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Down to Earth

Waste Management Practices in City

By A S M Nurunnabi

In Dhaka city, waste management through effective and efficient means has remained a serious issue. Waste collection in the city seems to be a mixed enterprise. Dhaka City Corporation employs an army of street cleaners and waste collectors whose job is to keep waste from piling up on the streets. There is another more extensive class of waste managers comprising a network of itinerant waste buyers, waste pickers, small waste shops, secondhand markets, dealers, transporters and a wide range of recycling industries. According to observers, waste is big business for the poor and many poor families living in city slums survive in this manner. Rag-pickers and scavengers and their numerous chains of activists in this sphere exist because there is a market demand for their services.

The "free" market of waste pickers flourishes mainly because the municipal authorities have failed to carry the load. Just at the entry point to Road No 3, Dhanmondi Residential Area where the office of The Daily Star is located, there is a big garbage dump. Near it, an old man has set up a whole-time shelter with a couple of helpers. Their work seems to be to remain engaged all the time in ferreting out whatever is considered useful in their eyes. There are similar waste dumps at important city points all over where waste pickers work like squirrels in salvaging objects with potentialities for recycling.

There are some lanes near Moulybazar and other areas in the old part of the city, where the rag shops conduct thriving businesses. If one passes along such shops, one may wonder how there could be any use for such discarded things. But the stark reality is that such non-descript establishments keep the poor alive and provides dubious service to their clients.

The "waste economy" has some ominous aspects. The itinerant waste particularly in such fields as used plastic containers, used bottles of well-known brands of consumer items like shampoos, perfumes, talcum, powder, after-shave lotion, etc. are reported to be widely used in making spurious and adulterated products. For such activities, it is said that a wide range of so-called "industries" operate clandestinely using ingenious techniques, and their products are marketed in outlying areas in mofusils and villages to simple unsuspecting consumers. Observers feel that it is not easy to control the ongoing racket.

In many developed countries, the work of solid waste management is done through sophisticated technology of recycling for productive purposes. While such innovative technology is unthinkable in our present situation, the problem continues to grow on account of increased and uncontrolled urban explosion. In this context, to cope with the increased load of responsibility for waste management, some municipal

Protection of HR a must for sustainable dev: Dr Kamal

Eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hussain yesterday described state as the most powerful vehicle to harness all resources for people's welfare meeting their basic demands, reports BSS.

"The power behind that vehicle must be exercised properly and in an impartial manner so that people's interest can be protected without any disparity," he said.

Dr Kamal Hussain was giving his presidential speech at the concluding session of a three-day international seminar on "sustainable development, human rights and regional cooperation" held at Sonargaon Hotel.

International Law Association, International Committee on Legal Aspects of Sustainable Development and Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative jointly organised the seminar in collaboration with Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs.

The concluding session was attended by Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru, Chief Justice ATM Afroz, Barrister Sayed Istiaque Ahmed, Barrister Amirul Islam, senior lawyers and legal experts from home and abroad.

Dr Kamal Hussain stressed the need for integrating the united efforts for protecting human rights with the national efforts which would firmly help uphold people's basic rights.

He also called for sharing the experiences on human rights with other countries and said such exchange would greatly benefit the people's expectation to have their all rights fulfilled.

The concluding function was also addressed by Brian Burdakin of United Nations, Dr Nico Schrijver of the Netherlands, Prof. Paul De Waart of Canada, Judy Kallapan of South Africa and Justice Krishna Iyer of India.

Justice Krishna Iyer, describing life as harder in a developing country, said that Bangladesh had a great future with the present commitment for upholding human rights as well as bringing about a positive change through the development efforts.

Brian Burdakin said he was deeply impressed by the level of commitment at government, non-government and other stages to protect human rights in Bangladesh. This determined challenge is sure to lead Bangladesh towards its desired goal," he observed.

Prof. Paul De Waart referred to poverty and other adverse aspects in Bangladesh and said this country would surely be able to protect human rights with its present determination to do that.

Judy Kallapan was also highly appreciative of the commitment he had witnessed here towards social justice and said sustainable development would be possible with fulfilment of people's rights and privileges as they deserved.

All the speakers were of the opinion that the social perspective must be built in favour of those who had been socially victimised over the years.

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PHILIPS

Merrill lauds HR situation in Bangladesh

US Ambassador to Bangladesh David N. Merrill yesterday lauded the present state of human rights in Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Bangladesh had made an important progress in abolishing the child labour from the local garments industries, he said.

