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64 arrested from Kutupalong refugee camp

From Our Correspondent
COX'S BAZAR, Mar 6: BDR and police in a joint operation early today arrested 64 people from Kutupalong camp, housing Rohingya refugees from Myanmar.

Authorities said the raid was conducted following a fire yesterday that partially razed the camp controlled by extremists.

The elements kept the refugees under hostage for more than a week, protesting their repatriation to Myanmar.

They have been blamed for the fire that followed their

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India to keep land transit corridor open for Nepal

KATHMANDU, Mar 6: India has agreed to keep an overland transit corridor open to help land-locked Nepal trade with the outside world, a Foreign Ministry source said today, reports AFP.

The 43-km (26.8-mile) corridor connecting the Kakarbhitta frontier of Nepal with Bangladesh through Phulbari-Banglabandh was closed from 1st March following the expiry of the six months' probation period starting from 1st September 1997, the official source said.

Following a formal request from Nepal, India agreed to an extension of the overland transit facility, he added.

Officials from both countries will meet in New Delhi at the end of the month to discuss details.

BNP to gherao DC offices on March 10

By Staff Correspondent
BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday called upon the people to make success the party's programme to gherao the Deputy Commissioner's office in the city on Tuesday, a press release said.

BNP earlier called the programme to protest price hike of essentials and government's alleged failure in tackling a "famine like situation" in the country.

A famine is imminent in

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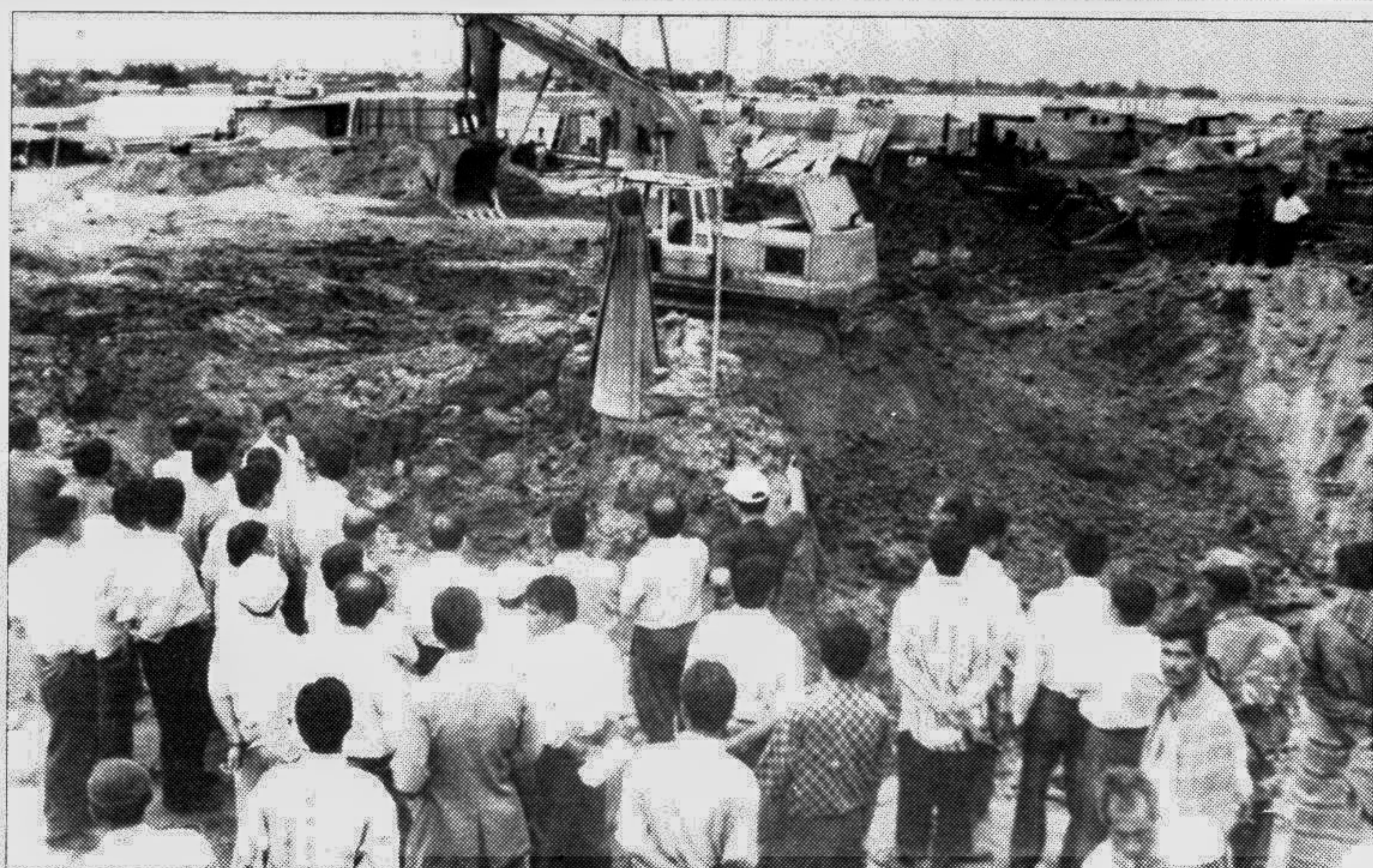
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Digging of earth was going on at the site of gasline leakage near BTV Bhaban in the city yesterday to locate the gas pipe. —Star photo

