government has been compelled to seal up a few hundred of DTWs by engaging a task force, it was reported recently. Calcutta based newspapers references of the scientists in respect of existence of the dangerous underground arson-

opyorrhoea stores which have been emitting arsenic in underground water deposit. The geologist are searching for the store's layer there.

The Public Health Engineering Department source further added that after arsenic detection in West Bengal, ground water has been collected from 32 DTWs from South West border district of Chuadanga, Meherpur, Kushtia, Jhenidah, Jessore, Khulna and Sathkira for laboratory tests. Arsenic has been found in large amount collected from the respective DTWs. One DTW at Chuadanga, two DTWs at Kushtia, one DTW at Meherpur and one DTW at Sathkira have been sealed off. Thousands of the people of the districts have been affected with skin diseases due to drinking of the poisonous water.

An International seminar on Arsenic in underground water was held at Jadavpur University, Calcutta last year where the hydraulic experts have observed the burning issue. The lives of one crore people of the eight border districts in Bangladesh have been threatened due to intake of water containing arsenic supplied from water tanks of the concerned Pourashavas.

According to experts, arsenic is coming out due to lifting of underground water by DTWs. They have suggested protective measures to maintain underground water layer.

Husband allegedly beats wife to death

SIRAJGANJ, Sept 13: A young housewife was beaten to death allegedly by her husband at Hajipara village in Raiganj thana on Thursday, reports UNB.

Police said Saleha Khatun, 22, mother of two, was severely beaten up by her husband Anwar Hossain as she failed to bring dowry money from her father.

Anwar Hossain went into hiding soon after the incident.

The body was buried after autopsy at Sirajganj General Hospital. A case was filed with Raiganj thana.

Rival group takes revenge

Six houses looted, 23 women beaten

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Sept 13: At least six houses were looted and 23 women including a pregnant woman were beaten up mercilessly at Ishwardi village under Nagarkanda police station by a rival group on September 9 in the morning following the death of one Mozammel of the same village who was fatally injured in a clash between two rival groups in a trial matter on September 8, according to police and witnesses sources.

In a critical condition Mozammel was rushed to Nagarkanda hospital where from he was referred to Dhaka. He succumbed to his injuries on September 8 in Dhaka.

Two cases were lodged with Nagarkanda police in these connections. Police investigation is going on. None was arrested till the writing of this report on Wednesday.

Property worth Tk 20 lakh gutted

From Our Correspondent

KISHOREGANJ, Sept 13: Property worth about Tk 20 lakh was gutted when a fire broke out in Tarail Pilot High School at Tarail Thana Headquarters, fire brigade sources and witnesses said.

The fire which originated due to electric short circuit gutted the science laboratory, office-room, library and auditorium of the school along with all furniture. After being informed through wireless message, the fire brigade personnel of Kishoreganj immediately started for the spot, but they could not reach there in time due to the pitiable condition of the road. It was learnt.

15,000 children suffering from malnutrition in Patuakhali

PATUAKHALI, Sept 13: About 15,000 children of six thanas in the district have been suffering from malnutrition, reports UNB.

According to official sources, the number of affected children is increasing day by day in different areas of the district specially in char and coastal areas.

According to the sources, poverty of rural people is mainly responsible for the increasing malnutrition. The poor people cannot provide nutritious foods to their children. About 75 per cent people in the district are dependent on agriculture. But the agricultural productions are affected by natural calamities, high prices of fertilizers, want of bullocks and non-availability of soft-term loan.

Besides, many people in five thanas — Kalapara, Dashedima, Bauphal, Galachipa and Mirganj — have been rendered homeless due to erosion of the rivers.

Father, son electrocuted in B'baria

From Our Correspondent

BRAHMANBARIA, Sept 13: A father and his son died of electrocution yesterday as a live overhead electric wire fell on the son when both were cutting bamboo from a bunch in the Bunihaat area of the town.

According to witnesses, the eight-year-old son Khairul Islam and his father, Morshed Ali, 60, were cutting bamboo from a bunch. A bamboo got stuck with the overhead live wire and tore it apart falling on Khairul. The father was electrocuted when he went to help his son. Both died on the spot.

Training prog held

TANGAIL, Sept 13: A training programme on 'Family Planning and Health Care of Mother and Children' was held at Kalihati thana recently, reports UNB.

Deputy Commissioner, Tangail, Mohammad Abdus Sattar Khan inaugurated the programme arranged by the District Information Office at the BRDB auditorium.

Forty trainees, including 12 imams from 12 unions, 12 primary school teachers, 12 UP members, a member of Anar VDP and one member of Tangail Bureau took part in the training programme.

Addressing the programme, the Deputy Commissioner urged the trainees to reach the knowledge acquired from the training programme to the people of their respective areas.

