

Arsenic poisoning poses big threat to residents of Nilkanda

Only 6 out of 56 tubewells arsenic free

Do they drink from the tubewells around that pump poison or opt for pond waters that are unsafe as well?

Hundreds of villagers at Nilkanda, about 50 kilometers off the capital city are trapped in the dilemma. They, however, continue to drink water from the tubewells which are arsenic-affected, reports UNB. "Some people from different NGOs have been doing their business by telling us that the water is arsenic contaminated but have not taken any effective measures to get rid of the danger," said an evidently frustrated — and irked. Mainul Islam who was diagnosed ill with the chemical poisoning in 1995. "Photographers from home and abroad have come here, talked to me and taken my photograph at least fifty times and assured necessary steps to cure me, but that has not happened yet," he said while talking with a group of journalists last Wednesday at his village.

Mainul, Mujibur and Awlad Hossain Khokan, three young-

sters of the area are all affected by arsenic poisoning. The number of such patients are now 46 in their village. They think there are more affected people in the village who are yet to be identified.

Some 56 tubewells are used regularly at Nilkanda village of which only six are arsenic-free. Most of the people drink from these six ones.

"It is impossible for everyone to collect drinking water from only six tubewells," said sexagenarian Bibi Hawa, who was advised by some visiting people not to drink water from other tubewells "from where will we take drinking water now?", she asks.

In 1999, some NGO workers went to the arsenic-infested village and sold fifty filters to the villagers. "They did not return after selling their filters," said Abdul Matin.

"We (Nilkanda villagers) are being used like guinea-pig for years now by some NGOs who are capitalising on our plight," said Mujibur Rahman.

People panicked when at one stage all the tubewells were declared arsenic-affected. Later the six of them were declared to be safe for drinking.

Being cheated repeatedly, young men of the village have now united against the NGO people and have even decided to hand over the NGO people to the police if they come again.

Meanwhile, NGO Forum which works for supply of safe drinking water and sanitation came to the village two months back. The youths of the village intercepted them at first.

"Please let us work for a while, if you are not happy, then you can take action against us as you like," Dr Abul Hasnat Milton, chief of arsenic cell told the protesters.

Mainul says they are quite satisfied now as the Forum people have created two alternative sources of drinking water. "But we do not know how long it will continue to benefit us," he said.

NGO Forum has set up two types of water tanks, "Rain Water Harvesting System" and "Iron Removal Plant". "We are trying to ensure safe drinking water for all this village by November 2000," said Dr Milton, an arsenic specialist work-

ing with the forum. Rohom Ali, chairman of Village Development Association, told the journalists that they are creating awareness among the villagers about the mass arsenic poisoning.

The villagers also praise the role of NIPSOM who have trained some of the youths of the village on how to combat the mass poisoning.

Dr Milton said one particular tubewell at the village has 1.45-milligram arsenic per litre, that is 21 times higher than the permissible level. On average, there is 0.2 to 0.5-milligram arsenic per litre in the tubewells in this village, he said.

According to NGO Forum, arsenic contamination has been detected in the deep tubewells in 211 thanas among the total of over 460 in the country. They say at least 17 per cent people of the country are arsenic affected to some level or the other.

About people's resentment against the activities of NGOs, Dr Milton said he did not want to dismiss the allegations against some NGOs. "It is true that some NGOs love foreign aid more than the countrymen," he said regretfully.



Abdur Razzaque, Minister for Water Resources addressing a discussion meeting on Prevention of Drug Abuse organised by Bangladesh Anti Drug Federation of NGOs (BAF) at a local hotel in the city. — PID photo

Health, literacy priority for Rotary this year

By Staff Correspondent

The Rotary International District 3280, Bangladesh will give special priority to controlling health and literacy related problems, including arsenic poisoning, acid burn victims, rehabilitation of the disabled during the new Rotary year to 2000-2001.

This was disclosed by the new District Governor (DG) Rtn. Hasan Maniruzzaman at a press conference at Dhaka Club yesterday.

The immediate past DG Mosharrar Hossain introduced the new DG before the journalists at the programme. Past DGs and district officials of Rotary in Bangladesh also attended the conference.