Gas supply likely to be restored this morning

Star Report
Work continued late last night to repair the leakage in Titas Gas transmission line near the TV centre at Rampura which triggered a massive disruption in gas supply in the city since 2 pm on Thursday.

"We burrowed up to the leakage at about 10 pm. Now work is going on to clean the two square inch leakage and pump out the water at 22 feet underground," Major (rtd) Mohammad Mukhtar Ali told the Star at 11:30 last night.

He said teams from Army, Titas Gas, PWD, the City Corporation and other agencies have been working to repair the leakage. The leakage will be welded when moisture is removed and normal supply is likely to be restored by early this morning, he said.

The underground 12 inch diameter main distribution line of Titas Gas was damaged at about 7:30 am on Thursday

when crews of a construction company hired by the PWD rammed a piling on the pipe. The construction company is constructing multi-storied flats for BTV employees on a swamp adjacent to the TV centre.

Titas gas, BTV and police filed three general diaries with Sabujbagh police station late Thursday night in connection with the incident.

More than half of the city plunged into an unprecedented gas crisis following the incident. The authorities termed the incident an act of sabotage.

Some 300 workers and a number of engineers were working round-the-clock under the supervision of high officials to repair the damaged pipeline and restore normal supply. Gas supply from different gas control stations was cut yesterday afternoon to avert disaster like explosion.

The Energy Minister, State

Not an act of sabotage, says Tofael

By Staff Correspondent
Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed yesterday said that damage of the Titas Gas pipelines at Rampura in the city was not at all an act of sabotage.

Tofael made the statement at a question-answer session on the concluding day of a three-day Democracy Festival, organised by Democracywatch in the city, a press release issued by the organisation said last night.

"We in the governing party had never said that it was an act of sabotage. Without knowing anything, none should blame anyone. We have formed an enquiry committee which is investigating," the minister told a questioner from the audience during the session.

Participating in the session, BNP MP Nazmul Huda said, "Titas Gas is a public organization. In a press note it had termed the incident an act of sabotage. So we can certainly assume that it carries the ver-

See Page 12 Col 5

Garments export Another case of 'quota' forgery

By Nazmul Ashraf and Ehsanul Haq
The Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) has detected another case of forgery of garments' export quota, official sources said.

The forgery has been in the garments sector that has just overcome a similar problem with the GSP.

An EPB investigation showed that a Narayanganj-based garments factory — Sonargaon Garments Private Limited — submitted forged documents to the Bureau on a '5,000-dozen-quota' of garment items to be exported to the United States in the current 'quota year of 1998'.

