

Easy method to remove arsenic from water

By Special Correspondent

A Bangladeshi scientist, who works in Germany, yesterday demonstrated a cheap and simple method of keeping water arsenic free, using a filtration process of iron, sand, alum, sunlight and wind.

Presenting a paper on "cheap process of removal of arsenic from water" at the Department of Environment (DOE) in the city yesterday, Dr Jamal Anwar said the simple technique would help the poor to combat the arsenic problem without expensive technology from abroad.

Dr Anwar, who works at Integrated Quality and Environment of Germany, said that arsenic is present in nature in two forms — As+3 and As+5.

Due to oxidation process, the As+3 in water turns into As+5 which along with iron, deposits as sediment to the bottom, he said.

Therefore, if arsenic contaminated water is kept in an earthen container in the open under the sun, and filtered through iron, sand and alum, the arsenic would come down to 0.05 mg. The process would take eight hours, he added.

He also pointed out that if a tubewell is located beside a pond there is less arsenic in the handpump water.

A number of environmental scientists, experts and researchers were present at the demonstration.

Pre-hartal

From Page 1

6-45 p.m. People scattered in different directions when the gunmen emptied their magazines mostly shooting in the air.

Police, escorting the BNP procession, watched the happenings but did not intervene, witnesses said.

Several people including journalists were hurt. The casualties included a Daily Star Photographer, who was trampled by several people in their frantic bid to escape the violence, a passer-by, a female marcher and two rickshaw-pullers.

Six victims of bomb splinters were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Others received treatment at different city clinics.

Demonstrators torched two buses at Hathkhol and Azimpur. Some people stopped another bus at Zigaola in Dhanmondi and lighted it, fire service said.

All arson, chase and counter chase with guns and bombs took place between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m.

However, the police remained inactive during this period.

Motilheer police at 11 p.m. said there had been a 'loud sound' near Awami League office when the BNP procession was passing by and that people ran away after the 'sound'. However it dismissed reports that there had been indiscriminate use of guns and bombs.

Gunfire was also heard in Dhanmondi area at 10-15 p.m. but the police denied this.

Earlier, a pro-hartal torch procession of BNP came under bomb attack near Bangabandhu Avenue in the city at around 7 pm yesterday.

Exploding bombs, anti-hartal elements chased BNP marchers away from the scene near the central office of Awami League. Immediately after the attack, the anti-hartal elements brought out a counter-procession denouncing an opposition-called three-day shutdown beginning at six this morning.

BNP brought out the torch-procession from its city office at Nawab Yusuf Market in the Old City to drum up support for the nationwide general strike that coincides with municipal polls. BNP leaders Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Sadek Hossain Khoka, Amanullah Aman, Nazimuddin Alam and Mirza Abbas were leading the procession.

The procession was scheduled to disperse at Kakrail crossing. But the sudden onslaught saw the BNP leaders and activists run for shelters.

Reached over telephone at the party office immediately after the incident yesterday evening, city unit leaders of Awami League denied any involvement in the attack.

"We were sitting inside our office. But we heard several bomb explosions when a BNP procession was passing by," said a city AL leader.

JP leader Rana dies

RANGPUR, Feb 22: Former lawmaker and vice chairman of Jatiya Party central committee Advocate Rezaul Haque Sarker Rana died of massive cardiac arrest at Rangpur Medical College Hospital on Sunday. He was 60, reports UNB.

Current president of district Ainjibi Samity Rana left behind his wife, a son, a daughter and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

The body was laid to rest at his family graveyard after Namaj-e-Janaja at Munshipara Jame Mosque on the same day.

Kabir Uddin dead

Alhaj Kabir Uddin Ahmed, a former member of then East Pakistan Provincial Assembly from Nalchity of Jhalakathi district died of heart attack at Barisal Medical College Hospital yesterday. He was 72, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife, three sons, five daughters and a host of relatives, friends and admirers to mourn his death, a press release of Nalchity Thana Samity in Dhaka said.

Alhaj Kabir Uddin was also chairman of Nalchity Pourasbha and Union Parishad. He was the second son of Shamsuddin Ahmed.

2 JCD workers injured in BCL attack

By JU Correspondent

At least two JCD activists were injured when a group of BCL workers reportedly attacked them on the Jahangirnagar University campus in the early hours of Sunday.

The injured were identified as Jewel, a 2nd year student of Philosophy Department, and Bahlool, a 3rd year student of Geography Department. Both of them are resident students of Al Beruni Hall.

The JCD leaders said some armed BCL activists attacked the JCD workers when they were returning to the dormitory after placing wreaths at the university Shaheed Minar.

The JCD leaders submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor, Pro-VC and Proctor yesterday demanding steps to ensure security of the students and immediate action against the persons involved in the attack.

