

Formulate hazardous waste management policy

Experts tell workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a workshop yesterday underscored the need to formulate an effective hazardous waste management policy to protect the environment and to improve standards of public health.

Rapid industrial growth and the lack of proper implementation of anti-pollution policies, laws and regulations have led to a detrimental effect on the environment, said Maqsood Sinha of Waste Concern, who along with

Iftekhar Enyetullah of the same organisation presented a draft policy at the workshop.

The Department of Environment (DoE) and Waste Concern in association with the Asian Development Bank organised the workshop on 'Draft policy on hazardous waste management' at the Spectra Convention Centre in the city.

The draft policy along with suggestions from the participants of the workshop will be submitted to the environment ministry for finalisation of the

policy, said Iftekhar.

The main objectives of the hazardous waste management policy are to improve standards of public health, protect the environment and to ensure sustainable industrial growth, he added.

The draft policy calls for enabling institutional environment and legal support to encourage the use of cleaner production practices in the management of hazardous waste; provide guidelines for collection, transportation, treatment, recycling and

disposal of all kinds of hazardous waste; and calls for appropriate, efficient and environment-friendly technology for hazardous waste management and awareness campaign among stakeholders.

Iftekhar said the draft policy also suggests encouraging public-private partnership to establish plants for treatment, recycling and disposal of hazardous waste.

Acting DG of DoE Md Hissain said they are not against the industrial growth, but they want to protect the environment without creating obstacles to the industrial growth.

He also said a set of rules has to be formulated to ensure proper enforcement of the hazardous waste management policy.

Shahidul Islam Helal, president of Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI), said the media should highlight the factories which have set up Effluent Treatment Plant so that other factories are encouraged to follow suit.

Susan Lee of Asian Development Bank, Manila, Prof Dr Jaz Hossain, Prof ATM Nurul Amin, FBCCI Director Md Jashim Uddin and Md Shahjahan, director (technical) of DoE, also spoke.



Iftekhar Enyetullah speaks at a workshop on 'Draft policy on hazardous waste management' at the Spectra Convention Centre in the city yesterday.

Healthcare service for urban street dwellers launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) has come up with a new one-year project in order to provide essential healthcare services for the urban street dwellers in the city.

The pilot project to 'develop and test strategies for providing essential healthcare services to urban street dwellers' funded by German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) was launched in a programme at the ICDDR,B complex yesterday.

It will be implemented in partnership with the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Dhaka City Corporation (DCC), 2nd Urban Primary Healthcare Project (UPHCP), Bangladesh Railway (BR), National Sports Council (NSC) and NGOs.

Speakers at the launching ceremony said the project aims to test and find effective ways to provide essential healthcare services for the urban homeless.

Although there are free healthcare services available to the homeless, street dwellers have little knowledge about the location of these facilities, the speakers said, adding that many feel that such services are not necessary.

In his presentation, Dr Jasim Uddin, associate scientist of ICDDR,B, said, "Studies have shown little availability of healthcare service delivery mechanism for street dwellers and their access to health services should be increased."

ESD, PHC, DGHS Deputy Programme Manager Dr Iqbal Ansary Khan said, local street dwellers will be used as volunteers to motivate and inform other street dwellers about the ser-

vices. Local pharmacies and healthcare providers will also inform the street dwellers through referral linkage.

The government-supported project will see two satellite clinics at Kamalapur Railway Station and Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium at Mugda and a static clinic at the DCC zonal office at Karwan Bazar.

The clinics will have male and female paramedics trained by experts from DGHS, Marie Stopes and ICDDR,B to provide medical services without any charges.

The services will include family planning, general health check-ups, safe deliveries and solutions to gynaecological problems and skin problems along with some other services.

Presiding over the programme, DGHS Director General Prof Shah Monir Hossain said, "There are, in fact, many organisations working to provide health care services for the urban homeless. However, there is hardly any coordination among them. These stakeholders should offer collaborative effort and share their experience with each other in this regard."

DCC Chief Health Officer (acting) Nurul Islam, Marie Stopes Clinic Society Director Dr Yasmin Ahmed, ICDDR,B Executive Director Dr Alejandro Cravito, GTZ Programme Coordinator Jean-Olivier Schmidt, PHC, ESD and DGHS Director Dr ABM Jahangir Alam and Dr Tracey Perez Koehlmoo of ICDDR,B also spoke.