The garments company, owned by a local leader of the ruling Awami League, also sold 3,000-dozen-quota to Bengal Dyeing and Printing Works Limited and took clearance for a '4352-dozen-quota' without any valid documents, according to EPB findings last month.

The manipulated '12,352-dozen-quota' was for the export of men's and boys' shirts (in the category of 340/640), costing 2,90,272 US dollars.

In September last year, EPB authorities had unearthed the first case of manipulating garments export quota and a five-member probe body headed by the additional secretary of commerce ministry is still investigating it. As a primary step, EPB suspended seven of its employees and lodged complaint with the Bureau of Anti-Corruption in this regard.

In the recent case, EPB has asked Sonargaon Garments to surrender the forged '12,352-dozen-quota' and another '6,176-dozen-quota' as penalty for the manipulation. The bureau, in a letter on 23 February, also suspended all activities of the company until the '18,528-dozen-quota' was surrendered. It also dismissed an office assistant from job for his involvement in the preparation of the forged documents.

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Historic Mar 7 today

By Staff Correspondent
The nation observes historic 7th March today.

On this day in 1971, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman gave a call for independence movement through a historic speech delivered at a mammoth public meeting at Race Course Maidan (now Suhrawardy Udyan) in Dhaka.

"Ebarer Sangram Amader Muktir Sangram, Ebarer Sangram Swadhinatar Sangram" (this time the struggle is for our

See Page 12 Col 3

Influx of Indian goods blamed 81000 mills & factories shut, says Khaleda

KASHINATHPUR (Pabna), Mar 6: BNP Chairperson and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Begum Khaleda Zia today accused the government of destroying the country's economy by pursuing a weak-kneed policy, reports UNB.

"Whatever Awami League government did in last 20 months was done in the interest of India," Begum Zia told a meeting at Kashinathpur Shaheed Nurul Hossain Degree College ground in the afternoon.

She said 81 thousand mills and factories, set up during the BNP regime, were closed down due to influx of substandard Indian goods in the country.

The BNP chief alleged that the government in a planned move forced the people to purchase Indian goods. Thousands of weaving factories in Pabna and Sirajganj have been shut down.

Turning to the Jamuna bridge, Begum Zia alleged that the present government did not want the implementation of the project. The Awami League called hartal during its foundation laying ceremony.

She said 60 per cent of the construction work of the Jamuna bridge was completed during the BNP regime.

Begum Zia said the government has increased the power tariff several times and is hatching a conspiracy to import power from the neighbouring country.

She said farmers have lost interest in crop production due to load-shedding, price hike of fertiliser and insecticides. They want fair price of their produce.

Referring to the Ganges water sharing treaty with India, the BNP chairperson said the country has received less water than before signing of the accord. Rivers will dry up gradually if such situation continues.

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A dozen MPs may not join dinner hosted by Ershad

By Staff Correspondent
Jatiya Party chief H M Ershad has invited party MPs to a dinner at a city restaurant tonight in what appears to be a 'show of strength' of those loyal to him and to former JP secretary general Anwar Hossain Manju, removed from the party job last week.

A number of MPs have decided not to attend the dinner, said JP sources who disapproved Ershad's decision regarding Manju.

"Ershad is hosting the dinner against the backdrop of recent polarisation in the party after removal of Anwar Hossain

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Statement of 14 JP MPs

By Staff Correspondent
Fourteen MPs of Jatiya Party in a joint statement yesterday said, "Whatever is being said in the name of playing the role of so-called opposition will not do any good to the party."

They said, "the constructive role of JP ever since the 1996 general elections for democracy, stability and development had accelerated the release of the party chairman and consolidated the organisational activities along with the development of constituencies," the statement added.

The statement, written in the pad of Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad was sent to The Daily Star last night.

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Anisuzzaman made Food Adviser to PM

The government has appointed A M Anisuzzaman Agriculture and Food Adviser to the Prime Minister, reports UNB.

A government announcement yesterday said he will enjoy the status of a minister. Anisuzzaman was an adviser to the caretaker government in 1990.