They were threatening us for our protests against rape incidents, for chanting party slogans and for staging our party programmes on the campus," JCD leaders said while talking to The Daily Star.

BCL leaders, however, denied any involvement of their activists in such an incident.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, former general secretary of BCL, Nahid said, "No such incident took place on that day. Some outsiders were roaming at that place, so our boys challenged them. But none of our boys beat up any of them."

Young man shot dead in city

By Staff Correspondent

Police recovered the body of a young man with bullet wounds from the city's Rayerbazar area yesterday.

The dead was identified as Afsar alias Farid, 22, son of Hafez Mahiuddin, a resident of Bandar, Narayanganj, police and hospital sources said.

Police found the body lying beside Hatembagh Road at about 11 am.

Hospital sources said there were eight bullet marks in different parts of Farid's body, including in his head and chest.

The motive behind the killing could not be known immediately.

None was arrested in connection with the killing till last night.

A murder case was lodged with Dhanmondi thana.

BCL urges people to resist hartal

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders yesterday urged the countrymen to build up a strong resistance against hartal, saying the hartal called by BNP-led Opposition is designed to destroy the democratic practice and the ongoing development activities, reports BSS.

BCL president Bahadur Bapary and general secretary Ajoy Kar Khokon in a joint statement yesterday said, the three defeated forces have called the illogical hartal to create an obstacle to the process of achieving the goal of building Bangladesh as an economically self-reliant country.

They urged the student community to resist the "Opposition's evil design" for impeding the present trend of development and progress led by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

Foreign currencies worth Tk 27 lakh seized at ZIA

By Staff Correspondent

A Customs surveillance team at the Zia International Airport yesterday seized foreign currencies worth about Taka 27 lakh from two Singapore and Hong Kong-bound passengers.

The passengers were identified as Mahammed Jasimuddin, an Indian national, and Gopal.

According to Customs sources, the team seized 5.45 lakh Indian rupees, 16.9 thousand US dollars and 20 thousand liras and other foreign currencies worth Tk 15.65 lakh from Jasimuddin, who was on transit to Singapore.

The team also seized 12.15 thousand Singapore dollars, 3.55 thousand US dollars, 18.2 thousand German marks and 2.7 thousand Brunei ringgit worth Tk 11.20 lakh from Gopal, a Hong Kong-bound passenger.

Two departmental cases were lodged in this connection.

Young man hacked to death

SIRAJGANJ, Feb 22: A young man was hacked to death by unidentified persons at Bindarai village in Shahjapur early today, reports UNB.

Police said a group of about 12 people picked up Babul Molah, 30, from his house and killed him in a nearby field.

Five people have been arrested in connection with the killing.

Dacoits kill one in Kaliganj

SHATKHIRA, Feb 22: A gang of armed dacoits shot dead a man of village Chakla in Kaliganj thana and looted cash and ornaments worth Tk one lakh from his house in the early hours today, reports UNB.

Police said the gang stormed into the house at about 2 am and started firing, killing Shahjahan Ali, 35, on the spot. They also exploded a number of bombs injuring Ali's wife, son and sister seriously.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina placing wreath at the Central Shaheed Minar in the early hours of February 21 to pay homage to the martyrs of language movement. — Star photo



Awami League leaders placing wreaths at the Shaheed Minar. — Star photo



BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia placing wreath at the Shaheed Minar. — Star photo



Bangla Academy's tribute. — Star photo

Socio-economic confce in Nepal

Corruption retards anti-poverty agenda

KATHMANDU, Feb 22: Former heads of government of Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Thailand at a conference here on Saturday identified corruption in governance as a major cause of poverty in the Third World countries, reports UNB.

They called for eradicating corruption and ensuring transparent good governance to properly exploit the region's potentials to have a better economy befitting the coming century.

Nepalese Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala opened the conference dubbed 'Socio-Economic Summit — Nepal 1999' arranged by Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) at Birendra International Convention Centre.

Bangladesh's former president Hussain Mohammad Ershad, Pakistan's former president Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari, former prime minister of Thailand Anand Panyarachun, Nepal's former prime minister Man Mohan Adhikari and Bangladesh's former finance minister AMA Muhith took part in the discussions.

A delegation of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), led by its president Abdul Awal Mintoo, also joined the conference.

Pakistan's former president came down heavily on "Political and economic elites for 'Stealing people's money to the legally protected safe haven in the West'."

He sought cooperation from

the Western governments to assist Third World countries to root out corruption, make government decisions transparent and establish rule of law. They (the West) must be our development partners, not accomplices of crimes."

He felt a strong judiciary and free press could work as watchdogs to keep democracy on the right track. He mentioned some of his steps to make legal frameworks to ensure freedom of judiciary and press in his country, which were later abandoned or curtailed.

Leghari described his bitter experience that made him to resign as president in 1997. "I resigned as I didn't want to be an accessory to the murder of democracy," he said.

