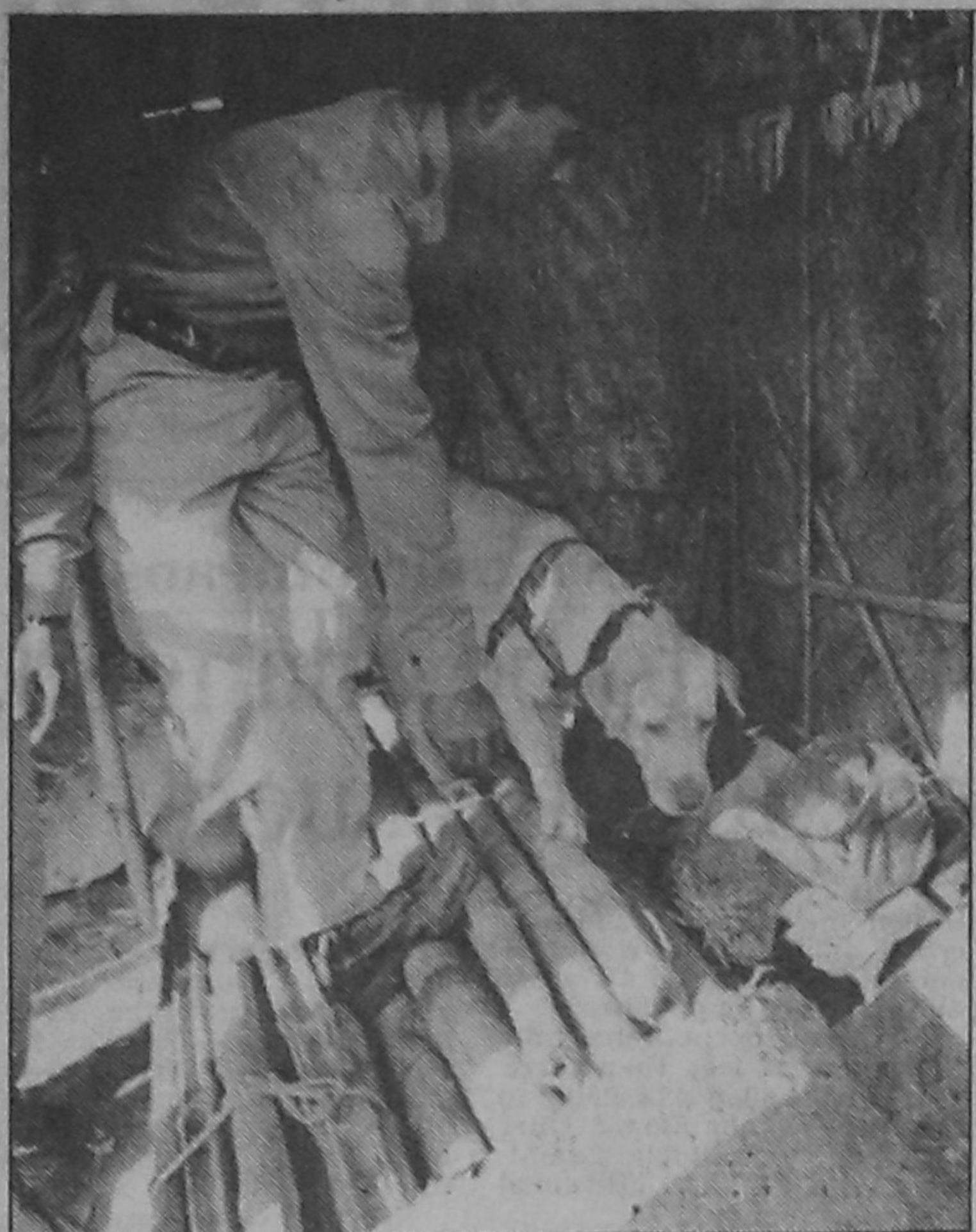


Metropolitan



The Dog Squad of DMP conducted a raid on the Agargaon slum in the city yesterday to recover narcotics. —Star photo

26 pc of tested tubewells contain arsenic

By Staff Correspondent
Twenty six per cent of the tubewells tested so far across the country contains arsenic contaminated water, local government minister Zillur Rahman revealed in the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

The government has declared water of those tubewells unsafe for human consumption, he said in response to a written question tabled in the House.

