

Action programme to facilitate safe drinking water suggested

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar in the city yesterday recommended immediate action programme to facilitate safe drinking water to the arsenic-hit people with a call to identify the patients.

The seminar on arsenic contamination in ground water in Bangladesh: Strategies for social action programme and creation of public awareness, organised by the University of Asia Pacific was held at the National Economic Council auditorium of Planning Commission.

The speakers in their recommendations said, "We can not let the people drink the contaminated water any more knowing well that it is a serious problem. We should immediately look for alternative sources of safe water."

The extent of damage already done to human life is, as estimated, quite large and we should now focus on clinical problem and its awareness," they said.

A number of options for alternative sources of 'safe' drinking water were put forward as recommendations at the day-long seminar. Some of them include, identification of the 'safe' tubewells, use of treated surface water, all new hand-pump tubewells should be installed at least beyond 350 feet layer.

For creating public awareness the speakers recommended that village level policy makers should be motivated first to accomplish public consciousness about the severity of the prob-

lem without creating 'panic' in the community. The speakers also suggested that the village level local government should be involved to disseminate the options and other information.

Dr Quazi Quamruzzaman, Chairman of Dhaka Community Hospital (DCH) Trust, the pioneer body to first identify patients in the country having severe melanosis and keratosis — some of the visible symptoms of arsenic poisoning, in his key note speech said, "DCH's involvement with the problem came not through choice but from necessity."

Dr Tanvir Ahsan of the World Bank in his paper on management of arsenic problem in Bangladesh said, "arsenic poisoning that eventually leads to death has affected a large number of people including children."

The Vice Chancellor of the university, Hedayet Ahmed in his address said, "It took us almost 18 years to realise that arsenic contamination is quite a serious one. We are in the right track. We now need to educate the people and the university would like to offer any service needed to tackle the problem."

State Minister for Planning, Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir addressed the participants as chief guest while State Minister for Health and Family Welfare Professor M Amanullah gave his speech at the concluding session.

Cultural contest for children begins

A two-day cultural competition for the children began at Shishu Academy in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

A cultural organisation Amra Kuri organised the competition, inaugurated by Chairman of UNB Amanullah Khan. Among others, Director of Amra Kuri Mushtaq Ahmed Liton, Advisor Shafiul Alam Babu and Organisation Committee convenor Shakila Nasrin Lupin spoke on the occasion.

Khan said Amra Kuri has been making significant contributions in flourishing the latent talents of the children. It has established itself as an institution in this field, he added.

Some 1000 children are taking part in the competition on drawing, music, dance, recitation of poetry, handwriting and general knowledge.



Prof Rangalal Sen seen addressing a seminar at the National Museum auditorium yesterday entitled 'Shaheed Dhirendranath Dutta: Fifty years of Language Movement' organised by the Shaheed Dhirendranath Dutta Memorial Parishad.

— Star photo

Bangladesh to donate Tk 50 lakh for tornado-hit people in India

Bangladesh will donate Taka fifty lakh for the people of India who were affected by last week's tornado, it was learnt yesterday from a reliable source, reports BSS.

The decision was taken in view of the widespread destruction caused by the storm in eastern India, the source added.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina earlier on Friday expressed her deep shock and sorrow at the loss of lives and destruction of property by the tornado, in a message to her India counterpart, Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Bangladesh Prime Minister said that the people of Bangladesh "will stand by our friends in India at the time of their distress."

Treasury bill auction results

The 87th auction of the 90-day treasury bill, the 78th auction of the 30-day and 180-day treasury bills and the 52nd auction of the one-year treasury bill were held yesterday, says UNB.

Some 45 bids for a total of Tk 446.50 crore of 30-day bill, two bids for Tk 5.50 crore of 90-day bill and 20 bids for a total of Tk 105.60 crore of one-year bill were offered.

Of these, 17 bids for a total of Tk 236.50 crore of 30-day bill and six bids for Tk 44.60 crore of one-year bill were accepted.

No bid was accepted against the 90-day bill and no bid was offered for 180-day bill. The weighted average prices of the accepted bids against the 30-day and one-year bills were Tk 99.29 and Tk 90.50 per 100 taka respectively.

State Ministers listen to people's problems

By Staff Correspondent

On the second day of the ministers' "meet-the-people" programme yesterday, two state ministers visited Awami League central office.

Minister of State for Fisheries and Livestock Satish Chandra Roy and Minister of State for Education Prof Zinatunnesa Talukdar took part in the programme last night. Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad, who was also scheduled to attend the programme, however, is now out of the country.

People from various areas came to AL office at Bangabandhu Avenue to seek recommendations from the ministers in getting jobs and admission to educational institutions.

Weather

Thundershower likely

Rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary *Kalbaishakhi* gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at many places over Rajshahi division and at a few places over Khulna, Barisal, Comilla and Sylhet during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country during the period, the Met Office said.

It predicted that day temperature may remain mainly unchanged over the country.

Temporary west or north westerly *Kalbaishakhi* squally wind with a speed of about 65 to 85 km per hour is likely to occur over the regions of Pabna, Bogra, Rangpur, Khulna, Jessore, Kushtia, Faridpur, Dhaka, Tangail, Mymensingh and Sylhet during the next 12 hours.

The country's highest temperature 36.0 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Ishurdi and the lowest 15.8 degree Celsius at Srimongal.

The sun sets today at 6:13 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:52 am. Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

| City/Town | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in Percentage | |
|------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|---------|
| | Max | Min | Morning | Evening |
| Dhaka | 33.5 | 19.3 | 55 | 50 |
| Chittagong | 33.2 | 20.3 | 68 | 49 |
| Rajshahi | 34.8 | 20.0 | 63 | 43 |
| Khulna | 33.0 | 22.0 | 68 | |

We do Dubai 9 times a week.

From April 1st award-winning Emirates serves Dubai nine times a week with even more convenient connections to Europe, Africa and within the Middle East. And we serve Kuala Lumpur four times weekly with convenient connections to the Far East and Australia with our inter-line partners. Fly with Emirates and enjoy the award-winning style that has won the accolade of 'Airline of the Year 1998'.

OVER 150 INTERNATIONAL AWARDS, 44 INTERNATIONAL DESTINATIONS. FOR DETAILS CALL YOUR TRAVEL AGENT OR EMIRATES ON 9563813-15 (DHAKA) 725647 (CHITTAGONG) OR 712159 (SYLHET)

Sangu Gas Field

A World Class Development in Bangladesh

- Sangu is one of the world's fastest offshore gas developments and is the first project to develop and supply gas from the Bay of Bengal to Bangladesh.
- Sangu is dedicated entirely to Bangladesh's energy needs. It brings an "Energy Solution" to Chittagong, removing at a stroke the most pressing barrier to economic development and growth in the Chittagong region.
- The Sangu development has been achieved at competitive cost in world terms.
- Sangu is a triumph of Bangladeshi, American, British and Dutch co-operation under difficult and pioneering conditions.
- The platform, 45km of pipeline and the Chilimpur processing plant were built and installed without delays and in record time.
- By the end of the year Sangu is expected to account for more than 20% of total Bangladeshi gas production.

An International Alliance helping Bangladesh Achieve Energy Solutions