Flood situation improves in C'nawabganj

Affected people not getting sufficient relief

From N S M Mahbubur Rahman

CHAPAINAWABGANJ, Sept 13: Although flood situation in Chapainawabganj improved at the gradual recession of water level in the Padma and the Mahananda. However, the over all condition of the flood affected people deteriorates due to crisis of food, drinking water, clothes, medicine and fuel. Children women and old people are the worst sufferers.

Flood has washed away one lakh 5 thousand 2 hundred 80 houses affecting 6 lakh 16 thousand one hundred 38 people and damaging crops of 13 thousand 3 hundred 39 hectares of land, 251 km kucha roads and 162 kilometres of pucca roads, 25 kilometres of embankments, 200 educational and religious institutions have been badly affected. Death toll in the flood affected areas reached 20. Bus communication between

One commits suicide

From Our Correspondent

MAGURA, Sept 13: One Asaduzzaman Asad, 20, of Barisat village under Sirpur thana in the district committed suicide by taking poison recently, the police sources said.

Police suspects Asaduzzaman Asad ended his life following family troubles.

Number of landless people increases

NETROKONA, Sept 13: The number of landless people, particularly farmers, has been increasing fast in all the 10 thanas of the district due to a variety of reasons, reports UNB.

Leading farmers said the reasons included natural calamity, high prices of fertilizer, want of bullocks and non-availability of loans.

The farmers have to borrow money at high rate of interest from local landlords by mortgaging their small holdings, which are usually confiscated for non-payment or sold away for repayment of loans and interest.

Agricultural loans from authorised financial institutions are hardly available because of corruption, irregularity and procedural bottlenecks, they said.

It was also alleged that a section of unscrupulous employees in collaboration with local routs harass the farmers who refuse to pay bribe.

The farmers of the district have urged the government to streamline the loan disbursement procedure.

300mt of wheat sanctioned for rural infrastructural development

From Our Correspondent

FARIDPUR, Sept 13: A total of 300 metric tons of wheat have been sanctioned for each of the five constituencies of the district under Rural Infrastructure Maintenance Programme, according to official source.

The source when contacted told this correspondent that the programme will be implemented in the ensuing dry season under the direct supervision of the respective MP.

Besides, 100 metric tons of wheat have been allocated for each of the constituencies under village maintenance project during this current rainy season, the source added.

Moreover, a sum of Taka 13 lakh 79 thousand and 340 bundles of CI sheet have also been allocated as house building grant to be distributed among the flood and river erosion affected people of Sadar, Char Bhadrassan, Sadarpur and Bhanga thanas in the district, the source informed.



JESSORE: One thousand 809 bottles of phensidyl were seized from a Dhaka-bound night coach bearing number Laxmipur 'Ba' 02-0001 recently. Three persons were also arrested for their alleged involvement in carrying the contraband drugs.

Earning from fish export may fall by Tk 200 cr in next fiscal : Shatish

From RU Correspondent

RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY, Sept 13: Shree Shatish Chandra Roy, State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock has said that fish policy would be formulated soon with a view to boost the fish production in the country.

Shree Shatish was inaugurating a day-long workshop on 'Breeding problems regarding fish fry and fish resources' at Rajshahi University senate hall on September 8 last organised by Fisheries Directorate, Rajshahi Division.

The State Minister said that export earning from fish may decline by Tk 200 crore in coming fiscal year as the recently detected, 'white spot' disease of shrimp in alarming, State Minister further said that Gold, Silver and Bronze medal would be awarded to the best fishermen and organisation from the current year for the outstanding contribution to the field of fisheries.

Mizanur Rahman Minu, Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation has said that concerted efforts of fishermen, scientists and government should be taken with a view to enrich Bangladesh with fish.

Prof M Eusuff Ali, Vice-Chancellor of RU, A F M Yahya Chowdhury, Divisional Commissioner of Rajshahi also spoke on the opening ceremony with R Chowdhury, Deputy Director of Fish Directorate, Rajshahi in the chair.

Case filed against RU authority

RAJSHAHI, Sept 13: A case was filed on behalf of some students of Rajshahi University against the authorities' recent decision to cancel the admission of 36 students, reports UNB.

Three students — Farzana Khaled, Tamanna Yasmin and Farhana Yasmin — filed the case with the Senior Assistant Judge against the university's Vice Chancellor, Registrar and Dean of Arts Faculty.

According to the petition, some 36 students were admitted in the first year honours classes for the 1996-97 academic session prepared on the result of admission test.

A student organisation demonstrated against the decision of the university authorities which ordered a halt to the admission process and announced new dates for repeat interview, the plaintiffs said.