Ambassador Merrill was speaking at the inaugural function on "Arts For Amnesty" organised by Bangladesh chapter of Amnesty International (AI) at the Institute of Fine Arts of Dhaka University.

The inaugural ceremony was also addressed by President of Foreign Investors Chamber Mahbub Jamil, Human Rights activist Golam Mostafa, and President of AI, Bangladesh chapter, Syed Mohammad Dastagir Hussain.

The US envoy referring to the fine arts competition said this is innovative way to accomplish the goals to achieve human rights.

Ambassador Merrill said, "Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia are trying to abolish the problem of women and child trafficking from the country."

He said, "This show will shed lights to enhance the movement to help the prisoners of conscience."

The ambassador said that his government was interested to promote the movement to free all prisoners of conscience. He said Bangladesh had progressed much in this respect but there is "still long ways to go."

Ambassador Merrill distributed Amnesty International awards to four artists.

Malaria kills over 2500

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with mosquito killing insecticide. The programme, however, proved ineffective mainly due to integration of MEP into general health services and cessation of vector control operations, the sources pointed out.

In view of the deteriorating situation, Bangladesh government and WHO reviewed the malaria control programme in May, 1992. Later, in the same year at Amsterdam, delegates from various countries endorsed the world declaration on malaria and the revised global strategy for its control.

Since its implementation, malaria, especially in the endemic zone, is well under control. According to a recent government assessment of the current malaria control activities, the reported cases showed a downward trend. A 25 per cent reduction of malaria deaths by the year 2000 has been targeted. WHO has a budget of about Tk 1,10,50,000 for this fiscal year exclusively for control of the vector borne disease.

There are four types of malaria parasites, globally recognised. Two of those Plasmodium Falciparum and Plasmodium Vivax, exist in Bangladesh. Mosquitoes carrying P. Falciparum parasites live mainly in dense hilly forest areas whereas mosquitoes having P. Vivax live in the plains. Both the parasites, transferred through mosquito bites, multiply in the red blood cells causing sickness, the first symptom of the disease, followed by severe diarrhoea, anaemia, vomiting and unconsciousness.

"We have three different forms of malaria treatment. Uncomplicated, when the patient experiences mild fever, he is given chloroquine tablets for three days. If the victim does not show any sign of improvement, his case is considered as treatment failure malaria. He is then given quinine, fansidar and primaquine tablets. If temperature of the patient continues to rise, the victim is given quinine injection along with fensidar and primaquine tablets," explained Dr Ajay Ghosh, a medical officer at the Ramu Thana Health Complex in Cox's Bazar.

Cox's Bazar, once viewed with superstitions, seems to be well in control now in the remote villages. "This has been possible through extensive motivational programmes. Traditional village quacks, imams and elite of the rural areas are regularly briefed about the modern method of malaria treatment. A villager feeling fever would instantly take a dose of chloroquine tablet before arriving at the thana health complex for further treatment," Dr Ghosh added.

There was a time in early seventies when at least one member from every family in the deep forests of the Hill Tracts region died from malaria. Death toll was high when the disease spread in an epidemic form. "Today we have some of the best experts on malaria control in the country. Thanks to the national policy, we are now able to combat this killer disease, once considered uncontrollable," said Dr Supriya Barua, Civil Surgeon of Rangamati.

Despite substantial success in eradication, incidence of malaria in remote hill areas will continue so long as communication in the area does not improve. There are inaccessible places in Pargana, Bagaichhari and Langadu in Rangamati and Nachionchhari in Cox's Bazar where the only means of communication is by foot. It takes six to nine hours to reach the nearest health centre. In such places a positive malaria victim would probably die helplessly," Dr Barua, who has 18 years of experience in this field, told The Daily Star.

Patients with malaria flood hospitals during the pre-monsoon (June-July) and post-monsoon (September-October) seasons when mosquitoes start breeding. Medicated mosquito nets distributed in the villages have proved an effective tool to fight mosquitoes, especially before, during and after the monsoon season, sources concerned pointed out.

To detect positive cases of malaria, blood samples are taken for microscopic examination. This tremendously helps us during our treatment period. We know exactly which drug to apply," said Dr Barua. "Without the examination, it is difficult to determine the nature of the parasitic attack which can cause constriction of blood vessels in the brain and ultimate death within six to eight hours," he added.

JCD leader killed

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Post-mortem of the body was done in the same hospital.