He categorically said corruption is the root of all problems of socio-economic transformation in the Third World countries, including those in this region, to cope with the coming millennium.

Former Thai prime minister Anand said Thailand is no longer a backward economy, but its economic growth, he noted, was "unbalanced, inequitable and unsustainable."

Rapid industrialisation in Thailand led to massive pollution threatening the ecology and growth of social problems like prostitution and unskilled workforce.

Anand felt human resources development is vital both for industrial and agricultural developments, adding that farmers, who are the backbone of Thai economy, are ignored and remain unskilled.

He also stressed the need for a 'clean, transparent and effective' governance system and measures to root out corruption to ensure a balanced economic growth in the region.

Bangladesh's former president H M Ershad said the poor countries are being buffeted by the vested interest groups. A set of nations has mastered the technology... They now control all potentials of development."

He mentioned his government's 'development philosophy' including introduction of U-pazila system, involving grassroots people in development process. "Even the present government, which opposed this system then, has been forced to restore it."

The fodder poor states cannot expect a sudden radical change, he said, but can try to obtain the ladder of ascent to prosperity.

Nepalese Prime Minister said corruption is the main cause of poverty and poor economic growth in the region. With a direct reference to his own country, Koirala said, "Coalition government is the most corrupt government."

In his Nepalese language speech, the Prime Minister pointed to the gap between politicians and bureaucracy often leading to inefficient governance in Nepal.

He would like to go forward with a "cautious economic reform" taking lessons from harsh privatisation in Bangladesh and Pakistan. Koirala saw vast potentials of hydro-electricity in his country.

Aref murder

From page 1

first group gave cover to the second group.

Following the incident, the second group left the spot by three motorbikes. Later, the first group disappeared from the spot.

A suspect arrested in connection with the killing gave details of the incident, the source said, and added that his statement was recorded under Section 161.

Investigating officials said the motive of the killing was known from his version.

CID team investigating in the incident is optimistic of rounding up two or three of those directly involved in the shootout.

Firoz Al Mamun, Chairman of Aria Union Parishad, allegedly knew the plan for killing. He left the dais minutes before the killers reached the spot.

He was produced before the court where he disclosed that 11 people were the main architects of the plan.

His statement was recorded as witness and he was released later.

One held with pistol in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Feb 22: Police arrested an alleged mugger with a pistol from the city's central bus terminal this morning, reports UNB.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team from Shiroil outpost raided the terminal and nabbed Selim alias Suman, a resident of Shiroilpara.

'Dekha Theke Lekha' published

An anthology of articles by an ex-diplomat has been published by the title 'Dekha Theke Lekha' and is available in Ekushey book fair stalls, reports UNB.

Author MM Rezaul Karim, who had been Ambassador to China, the Soviet Union, Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom and retired in 1992, articulated his vast experiences, gathered from home and abroad, in the book.

It contains the articles, published in the Bengali dailies, which mainly dealt with significant political, economic and social developments in Bangladesh beginning from 1996 to date.

There are some chapters in the book related to the bilateral, regional and international issues and one specially on Britain and the Commonwealth, said a press release.

Seven arrested from Benapole check-post

JESSORE, Feb 22: Bangladesh Rifles rounded up seven people from Benapole check-post on Thursday while they were trying to cross-border without valid documents, reports UNB.

BDR jawans of 32 Battalion arrested them from Daulatpur border point at Benapole in Sarsa thana. All of them hailed from Narail.

The arrested were later handed over to the police. A case was filed in this connection.

Job under int'l organisations

Some International Organisations have invited applications for filling up certain vacancies at their disposal. Name of the organisations along with the post titles and last date for receipt of applications by the head offices of the concerned organisations are below:

Post under United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization: Operations Officer (P-2)-16 March, 1999; Senior Officer (Rural Development)-3 March, 1999.

Post under United Nations: Senior Co-ordinator (P-5)-19 February, 1999.

Post under UN AIDS: Programme Development Officer (P-5)-2 March, 1999.

Senior Epidemiologist (P-5)-2 March, 1999.

Post under Asian Disaster Preparedness Center: Manager, International Consultancies Management Unit, ADPC — Application should be reached as soon as possible.

Post under World Tourism Organisation: Regional Representative for the Americas (P-4) — Application should be reached as soon as possible.

Chief, Statistics and Economic Measurement of Tourism section — Application should be reached as soon as possible.

Post under UNESCO: UNESCO Liaison Officer (P-5) — Application should be reached as soon as possible.

Further details of the post and procedure for applications will be available with the Ministry of Establishment, Offices of the Divisional Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners and District Labour and Manpower, says an official handout.



Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University, pays homage to the martyrs. — Star photo



Disabled freedom fighters placing wreaths at the Shaheed Minar. — Star photo



British High Commissioner paying tributes to language martyrs. — Star photo