The new Rotary year which begins today will be observed through a day long programme that includes a rally, feeding of about 1200 orphans, painting exhibition of the children and an inter-city meeting of Rotarians from all over the country.

Khaleda Zia, leader of opposition in the parliament and BNP chairperson will attend

Int'l Cooperative Day today

The 78th International Cooperative Day will be observed in Bangladesh, as elsewhere of the world, today in a befitting manner and with a sense of solidarity with the cooperatives of other countries of the Globe, reports BSS.

The Directorate of Cooperatives has taken up extensive programmes to observe the day with a renewed pledge to encourage the country's cooperatives towards eradication of poverty from the country by infusing the philosophy of cooperative movement into the conscience of the general mass, an official source said in the city yesterday.

President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate messages on the occasion wished overall success of the day and said the main objective of the cooperative movement is to make everyone self-dependent through united economic activities.

The President described cooperative as an ideal institution where the present government has been giving due importance in the greater interest of the country's rapid development. The Prime Minister in her message expressed the hope that the cooperative movement would show path towards a happy and prosperous Bangladesh as dreamt by Father of the Nation.

The Rural Development and Cooperative Division and the Directorate of Cooperatives will jointly organise a discussion on the day at the WAPDA auditorium today at 5 pm. Minister for Local Government Zillur Rahman will be the chief guest and State Minister for Rural Development and Cooperatives Advocate Rahmat Ali will be the special guest at the function.

'High moral values important factors to make a drug free society'

Speaker at a workshop yesterday said religious values can play an effective role against drug abuse and its illicit trafficking, reports UNB.

"High moral and religious values are the most important factors to make a drug free society," said psychiatrist Professor AKM Nazimudowla at the workshop.

Bureau of Human Rights Bangladesh (BHRB) organised the daylong workshop on "Drug abuse and illicit trafficking" at its office.

Professor Dr Hasanuzzaman Chowdhury and Professor AKM Nazimuddin presented keynote papers at the workshop while Justice Abdul Wahab, BHRB general secretary Advocate Shahjahan took part in the discussion. BHRB chairman Syed Anwar Hossain presided over the meeting.

Some 40 people from different professions, including lawyers, teachers, development and human activists and journalists, attended as participants in the workshop.

Construction of 74 clinics to start soon at Manikganj

MANIKGANJ, June 30: Construction of 74 clinics under the 'Community Clinic Construction Project' has been taken up in seven upazilas of the district under the supervision of Local Government Engineering Department, reports BSS.

The upazilas are Manikganj sadar, Ghior, Shibhalaya, Hari-rampur, Sattaria, Daulatpur and Singar.

The construction of the clinics will cost of Taka 1.48 crore. The work will be started soon.

Rotary News

North West meeting

The first meeting of the new Rotary year 2000-2001 of the Rotary Club of Dhaka North West will be held today at Sonargaon Hotel at 4:00 pm as part of the Inter-city meeting, says a press release.

Members have been requested to attend on time.

Inter-city meeting

Rotary International District 3280 will hold an inter-city meeting of the Rotary clubs on "Literacy and Environment" at Hotel Sonargaon at 4:00 pm today, says a press release.

Leader of Opposition in the Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will attend the meeting as chief guest.

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Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Police Super Dhaka Tender Notice
Tenders are hereby invited from bonafide repairing establishment/contractors for repairing Dhaka District Police Launch PLD-3. Tenders will have to be dropped by 12-00 noon on 10/07/2000 in the tender box kept at the office of the undersigned and will be opened the same day in presence of the tenderers present (if anyone remains present). Tender schedule will be available on payment of Taka 400/- (four hundred) in cash from Police Office, Court Building, Dhaka. Uptodate income tax certificate, trade licence, bank solvency certificate, certificate for previous experiences and security money of 2 1/2% of the rate submitted from any scheduled bank will have to be deposited to the Police Super, Dhaka and Bank Draft will have to be enclosed.
The authority reserves the absolute power to reject or accept any tender without assigning any reason.
DFP 16180-27/6 Police Super G-1249 Dhaka

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer, R&H Chandpur Road Division, Chandpur R&H Lease Quotation Invitation Notice (2nd Call)