Tushar was buried at his village Chhoto Dalia in Sadar thana after nama' e-janaza this afternoon.

BNP and JCD activists staged violent protests in the town and on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway today, setting fire to five vehicles and damaging dozens of other.

They also brought out a procession and called for a hartal tomorrow from 6 am to 2 pm protesting the killing.

Joint Convenor of district BNP Prof Jainal Abedin in a statement blamed the "ruling party's terrorists" for the killing and demanded arrest and punishment of the killers.

To bring the situation under control, the district administration has called out a platoon of paramilitary, BDR and one platoon of Range Reserve Force, police, told The Daily Star over telephone.

Police also arrested four persons from a JCD procession which was brought out after the Janaza of Tushar. No case has been filed, police said.

278 tribals

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the returnees will be rehabilitated properly and the refugee issue will see an end," said Upendra.

Turning to the repatriation in 1994, Upendra said, "The previous government showed hypocrisy in fulfilling the commitments as per agreement and as a result I am not satisfied with the measures taken by it for rehabilitation of refugees."

Earlier, a ceremonial farewell was accorded to the refugees at Mandirghat by Indian government by organising an inaugural song and folk dance before starting the repatriation.

Abul Hasnat Abdullah and other members of the National Committee on CHT went to Mandirghat at 11:40 am. They were received by Indian officials and were taken to the podium erected there for the purpose.

District Magistrate of South Tripura K Raizessar Rao delivered his address of welcome while Deputy Chief Minister of the state Baidanath Majumder, Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah and Upendra Lal Chakma also spoke on the occasion.

Baidanath said, with the solution of the refugee issue, relationship between India and Bangladesh will be further strengthened.

Abul Hasnat Abdullah said the present government has taken up pragmatic measures to resolve the refugee issue.

But Upendra Lal in his speech here claimed that 40,000 tribals from Chittagong Hill Tracts had crossed to India in the face of persecution and repression by Pakistani government before emergence of Bangladesh and settled in Arunachal.

Another 10,000 tribals later took shelter at Mizoram while in 1986, over 50,000 tribals crossed to Tripura state of India and took shelter in camps.

Over 100 hurt in Sirajganj clash

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 28: More than 100 people were wounded, 23 of them seriously, in a clash between rival groups in the town today, reports UNB.

The groups, equipped with country-made weapons, locked into the clash to get the sub-contract of an embankment across the Brahmaputra at Kazipur ghat here this afternoon.

Production in Chhatak Cement Factory falls

SUNAMGANJ, Mar 28: Production in Chhatak Cement Factory has marked a fall for want of a steam turbine generator, factory sources said, reports UNB.

They said the factory could not achieve its production target, fixed at 2.33 lakh metric tons, last year as it has no turbine generator.

Share scam

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According to official sources, the government is well aware of possible repercussions that any action might create in the capital market. The government will make public the inquiry committee report after taking the actions. It is also contemplating allowing the committee function "for some more time," the sources said.

Meanwhile it is learnt that the member-dealers of the DSE have become divided over the inquiry committee report. The present Chairman of the DSE is leading one group while a former DSE chairman is leading the other group, it was further learnt.

Rice mill owner stabbed to death at Lalmonirhat

LALMONIRHAT, Mar 28: An owner of a rice mill was stabbed to death by a group of unidentified miscreants in the town last night, reports BSS.

Police sources said a group of miscreants entered the rice mill of one Abdus Sattar, 45, breaking open the door at midnight where he was sleeping.

He died on the spot after the miscreants stabbed him severely.

Police recovered the body in the morning and sent it to the Lalmonirhat General Hospital for autopsy.

Police suspected previous enmity as the reason behind the killing.

However, none was arrested in this connection.

Secy-Gen

From Page 1

Lua is expected to brief Bangladesh leaders on the continuity of Chinese foreign and domestic policies in the post-Deng era.

The Chinese government has offered a 30 million Yuan interest free loan to Bangladesh recently and an agreement to this effect will be signed during the visit.

The Chinese Vice Premier will hold official talks with the Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad. He will call on President Shahabuddin Ahmed, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Finance Minister SAMS Kibria.

Lua Gan's visit is the first trip of a Chinese leader since the Awami League government took office in June last year.

Illegal immigrants

Malaysia urged to extend further amnesty

By Staff Correspondent

The Workers' Welfare Society, an organisation of Bangladeshi wage earners in Malaysia, has urged the Bangladesh government to persuade the Malaysian government to further extend the amnesty to "illegal immigrants."