Currently, there are no studies available about the number of homeless people in the city. However, it is believed that the number is increasing by more than 6 percent every year, ICDDR,B sources said.



ICDDR,B Executive Director Dr Alejandro Cravito addresses a launching ceremony at the ICDDR,B complex in the city yesterday.

AK Khandker elected SCF chairman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new executive committee of Sector Commanders' Forum (SCF) has been formed through an election on Sunday in the city, says a press release.

Air Vice Marshal (ret'd) AK Khandker was elected chairman of the 19-member committee in the polls held at a general meeting at Liberation War Museum.

Maj Gen (ret'd) KM Shafiullah, Maj Gen (ret'd) CR Dutta, Lt Gen (ret'd) Mir Shaukat Ali, Lt Col (ret'd) Kazi Nuruzzaman, Maj (ret'd) Rafiqul Islam and Lt Col (ret'd) Abu Osman Chowdhury were elected vice chairmen respectively.

Former army chief Lt Gen (ret'd) M Harun-or-Rashid was elected general secretary of the committee.

Other office-bearers include Maj Gen (ret'd) Jamil D Ahsan, treasurer; Maj Gen (ret'd) M Masudur Rahman, organising secretary; Harun Habib, publicity secretary; Maj (ret'd) ASM Shamsul Arefin, research and publication secretary; Dr Sarwar Ali, welfare secretary; M Hamid, cultural secretary; Md Shafiullah, law secretary; Anwarul Alam Shahid, foreign affairs secretary; and Squadron Leader (ret'd) Sheikh Shaukat Jubayer, office secretary.

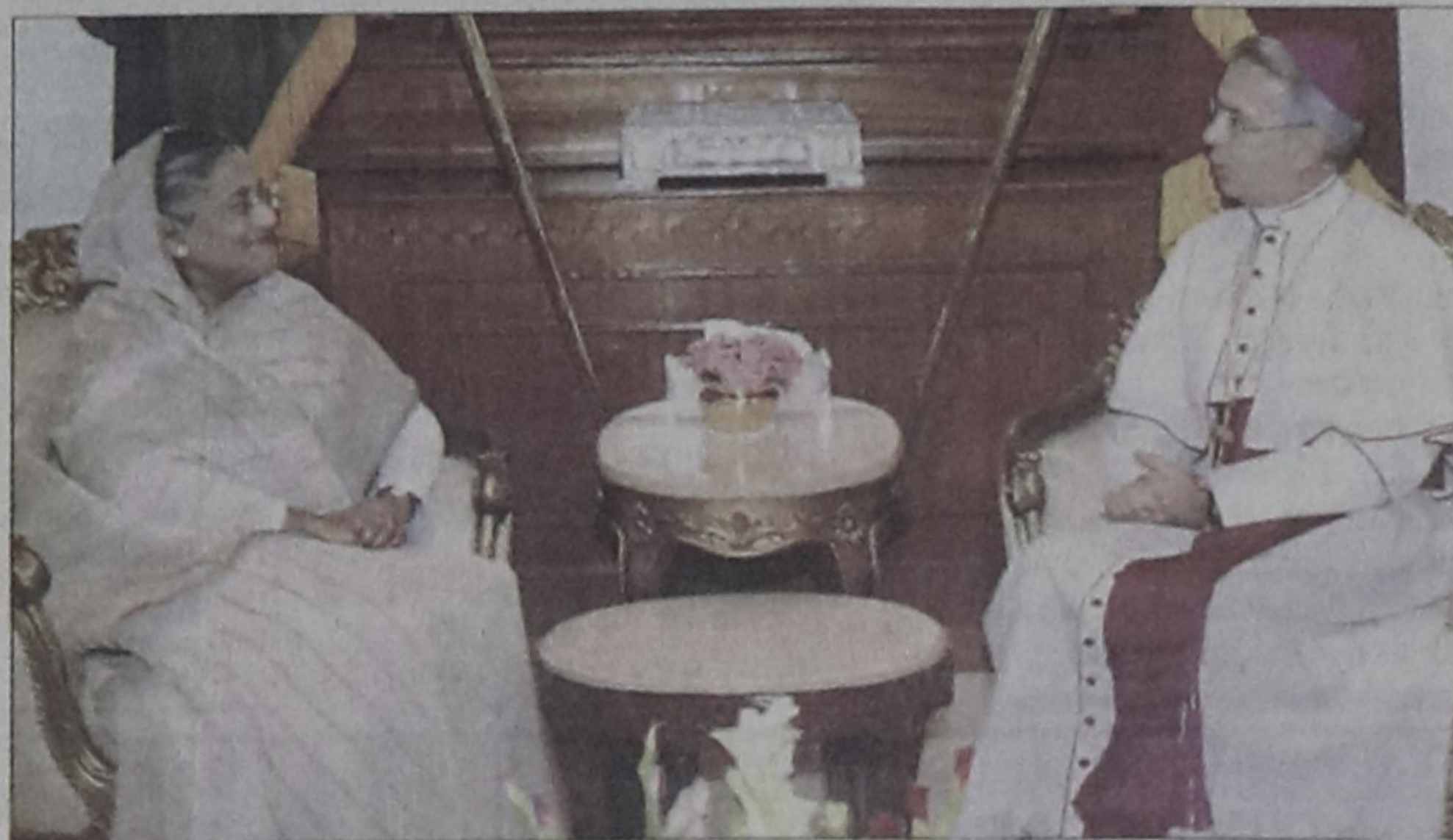
Maj Gen (ret'd) M Shah Jahan, Akku Chowdhury, Syed Sadruzzaman Helal and Farzana Shahnaz Mazid are the members of the committee.

