

National

Arsenic level alarming in 3 dists

By Staff Correspondent

been seriously affected by arsenic.

Meanwhile, PHED found out a new technology to set up 1000 feet deep tubewells in those areas to protect from arsenic. Each such tubewell costs Tk. 4,500 for installation. But poor people can not afford the higher cost of installation of such tubewells.

The authorities concerned should spend required amount of money for this purposes to protect poor people from arsenic contamination.

It is learnt that many people are now gripped with panic of arsenic. They are collecting water from ponds and other water bodies now.

Our Jhenidah correspondent says: People of Mothespur municipal area in Jhenidah district have been compelled to drink arsenic contaminated water finding no other alternative, an official of PHED said.

Mothespur thana is about 55 kilometres south or south-west of Jhenidah district headquarters with a population of about 25 thousand. Number of village under Mothespur Municipality is 16 and the total area is only 7.77 square kilometre. Number of households is 5,530.

But it is a matter of great regret that 400 families are provided with pure drinking water facilities. Of them 300 families are getting water supply from two deep tubewells of PHED and rest 50 families with 11 stand-post (road side) tubewells of the same department.

When this correspondent visited Jaminderpara, Patibila and some parts of Mothespur municipal area he saw many people are collecting water from 'red marked' tubewells.

Housewife Latifa Begum, 55, farmer Habi Mollah, 61, school student Reshma Khatun, 14, and Nurul, 7, of Jaminderpara had been asked why they had been collecting arsenic contaminated water from the 'red marked' tubewells, they replied that they had no other alternative.

PHED authorities, however, could not give any information about the actual figure of pa-

tients suffering from arsenicosis in Mothespur municipal area.

BSS from Barisal reports: The number of arsenic stricken people has been increasing day by day here as the ground water could not be processed till now.

The number of arsenic stricken people increases from 129 to 279 with the death toll 17 in different places here. This number might increase within five years if proper arsenic mitigation process could not be introduced in the rural areas, a survey report said.

The Health Department conducted a survey here in the Charkaua areas on arsenic contaminated ground water and



Arsenic contamination a threat to nation

A little girl of village Jaminderpara under Mothespur municipal area in Jhenidah district collecting arsenic contaminated water recently from a red marked tubewell. —Star photo

found as many as 94 arsenic stricken people there. Of them, 16 patients were found at South Chair Aicha, eight in Dinar, 69 in Karnakathi and one in Char Kalni areas. Some 13 people of houses of Mannan and Majed Bhuiyan are now arsenic stricken patients. The dreadful situations is prevailing in Karnakathi and Sapania under Sadar upazila. Most of the arsenic stricken people are women and children, 16 of the 42 patients are below 16 years age.

Meanwhile, a team of the NGO forum conducted a survey in 21 villages of Barisal Sadar, Agalijhara, Bakergonj, Hizla and Wazirpur upazila on arsenic contamination of the ground water. The team detected arsenic poison in 123 of 199 tubewells. The survey was conducted in five villages in Sadar upazila, two villages in Wazirpur, one village in Hizla, eight villages in Bakergonj and five villages in Agalijhara upazila.

Water of all the tubewells of Purbankandi village under Hizla upazila are found contaminated with arsenic poison. Similar is the case of Natherkandi village in Wazirpur upazila.

The NGO forum said 35 of the 59 villagers have been attacked with arsenic poison as they took tubewells water regularly. The number of patients has been increasing, they added.



Participants of a two-day Workshop on National Pages of the Daily Newspapers pose for a group photograph recently during its concluding session at the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) auditorium in Dhaka. A total of 23 journalists from Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal and Bogra took part in the PIB sponsored workshop. Z A M Khairuzzaman, In-Charge of the National Page (5th from left in the second row) represented The Daily Star in the workshop.

7 received acid injuries in Satkhira last year

From Our Correspondent

SATKHIRA, May 19: At least seven people, including three young girls, fell victim to acid throwing in the district last year.