Addressing a press conference in the city yesterday Golam Ahad, Secretary General of the Society, said about two lakh Bangladeshi workers legalised their stay during the amnesty period that expired on January 31 last while about three lakh more are still illegal with no option but to leave that country.

Golam Ahad came to Dhaka from Kuala Lumpur recently.

Ahad told the newsmen that many illegal Bangladeshi workers in Malaysia could not avail the opportunity of legalising their status due to various reasons for which they were not responsible. Some Malaysian employers failed to provide the workers with necessary papers while some others were deceived manpower agents there, he alleged.

Galib murder

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Some local people alleged that the killing was a sequel to a conflict between two rival groups in Kawran Bazar area.

Meanwhile, police interrogated a number of people from different parts of Tejgaon yesterday.

Galib's wife has filed a case with Tejgaon thana.

BNP denies

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BNP government.

He condemned the filing of a case against 12 people including DUCSU Vice President Amanul Hossain MP and General Secretary Khairul Kabir Khokon on charge of attacking the Awami League office at Tongi Diversion Road.

Bhuiyan said BNP activists did not attack the Awami League office. In fact, he alleged, the Awami League workers unleashed an attack from that office on the BNP procession and injured three BNP workers.

"The evil propaganda of the government, already identified by the nation as a lie, has crossed the limit," the BNP leader said the called upon it to withdraw the "false" case and refrain from propaganda against the BNP.

Gen Harun chief military observer of UNOMIG

Maj Gen M Harun-Rashid, BP, PSC, of Bangladesh Army has been appointed the Chief Military Observer (CMO) of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), reports BSS.

This appointment will take effect from May 1, 1997.

Prior to his recent appointment Maj Gen Harun was serving as Principal Staff Officer (PSO) to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

JRC talks

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pated by permanent members of the JRC from the two sides, water experts and representatives of the water resources and foreign ministers of the two countries.

An important item on the agenda of the meet would be to review progress of the Indo-Bangladesh accord on the Ganges. The meeting would also discuss the progress made and the problems encountered since the signing of the accord.

A detailed report is expected to be presented at the meet by the Bangladesh-India Joint Committee (JC) for water monitoring set up after the signing of the water treaty and which started functioning from January 1. The JRC will review the data of water availability at Farakka and the discharge made from Farakka point vis-a-vis the treaty. Reports of water availability from four observation points — the Farakka point, the Feeder canal, the Navigation lock and the Hardinge Bridge — would be reviewed, sources concerned indicated.

The would be the 32nd meeting of the JRC, a forum set up in 1972 for discussions and consultations on water-related issues between Bangladesh and India. The last ministerial-level meeting of the JRC was held in Dhaka in June 1990.

The decision to reactivate the JRC was announced in Dhaka on January 6 following official talks between Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her Indian counterpart HD Deve Gowda.

At the end of the JRC meeting, the two sides are likely to make a joint official announcement on the outcome of the talks and also make a statement relating to the actual progress of the Ganges water sharing accord, based on review of the monitored data received till the end of March.

One shot dead in Cox's Bazar

COX'S BAZAR, Mar 28: A youth was gunned down by his rivals at Gomatali village in Sadar thana today, police said, reports UNB.

Mohammad Zobayer, 22, was shot at by his armed rivals during a dispute over fish purchasing at Gomatali village this morning. He died on the spot.

Police arrested one Jashimuddin for his alleged involvement in the incident.

Old man beaten to Death in Barisal

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 28: An old man was beaten to death at village Machrang under Banaripara Thana of Barisal today.

Witnesses and police said, on Kithish Chandra Sarker, 75, was beaten to death on the spot when he prevented his rivals from building a house in a disputed area. A case was filed with Banaripara thana.

Urs of Shahjalal begins today

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Mar 28: Urs of the great saint Hajrat Shahjalal (RA) begins at the shrine at Sylhet town tomorrow.

The two day occasion will begin with the placing of *Gilaf* at the mazar. Other programmes included, *Jikr-Akbar*, *Fateha* and *Quran Khwani*. *Akheri munajat* will be held in the early hours of Sunday.

One electrocuted at Bakerganj

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Mar 28: An old man was electrocuted at Bakerganj of Barisal this afternoon.

Witnesses said, Iman Hossain, 60, a day labourer was electrocuted when he was cutting bamboos near Sangeeta Cinema Hall at Bakerganj thana headquarters this afternoon.

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