This decision, they said, was illegal, unfair and taken in violation of university rules, without any inquiry.

administration. Various political and social organizations are carrying out their relief programmes. Yet the relief is quite inadequate in respect of the needs.

It was learnt while visiting some affected areas that relief does not reach those who are remaining at their own lands under the open sky. It is alleged that relief often does not reach the right people.

The condition of the people living in the char areas like Sunderpur, Charbagdanga, Narayanpur, Alatal, Islampur, Devnagar, Char Onupnagar, Shahjahanpur, Panka, Uzirpur, Durlavpur, Manakasha is the worst. People of those areas have been leading a very miserable life due to acute crisis of food, drinking water and fuel.

Domestic animals of those areas, are apprehended to meet death due to food crisis.

Various diseases like diarrhoea and dysentery have broken out in the flood affected areas. According to the sources of the flood affected areas people are being attacked by diarrhoea. The actual number of the patients attacked by diarrhoea yet could not be known reportedly because they cannot come to the hospital as they are still confined in water logged areas. While contacted with the Civil Surgeon he said, none was reported to have been attacked by diarrhoea. 31 medical teams have been working in the affected areas. After complete recession of flood water diarrhoea is apprehended to take a very serious turn.

News from Kushtia

One killed in road mishap

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: One person was killed in a road accident on Kushtia-Rajbari road near Charaikole on Friday last.

The person has been identified as Mozib Rahman of Charaikole village. The victim died when a bus, Jessore, BA 812 at high speed carrying him on its roof reached in front of Nandalalpur Union Parishad office was hit by a branch of tree on head. The helper stopped the bus and saw him dead. The bus has been seized by police. Body of Mozib Rahman has been sent to Kushtia General Hospital for autopsy. A case has been registered.

Prices of essentials up in Kushtia

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: Price of essential commodities have shot up while price of rice remained unchanged in different markets of the district following start of the flood causing much inconvenience to the low income group of people.

According to reports price of flour have gone up in the markets. One kilogram of flour is being sold between Tk. 11.50 and Tk 12.00 and better quality between Tk. 13 and 14.

Prices of all types of pulses and grains increased in the markets abnormally. One kg of motor pulses is selling between Tk 38 and Tk 40, musur Tk. 44 and Tk. 46, grains between Tk. 40 and Tk. 42 and kharai low quality of pulses between Tk. 32 and 36 per kilogram. But the rate of the pulses were at least 10 per cent less a few weeks back, market sources informed.

Prices of all types of vegetables have gone high because of flood everywhere. One kg of basil is being sold between Tk. 5 and Tk. 6, brinjal between Tk. 10 to 12, potato between Tk. 11 and Tk. 12, patol between Taka 10 and Taka 12, green chili between Taka 25 and 30 per kilogram. But the prices of mutton and beef remained unchanged in the markets. One kilogram of mutton is being sold at 120, according to grade while beef is being sold at Tk. 65. All types of fish are dear in the market.

Small shaped puti, taki, tengra, pabda, royna and some other fishes are not available at all. Indian smuggled ruhi fishes are being sold at Taka 100 per kg. Local big fishes if at all available are being sold at Taka 150 to Taka 200 per kg.

Illegal occupants from Dak Bungalow annex bldg not yet evicted

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: Rent to the tune of Taka 95,550 remains outstanding with occupants of the first floor of the local Dak Bungalow annexed building. The Zilla parishad authorities have failed to realise the rent.

When contacted, the Zilla Parishad Secretary said that a group of vested people took possession of the building allegedly by force in August 1992 in connivance with the then Deputy Commissioner Syed Hafizuddin Ahmed and kept the building under their possession without any valid document causing huge loss to the Zilla Parishad exchequer.

After that Deputy Commissioner Abul Khair took office but did not take any action for reason best known to him. Md. Nazrul Islam took over as DC after Khair's tenure and when he was contacted he said that all formulations for eviction of the vested people were completed but the DC claimed that then LGRD minister, Abdus Salam Talukdar did not allow him to evict them for the interest best known to the then minister Nazrul Islam said.

The rent of the building fixed by the government is Taka 1950 per month.

President Kushtia Zilla Press Club had submitted application for allotment of the building in their favour and they were ready to pay advance six months' rents at the fixed rate of the Government. But for mysterious reasons they were not allowed to rent the building.

The secretary Kushtia Zilla Parishad said that he has informed the higher authority concerned to arrange for eviction.

One killed in snake bite

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: One person was killed by snake bite on Wednesday last in village Charaikole under Kumarkhali thana.

Ibrahim Hossain, 15, a student of Kumarkhali Islamia Alea Medresha became the victim of snake bite on Tuesday at night. The inmates of the house caught hold of the snake and at the same time treatment by Ozhas continued. But on the next day Ibrahim, son of Babar Ali died. The snake also died at the same time.