BJP confident as Cong half-hearted

NEW DELHI, Mar 6: Confidence mounted in the ranks of India's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) today after its arch-rival, the Congress Party, made a half-hearted bid to form the next government, report agencies.

But with the BJP still short of a parliamentary majority after inconclusive national elections, much still hinged on its efforts to win new allies.

The Hindu nationalists promised to end confrontation in Indian society and politics and put the economy back on track as they sought support across the political spectrum.

Late today, after a meeting with its allies, BJP leaders said there was a consensus for adopting the agenda once it forms the federal government.

The principle of preparing a national agenda for governance was discussed, senior BJP leader Jaswant Singh told reporters after the meeting. There was unanimity about adopting such an agenda.

"It was decided that a further meeting will be held on March 9 at 3 pm (0930 GMT) at this venue when the agenda will be further discussed for final adoption. The target is to have it adopted before the government is sworn in."

The BJP today announced that it had received unconditional support from four Haryana lok dal MPs and three individuals like Mrs. Maneka Gandhi and Satnam Singh taking the BJP-alliance support to 257.

Another report says, Congress continued to maintain a low profile on the formation of the next government.

The United Front (UF) core committee today held its crucial meeting but it ended inconclusively.

"We all have taken the view that we must adopt a common line and remain united," Front's spokesman Jaipal Reddy told newsmen after the meeting tonight.

The meeting was attended by the UF leaders including Prime Minister I K Gujral, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Sharad Yadav, Chandrababu Naidu, Jyoti Basu and P Chidambaram. Former prime minister H D Deve Gowda presided.

Reddy said the core committee will again meet on March 10 following which final decision would be announced.

Replying to a question he said various possible developments had been discussed at the meeting but he refused to disclose the individual position taken by the Front leaders at the meeting.

Congress spokesman Vithal Gadgil told reporters that his party was still in talks with the United Front to form a government.

See Page 12 Col 1



Chandrababu Naidu, leader of the Telegu Desam Party, attends a United Front meeting along with Jyoti Basu, leader of Communist Party of India (Marxist) in New Delhi yesterday. —AP/UNB photo

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড
ঢাকা।

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- অর্থনৈতিক কর্মকাণ্ডে আপনার অবদান রাখুন।

তৃতীয় কিস্তির অগ্রিম আয়কর প্রদান প্রসঙ্গে

চলতি আর্থিক বছরের তৃতীয় কোয়ার্টারের জন্য অগ্রিম আয়কর প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ১৫ই মার্চ, ১৯৯৮ইং। সংশ্লিষ্ট করদাতা কর্তৃক দেয় অগ্রিম আয়কর ফরম নং আইটি-৩১(বি)(সংশোধিত) চালান ফরমের মাধ্যমে পরিশোধ করতে হবে। এই ফরমের যে যে স্থানে '৭৪(১)' সংখ্যাটি উল্লেখিত আছে তার স্থলে '৬৪' সংখ্যাটি প্রতিস্থাপনপূর্বক চালান ফরমটি যথাযথভাবে পূরণ করে করদাতাপণ অগ্রিম কর পরিশোধ করবেন। উল্লেখ্য, সকল শ্রেণীর করদাতার জন্য অগ্রিম আয়কর প্রদানের ক্ষেত্রে মোট আয়ের আর্থিক সীমা বর্তমানে ১,০০,০০০/- (এক লক্ষ) টাকা। সংশ্লিষ্ট সকল করদাতাকে ১৯৯৮-১৯৯৯ কর বছরের জন্য চলতি আর্থিক বছরের তৃতীয় কোয়ার্টারের অগ্রিম আয়কর ১৫ই মার্চ, ১৯৯৮ইং তারিখের মধ্যে এই পদ্ধতিতে প্রদানের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

অগ্রিম আয়কর প্রদান না করলে অথবা প্রদেয় অগ্রিম করের অংক থেকে কম পরিমাণ পরিশোধ করলে বাৎসরিক ১০% হারে সরল সুদ আরোপের বিধান প্রযোজ্য হবে।

ফিটসি-০২৭৪-০১৩
কি-১২২

জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড

Arsenic found in 67pc of water samples in 141 thanas

By Naimul Haq (NIPSOB).