Arsenic has been detected in 3367 of the 33,674 tubewells so far tested in 61 of the 64 districts, he told the House. There has been no tests in the three hill districts of Khagrachhari, Rangamati and Bandarban.

The highest rate, (82 pc) of contamination was found in Chandpur while the lowest (0.3 pc) in Rangpur and Thakurgaon each, the minister in formed.

The government has been implementing two technical survey projects, one financed by the UNICEF and the other by the British DFID and one investment project with the World Bank financing to mitigate the arsenic contamination problem, he said.

Besides, he said, another project to purify pond water for drinking in the areas affected by arsenic and salinity was also under implementation. This project is being financed by the government.

Yet another project called Action Research Programme was on progress to preserve rain water as an alternative source of drinking water, he said.

2-day programmes on birth anniversary of Vivekananda

In observance of the 138th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, Ramkrishna Math & Mission has taken up two-day programmes beginning today, says a press release.

The programmes included special puja, reading from the scriptures, devotional songs and discourses.

The discussion on "Swami Vivekananda and Universal Friendship" will be held today at 5 pm with DG Bhattacharya in the chair. Mofazzal Hussain Chowdhury Maya, State Minister for Shipping, will be present as chief guest while Prof Hiranjyoti Sengupta as special guest.

Another discussion on "Swami Vivekananda: Pathfinder of Youth and Mass awakening" will be held on Friday with Swami Aksharananda Maharaj in the chair. Advocate Md Wazir Faruque will be present as chief guest while Prof Nim Chandra Bhowmik as special guest.

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Workshop on environment CHT people for rapid implementation of action plan

JURACHHARI (Rangamati), Jan 26: Grassroots people at a workshop emphasised yesterday the need for rapid implementation of the pro-people environment management action plan to check environmental degradation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts region, reports BSS.

Jointly organised by the Environment Ministry, Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs Ministry, Regional Council and UNDP, the workshop was held at the Bhujanjoy Government High School.

The inaugural session was addressed by Programme Coordinator of Environment Ministry Dr Mahfuzul Haque, Chairman of Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, TNO Mohammad Iqbal and Sustainable Environment Management Programme (SEMP) Consultant Janna Bikash Chakma.

Dr Mahfuz outlined the objectives of the workshop as part of the formulation of the action plan for CHT in consultation with all stakeholders and professional groups, including government officials, teachers, farmers, people's representatives, social workers and women.

The workshop was the last in a series of six grassroots workshops in Rangamati district. Quamrul said Bangladesh had prepared the National Environment Management Action Plan (NEMAP) earlier in consultation with people under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment and Forest and supported by UNDP and its follow-up Sustainable Environment Management Programme.

(SEMP). These were being implemented by 23 different ministries, divisions, agencies, professional bodies and NGOs.

Bikash Chakma called upon the local people to identify their environmental problems with probable solutions.

Participants divided into seven groups identified 22 issues of concern, out of which eight were mostly common.

At Jurachhari workshop, all the seven groups mentioned crisis of drinking water, lack of education facilities and forest depletion as important environmental issues. The other issues mentioned by some groups were health and sanitation, outbreak of malaria, diarrhoea and jaundice, high level of Kaptai Lake, depletion of forest, Jhum cultivation, lack of electricity, telecommunication facilities.

The government servants at Jurachhari workshop mentioned unplanned land management as number one issue. They also said that unwillingness of the government servants to work in the CHT was creating obstacles to the implementation of development projects.

Headmen and traders piled law and order situation as number one issue. The teachers raised issues like flash floods, drought and difficulties in ploughing hillocks.

The social workers suggested that mother tongue of each tribe be made compulsory from grade three. They also suggested that local tribal teachers be recruited for primary school.

Panel discussion on gender issues at British Council today

The British Council and Ain o Shalish Kendra jointly organises a show of a Teleplay "London Koinya" (The Bride from London) today at 5:30 pm at the British Council auditorium, says a press release.