Accommodation problem at IU

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: Teachers,

employees and students of the Islamic University are facing accommodation problem due to lack of adequate number of residential quarters and dormitories, reports UNB.

Teachers and students said that only three residential halls have been established since the university started functioning nine years ago.

According to records, at present, only 875 of the 4,500 students have been accommodated in two male halls — Saddam Hossain Hall and Ziaur Rahman Hall — and one women's hall — Khaleda Zia Hall.

Of the 153 teachers, 57 officers and 360 employees, only 16 teachers, six officers and 26 employees have got residential facilities.

Most of the students are living in Kushtia and Jhenidah which is 25km away from the campus.

The condition of the three halls are also not satisfactory. The dining rooms are unhygienic and food of low standard causing intestinal diseases among the inmates of Saddam Hossain and Ziaur Rahman halls.

Record deposit in BRDB's Kushtia branch

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: Bangladesh Rural Development Board, Kushtia has set an example of record deposit of Taka one crore 4 lakh 72 thousand as share and deposit during last one year.

Mosharraf Hossain Deputy Director BRDB Kushtia said that in greater Kushtia district there are offices for poverty alleviation which are continuing their programme without direct government help and it was noticed that one poor cooperator with firm determination can save taka one hundred every year.

He said that in 1995-96 total target of schemes were 283. Instead 350 schemes were implemented.

The member admission target was fixed at 9085 but 11,020 members were admitted. Target for share was 5.66 lakh but 22.07 lakh have been achieved. Deposit scheme target was fixed at Tk 30.26 lakh but 82.28 lakh have been achieved.

Distribution of loan target was fixed at Tk. 570 lakh but Tk 699.26 lakh has been achieved. Loan distribution target was fixed at Taka 566.82 lakh but Tk 543.30 lakh has been achieved.

Next fiscal we expect to expand more fields for our projects, Hossain said.

Diarrhoea claims 13 lives, affect 100 others

KUSHTIA, Sept 13: With the recession of flood waters, the water borne diseases broke out in the flood-hit areas of the district alarmingly, reports UNB.

Hospital sources said diarrhoea had so far claimed 13 lives while 100 others affected by the disease in the area.

Doctors ascribed the outbreak of the diseases to scarcity of safe water. The flood affected people alleged that they were passing their days in a miserable condition for lack of proper treatment and adequate relief materials.



RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Prof M Eusuff Ali, RU VC addressing at the opening ceremony of Summer Science Training Course on September 7 at Physics Gallery of the University.

Health complexes in Bandarban beset with various problems

BANDARBAN, Sept 13: Health Complexes in the seven thanas of the district including sadar hospital are beset with manifold problems, patients complained, reports UNB.

Many patients alleged that they are not getting proper treatment as physicians are inadequate and medicine scarce in the complexes.

Outdoor patients of the sadar hospital are stated to be the worst sufferers although yearly allocation of fund continues uninterrupted.

District Civil Surgeon informed that the government allotted Tk 26.82 lakh for buying medicine and surgical equipment last fiscal year. Of the amount, Tk 18.77 lakh was spent for buying medicine.

Besides, he said, a lion's share of the allotted money had to be spent for combating large scale outbreak of malaria in the district this year.

The government had undertaken a project for distributing medicated mosquito-nets among the poor people of the malaria prone areas of the hill districts.

Local Government Parishad Chairman told UNB that the project, which stopped halfway would restart soon.

Illegal cross-border movements, smuggling continue

BANDARBAN, Sept 13:

Smuggling and unauthorised cross-border movement continue unabated in the border areas of Nykhongchhari thana of the district, reports UNB.

According to local sources, measures are yet to be taken to build border road, outposts and customs offices which are essential for controlling illegal activities along with international border with Myanmar.

Since independence several crore taka were allotted for the development of four hill districts but a border road could not be constructed as yet.

On the other side, the Myanmar government has constructed 1,500 kilo metre border roads in that country's Rakhain region.

The sources said important commodities like urea fertiliser are being smuggled across Raikhong and Tumbru hilly areas and smuggling in and out of the country is increasing depriving the government of huge amount of revenue.

Local people alleged that the people who often go to frontier areas for collecting wood, bamboo and cane feel insecure in the absence of border outposts.

Between August 27 and 31, nine woodcutters were abducted, four killed and four others injured in an explosion planted by the Myanmar border force, Nasaaka.

The district law and order committee has proposed for setting up customs check posts in the Nykhongchhari border areas.

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RAJSHAHI UNIVERSITY: Prof A N Shamsul Haque delivering his presidential address at the seminar on "Race relation in the USA" held at the Senate Hall of RU recently.