The victims were identified as Mashkura Khatun, 15, Khadija Begum, 14, Sabina, 11, Mizanur Rahman, 20, Habibur Rahman, 60, Debara Sarkar, 26, and Pinu Sarkar, 35.

Unidentified miscreants threw acid on Mizanur Rahman, 20, son of Belayet Hossain of village Gangarampur under Tala upazila on January 22, 1999. He was treated in local hospital.

Mahkura Khatun, 15, daughter of Aizul Sardar of village Jograjpur under Sadar upazila, sustained burn injuries as one of her neighbours threw acid on her at night February 10.

Family sources said the neighbour, Mokhsur Rahman, threw acid on the girl only because the girl refused to accept the proposal by Mokhsur. She was treated at Satkhira Sadar Hospital. Police, however, arrested Mokhsur.

Two sisters, Khadija Khatun and Sabina, suffered burn injuries when unidentified miscreants threw acid on them on May 3 night. The two daughters of Shawkat Ali of village Chupuri under Sadar upazila,

Man chops wife to death in Chapainawabganj

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, May 19: A man hacked his wife to death and injured his son seriously on Sunday at village Hujrapur in Gomostapur upazila in Chapainawabganj district.

Police said Shafiqul, 30, locked in an altercation with his wife Rawshan Ara, 25, on the previous day and went to bed.

But in the early hours Shafiqul attacked his wife and the child with sharp weapon. The victims were sleeping during the attack.

The wife died on the spot. The boy, Khokon, 10, was admitted to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital.

Police arrested Shafiqul and sent him to jail.

When the victim was returning home from a nearby place at night unidentified assailants threw acid on him and melted into darkness. Neighbours have attributed the attack to dispute over land.

Villagers said Nazrul Islam, whose marriage proposal was rejected by Khadija, and his accomplice Shahidul Islam threw acid on the girls.

A 60-year-old man received acid injuries on May 7 at village Rahimabad under Tala upazila. He was identified as Habibur Rahman.

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Of the total 123 students including 51 girls have been awarded talent pool scholarships under Barisal division.

The tenure of the scholarship is for two years beginning from January 1, 2000.

Another report says: A total of 922 students were awarded primary scholarships from six southern districts under Barisal division during this current academic session.

According to deputy director office sources, of the total, 188 students including girl students were awarded talent pool grade scholarships while 734 general grade scholarships this year. The tenure of the scholarships is three years only.

A total of 30,414 students including 14,181 girl students appeared in this examination from 40 centres of 38 Unions of six southern districts of Barisal, Jhalakathi, Bholia, Pirojpur, Patuakhali and Barisal on December 19 and December 20, 1999 last.

Of the total students, 8,242 students including 2,348 girl students came out successfully this year in the examination of primary scholarship.

The percentage of pass was almost 27 only.

The value of each of the talent pool scholarship is Taka 125 per month and a lump sum

grant of Taka 100 annually while the value of each of the general grade scholarship is Taka 50 per month and a lump sum grant of Taka 30 annually.

Of the total, 49 talent pool and 90 general grade scholarships were awarded in Barisal district, 38 talent pool and 74 general grade scholarships in Pirojpur, 19 talent pool and 88 general grade scholarships in Bagerhat, 21 talent pool and 138 general grade scholarships in Patuakhali and 30 talent pool and 136 general grade scholarships in Bhola districts.

According to Moulvibazar Correspondent says: Rupali Khatun stood first among girl students in junior scholarship in Salkupa thana in Jhenidah district. She appeared from Salkupa pilot girls high school.

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Parag and Prince are the two sons of Mosharraf Hossain and Farvin Akhtar of village Chhoygharia in the Sadar

thana.

Our Moulvibazar Correspondent says: Musammat Tahia Tafsa (Bilkis) of Ali Amzad Government Girls' High School, Moulvibazar, secured junior scholarship in talent pool of class VIII this year.

She is the daughter of Md Abdul Musabbir, an officer of National Security Intelligence (NSI) working at Moulvibazar and Mrs Anupama Begum, a housewife. Her home village is Richi under the Sadar upazila of Habiganj district. Bilkis seeks blessings from all.

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