The tests were conducted in the last 18 months using the "most reliable" method called Flow Injection-hydride Generation-Atomic Absorption Spectrometry (FIHGAAAS), the sources said.

"This does not mean that the entire population of these districts are at risk," said Dr Quazi Quamruzzaman, Chairman of DCH Trust while talking to The Daily Star yesterday.

He said, "We have also examined hair, nail, skin lesions, and urine samples taken from people living in the affected villages. The analytical results show that 94 per cent samples, on an average, have arsenic above the normal value."

So far, DCH and SOES have detected 2,276 patients with melanosis, leuco-melanosis, keratosis, hyperkeratosis, dorsum, non-petting oedema, gangrene and skin cancer, all "strong" symptoms of arsenicosis, a term used to describe arsenic poisoning.

Meanwhile, water samples tested by the DPHE using 'field kit' show that Chandpur and Laxmipur districts had the highest number of tubewells contaminated with arsenic. Water of 80 to 83 per cent of the tested tubewells contained arsenic above the permissible level of 0.05 mg/l.

The DPHE tested 19,094 samples out of these, 3,796 contained arsenic above the permissible level.

It is not known yet what is causing the contamination. There are differing views on it. Experts say the reason will be

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DCC to set up Traffic Engineering Deptt

By Staff Correspondent
Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) will soon set up a traffic engineering department at Panchsaba Bhaban to implement several components of the World Bank (WB) assisted Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP).

DCC sources said steps have been taken to recruit at least five engineers and an architect to start the department's activities 'sometime in March'.

Two of the DCC's engineers, having qualifications in traffic engineering, are at present helping the temporary set up of the department.

They said that the new department would eventually implement about 75 per cent of the 200 million US dollar DUTP.

The department would oversee, among other things, construction of city flyovers, link and bypass roads, bus terminals, road safety measures, new city bus services, integration of non-motorised transport in the overall urban transport system and strengthening of 'institutional capacities' of the DCC.

Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA) Chairman is the present coordinator of the DUTP which has Rajuk, DCC, DMP, BRTC and the Roads and Highways Department as nominated members.

Meanwhile, DCC sources said that WB has agreed to finance development work of some important roads in the city. They said at least eleven roads including the Progoti Swarani would be developed under the WB financing.

The Progoti Swarani would be a vital road for the city once the Bangabandhu Bridge is opened for traffic. "It will work as a substitute until the Eastern Bypass is completed," said a DCC official.

NGOs to protect the environment.

Six killed in Narsingdi road accident

NARSINGDI, Mar 6: At least six people were killed and 35 others injured, eight of them seriously, in a road accident at Panchdaha in Sadar thana of the district today, reports UNB.

Police and witnesses said the accident occurred when a Kishoreganj-bound bus from Dhaka fell into roadside ditch while giving side to another bus at about 11 am.

The identity of the deceased could not be known immediately.

Int'l Women's Day tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent
The International Women's Day will be observed in the country tomorrow.

The Day is being observed all over the world since the declaration made at the second International Socialist Women's Conference, held in Copenhagen.

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Announcement

As a follow up of The Daily Star's initiative on "Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs Speak Out" a seminar will be held on "Investment Opportunities for Young Entrepreneurs".

Date : 8th March, 1998
Time : 6 p.m.
Venue : British Council Auditorium
Speakers : Faruk Sobhan, Executive Chairman, BOI
Rokeya A Rahman, President, Bangladesh Employers' Association
Syed Manzur Elahi, Chairman, Apex Group of Industries.

Participation : By Registration only (free of charge)

You can register by sending your particulars by Fax to The Daily Star. Fax No: 863035

Join the Young Entrepreneurs and Move Bangladesh Towards the 21st Century