The tele-play show will be followed by a panel discussion. The programme is part of the governance and gender initiatives of the British Council. This session will be held to help raise awareness and create sensitisation on the issue of gender discrimination and forced marriage prevailing in the country.



Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Badruddoza Chowdhury examines an ailing teacher at Osmani Udyan in the city where the non-government primary teachers have been staging a sit-in since Sunday. Badruddoza and other leaders of the BNP visited the teachers yesterday. —Star photo

Govt determined to preserve memories of Madhusudan

SAGARDAIR (Jessore), Jan 26: Education Minister ASHK Sadique has said that the government is determined to preserve the memories of great poet Michael Madhusudan Dutta, reports BSS.

"The process of implementation of 'Madhu Palli' here for preserving the memories of the great poet is underway," he said while inaugurating the National Madhu Mela yesterday.

Presided over by Secretary in charge of the Cultural Ministry Syed Abdur Rab, the function was addressed, among others, by Shah Haiduzzaman, MP, Khan Iqbal Khan, MP and Director General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Azad Rahman.

The Cultural Ministry has organised the week-long fair (mela) in observance of 176th birth anniversary of poet Michael Madhusudan Dutta. Paying rich tributes to the poet, the Education Minister said though born in a remote area of the country he (the poet) succeeded in establishing himself as a gifted person.

Mentioning the recognition of Ekushey February as the International Mother Language Day, he said Michael Madhusudan was the first man who familiarized Bangla as a language internationally.

JS body discusses irregularities in Wage Earners Welfare Fund

A meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on Public Accounts was held at the Sangsad Bhaban yesterday with committee chairman SM Akram in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed the report on audit objections and financial irregularities in the Wage Earners Welfare Fund raised by the Auditor and Comptroller General. The irregularities involving over Tk 7.96 crore took place during the period from 1990 to 1997, said an official handout.

According to the audit report, in most of the cases the fund was utilised for other expenses of the concerned missions in contrary to the objectives of formation of the welfare fund.

The committee took some decisions for administering the fund on the basis of sound policies.

Committee members Prof Md Ali Ashraf, MK Anwar, whip Md Abdus Shahid, Abul Kalam Azad, Nurul Islam Nahid and Abdul Mannan attended the meeting.

Auditor and Comptroller General Syed Yusuf Hossain, Labour and Employment Secretary Sirajul Islam and other high officials were also present.

BNP distributes foods among primary teachers

By Staff Correspondent
City BNP distributed foods yesterday among the non-government primary schoolteachers who have been staging sit-in at Osmani Udyan in the city since Sunday to press their demand for nationalisation of the schools.

A delegation led by Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Prof AGM Badruddoza Chowdhury visited the teachers and distributed 23 maunds of chira and 3 and a half maunds of gur (molasses).

Expressing solidarity with the demand of the agitating teachers, Prof Chowdhury said the government that cannot realise the importance of the teachers' role has no right to stay in power.

Listing various measures of past BNP government for betterment of the teacher community, he said if voted to power, the BNP will meet the just demands of the teachers.

City BNP convener Sadek Hossain Khoka said this anti-people government has forced the teachers to come to the street. The Awami League would have to pay for this inhuman activities, he added.

Prof Chowdhury also gave first aid to the sick teachers.

Opposition MPs urged to return to Parliament

Lawmakers participating in the debate on presidential address yesterday urged the opposition MPs to return to the House to strengthen the democratic process, reports UNB.

They, however, criticised the attitude of the Leader of the Opposition to resolve the political impasse through dialogue.

The Leader of the Opposition recently at the businessmen conference said that the time to sit-in a dialogue is over and any discussion will only be held under the caretaker government.

Chief Whip Abul Hasnat Abdullah regretted that it might be his personal failure that he could not keep them (Opposition MPs) inside the House.

He felt that the opposition's boycott was mainly due to the fact that they could not tolerate

the government's repeated success in different fields.

"If successes like Ganges Water Treaty, CHT agreement, managing worst ever flood are failures in the eyes of the opposition then I don't have anything to say," said the Chief Whip.