1	Quotation Notice No	03/EE/CRD/1999-2000.
2	Name of work	Quotation notice for realising toll through lease from the vehicles crossing by ferry at Ichli Ferry Ghat (with the supply of lubricant and fuel by lessee) under Chandpur Road Division during 1999-2000 fiscal year (for 365 days).
3	Earnest money	At the rate of 2% (two per cent) of the rate quoted in the quotation in the forms of BD/TC/Pay-Order from any schedule bank in favour of the undersigned will have to be deposited.
4	Name of offices where quotation documents will be available	Divisional Commissioner, Chittagong/Undersigned/Executive Engineer, R&H, Road Division, Comilla/B-baria/Planning & Design Division, Comilla/Planning Division-I (PD), Dhaka and all the offices of the Sub-Divisional Engineers under this division.
5	Name of offices where quotation documents will be received	Additional Chief Engineer, R&H, Comilla Zone, Comilla/Divisional Commissioner Chittagong/Superintending Engineer, R&H, Road Circle Comilla/Superintending Engineer R&H, Procurement and Monitoring Circle, Dhaka and the office of the undersigned.
6	Cost of quotation schedule	Taka 2,000/= (two thousand) only (non-refundable) per set.
7	Specific time for realising toll	365 (three hundred sixty-five days).
8	Last date of selling quotation	9-07-2000 till office hours.
9	Date and time of receiving quotation	10-07-2000 till 12-30 pm.
10	Date and time of opening quotation	12-07-2000 at 12:00 noon.
11	Date and time of lottery.	13-07-2000 at 1.00 pm
12	Eligibility of contractor	Renowned person/contractor/trading establishment.

DFP-16177-27/6 Executive Engineer, R&H G-1250 Road Division, Chandpur

Govt considering separation of judiciary, says Law Minister

JESSORE, June 30: Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Matin Khasru said here today the process of separation of judiciary is now under the consideration of the government, reports BSS.

Speaking as the chief guest at the district Awami Aijib Parishad Conference-2000, Khasru said the present government had been working relentlessly for the last four years to materialise the dream of Bangabandhu to reach the judiciary at the doorsteps of the common people.

Describing justice as people's right, the minister observed that the way to bring smiles on the faces of the commonman is to establish the rule of law in the country.

He said that goal of the present government is to empower the poorer section of the people.

Khasru said the government has formed a training institute to enhance efficiency of the judges and Law Commission to ensure independence of the judiciary.

Feni Diabetic Hospital bldg ready for opening

FENI, June 30: The construction of Feni Diabetic Hospital building has been completed, reports BSS.

According to an official source, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare sanctioned taka about two and half crore for the construction of three-storied hospital building. The hospital is situated at Mizan Road.

The inauguration date has not yet been fixed. Medical service will begin after the inauguration.

Munshiganj Bar polls held

MUNSHIGANJ, June 30: The election of the Executive Committee of Munshiganj District Bar Association was held in the Association building yesterday, reports BSS.

Advocate Arsheduddin Chowdhury and Advocate Shah Alam Mridha were elected president and secretary respectively of the Bar Association for 2000-2001 term.

The panel of candidates headed by the newly elected president bagged all the posts of office-bearers except those of vice-president and one member which were won by the other panel headed by Advocate Kazi Afsar Hussain.



Rtn Hasan Maniruzzaman, new District Governor of Rotary International District 3280, speaking at a press conference at Dhaka Club yesterday highlighting on the club's priorities for the new Rotary year commencing today. — Star photo

Government of Bangladesh Office of the Executive Engineer Faridpur PWD Division Tender No 143 of 1999-2000 Memo No: 1094 Dated: 19-6-2000/5-3-1407 Bang