"What do they want? Do they want that we stop the allowance for poor elderly people or providing food assistance to the poor people during Eid festivals," he asked.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Ashraf Islam said that the next election would be the most important election in Bangladesh because it would be a fight between the concept of creating Bangladesh and the concept of creating Pakistan.

Rotary News

Weekly meeting
The regular weekly meeting of Rotary Club of Dharmond will be held today at 5:30 pm at Dhaka Club Upstairs Family Lounge, says a press release. All members are requested to attend on time.

US, Italian professors call on DU VC
By DU Correspondent
Professor Kathryn B Ward of the Department of Sociology, University of Southern Illinois, US paid a courtesy call on Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof AK Azad Chowdhury at the latter's office yesterday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters of mutual interest, specially the possibilities to establish various joint collaboration academic programmes between the two universities, said a DU press release.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury thanked the visiting professor for his interest in academic activities of the DU.

Prof Shawkat Ara Hossain, Prof Nazmunessa Mahtab, Prof Amina Akhtar Mohsin, Prof Mahmuda Islam and DU Professor Prof AKM Nun-Nabi were present during the meeting.

Maria Luisa, Professor of Political Science of University of Sapienza, Italy also paid courtesy call on the DU VC yesterday and discussed different academic activities and exchanged views about programmes between the two universities.

Pro-Vice-chancellor Prof M Shahadat Ali, Science Faculty Dean Prof Mesbahuddin Ahmed, Prof Harun-ur-Rashid and Prof SM Imamul Haque were present.

Prof Luisa was accompanied by Miranda Rolli of Italy.

JS told
Two flyovers in city within 3 yrs
Two flyovers will be constructed in the city within three years to ease traffic jam that has made city life miserable, reports UNB.

Replying to ABM Abul Kashem, LGRD Minister Zillur Rahman told the House that the government has taken an initiative to build the flyovers, one at Mohakhali and the other at Jatrabari.

He said Roads and Highways Department had already invited tenders to construct the flyovers. The local Government Engineering Department will construct the flyovers within next three years under the Urban Transport Project.

AGM of DU Alumni Assoc tomorrow
The annual general meeting (grand assembly), 2000 of the Dhaka University Alumni Association will be held at the auditorium of Teacher Student Centre at 3 pm tomorrow, said a press release.

All alumni have been requested to attend the meeting. Registration fees have been fixed at Tk 50.

JP rally today
Jatiya Party city unit will hold a rally at Muktagong at 3 pm today, reports UNB.

The rally will be followed by a procession which will be led by party secretary general Nazur Rahman Monjur.

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3. Estimated cost : Tk 2,84,69,657/-
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5. Cost of tender documents (non-refundable)
6. Banks/offices from where tender documents may be purchased : (a) Divisional Commissioner, Chittagong. (b) The Manager, Sonali Bank, Mohipal Branch, Feni. (c) The Manager, Sonali Bank, WAPDA Branch, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. (d) The Manager, Sonali Bank, Bahdderhat Branch, Chittagong. (e) The Manager, Agrani Bank, Dalabazar Branch, Lakshmpur.
7. Last date of selling of tender documents & date of pre-bid meeting : 16.2.2000 during office & bank transaction hours. Pre-bid meeting on 8-02-2000.
8. Offices where tender documents will be received & opened : (a) Divisional Commissioner, Ctg. (b) Chief Engineer, South-Eastern Zone, WDB, Chittagong. (c) Superintending Engineer, Chittagong/Feni/Dhaka O&M Circle, BWDB, Ctg/Feni/Dhaka.
9. Date of receiving the tender : 15.2.2000, 16.2.2000 during office hours & on 17.2.2000 up to 12-00 Noon.
10. Date of opening of tender : 17.2.2000 at 12-30 PM.
11. Class of eligible contractors to compete the tender : "A" class contractors of BWDB enlisted for 1999-2000.
12. Address of advertiser : Rezaur Rahman Khan, Addl Chief Engineer, South-Eastern Zone, BWDB, Chittagong.

All other informations may be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

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