Notice Inviting Tenders

Sealed tenders are hereby invited in Bangladesh Form No 2911 from the approved special class-I/class-II sanitary and plumbing contractors of PWD, class-II sanitary and plumbing contractors of PWD Zone, Khulna for construction of Staff Quarter at Modhukhali PS in the dist of Faridpur (Sh: Providing of 75mm dia deep Tubewell and will be received by the undersigned as well as by the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Magura, Jhenidah, Jessore, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Maherpur, Narail and Rajbari in their respective offices up to 12:00 Noon of 12-7-2000. The estimated cost of the work is Taka 3,33,738/00 only and the earnest money is Tk 6,675/00 in TC, PO, BD from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh or Pratiksha Sanchaya Patra, Bonus Sanchaya Patra, 5 Yrs BD Sanchaya Patra must accompany each tender duly endorsed to the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Faridpur. Otherwise his/their tender shall be declared informal. No tender form, schedule of items, additional terms and conditions etc will be sold after 11-7-2000. The tender paper, schedule of items, additional terms and conditions etc may be obtained from the office of the undersigned as well as by the Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Magura, Jhenidah, Jessore, Kushtia, Chuadanga, Maherpur, Narail and Rajbari on all working days during office hours on payment of usual charge of Tk 400/- (Taka four hundred) only per set of the tender schedule and a sum of Tk 25/00 (Taka twenty-five) only per copy of Tender Form No 2911 (both non-refundable).

Details may be seen from the office of the undersigned during office hours.

Md Syedur Rahman Executive Engineer Faridpur PWD Division Phone No 3257. G-1247

Two murdered in city

By Staff Correspondent

Two persons were killed in separate incidents in the city on Thursday.

An alleged police informer was shot dead at Mahout Tuli in the city's Kotwali area Thursday night.

Police quoting the FIR said a Billal called Mohammed Ramzan Ali, 26, son of late Badiuzzaman, a resident of 8 Bagdasha Lane in the city, over his cell phone at about 11:15 p.m. on Thursday and asked him to come over at Kashi Tuli. Ramzan went out telling his family he will be back with Tk 5,000 from Billal.

Some unidentified men informed Ramzan's wife Saida Begum at about 11:45 p.m. that her husband was lying in a pool of blood on Kazimuddin Siddiqui Lane at Mahout Tuli.

She went there to find her husband with a hole in his head. Meanwhile, a police patrol reached the spot and took Ramzan to the Mitford Hospital where the attending doctors declared him dead.

Ramzan had provided information to Kotwali police that led to recovery of one kilogram of heroine on June 27. Two persons were also arrested. Family sources suspect the ring leaders of the drug cartel might

have killed Ramzan him to take revenge. However, Kotwali police said he was not a police source.

Kotwali police could not recover his mobile phone. The body was sent to the hospital morgue for autopsy. The victim's wife has filed a case with Kotwali police.

In the other incident, a man was beaten to death on Monir Hossain Road in Sutrapur Thursday night, said police and witnesses.

Nails were driven into different parts of his body, police said and added that the body was found abandoned on the road.

RU student missing from DU campus

An MBA final year student of Rajshahi University (RU) has been missing from the TSC of Dhaka University (DU) since Thursday morning, reports BSS.

Police quoting relative's statement said Mohammad Mozaffar Hossain went to the TSC at about 9 am on Thursday and did not return to his brother-in-law's house till Friday evening.

Mozaffar went to TSC to meet one of his friends. He was residing at his brother-in-law's house at Azampur colony for the last few days.

A General Diary (GD) was lodged with Ramna police in this connection.

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Dhaka No-1(50)/99-2000/EP-Publi/1140 Dated: 26th June, 2000

Tender Notice for Printing Brochure

Sealed tenders are invited from front ranking printing presses for printing a brochure to be published from the External Publicity Wing. Establishments participating in tender should have at least a double demy bicolour offset machine and other related machinery and necessary machinery/experience for printing/binding of international standard.

Schedule can be purchased from the office of the undersigned during office hours till the day before submitting tender on payment of Taka 200/= (two hundred) in cash (non-refundable).

The last date and time of submitting tender in the tender box kept at the main gate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is 10th July, 2000 till 2-00 pm.

Security money at the rate of 5.00 per cent of the quoted rate in the forms of Bank Draft/Pay Order in favour of the Assistant Director (Publication) External Publicity Wing, Ministry of Foreign Affairs will have to be submitted.

The authority reserves the power to accept any tender or reject all tenders without assigning any reason.

A T M Monemul Haque Assistant Director (Publi) Phone: 9554881
DFP-16269-28/6/00 G-1248