Six divisional organising secretaries for six divisions were also elected at the meeting. They are -- Prof Abul Kalam Azad Patwary (Dhaka), Nurul Alam (Chittagong), Dr Shafiq Ahmed (Rajshahi), Lt (ret'd) Gazi Md Rahmatullah Dadu (Khulna), Sheikh Kutubuddin Ahmed (Barisal) and Dr Premangkur Roy (Sylhet).

A three-member election commission led by Col (ret'd) Shamsul Alam conducted the election.

Correction

"The amount of compensation resulting from workplace death should be over Tk 6 lakh instead of existing Tk 1 lakh" -- this was stated by Sekender Ali Mina, research officer of OSHE Foundation, not by Ataharul Islam, secretary to the labour and employment ministry, as mentioned inadvertently in a report headlined 'Death at Workplace: Strengthen inspection for due compensation' published on Page 3 of The Daily Star on May 4. We regret the error.



Ambassador of Vatican City in Dhaka Monsignor Joseph Marino calls on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in the city yesterday.

Govt firm to implement CHT peace deal fully

PM tells Vatican City envoy

UNB, Dhaka

Apostolic Nuncio (Ambassador) of Vatican City in Dhaka Monsignor Joseph Marino called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday, when they discussed various matters related to national, regional and international peace.

The prime minister informed the envoy of the holy land about the communal harmony among the people of Bangladesh and reiterated her government's strong commitment to maintain peace and peace of prosperity in the country.

As the situation of Chittagong Hill Tracts came up for discussion, the prime minister said the last Awami League government had succeeded in restoring peace in the unrest-stricken hill districts through the signing of the CHT Peace agreement in 1997.

She also said that the government is pledge-bound to implement the CHT peace treaty fully as the present government believes in development of people of all walks of life.

Sheikh Hasina further informed the envoy about the role of Bangladeshi security personnel in establishing peace in various countries of the world under the UN Peacekeeping Mission.

The Vatican City envoy conveyed deep shock of the Holy See at the death of army officers and civilians in the February 25-26 BDR mutiny at Pithkhan.

He hailed the prime minister for her wisdom and far-sightedness in tackling the BDR crisis peacefully and quickly.

The envoy gave special thanks to the prime minister as the government increased the tenure of visas of the people working in the missionary institutions to five years from the previous timeframe of one year.

Joseph Marino also expressed interest of his government in providing training on teaching at the missionary schools in Bangladesh.

The prime minister recalled the visit of Pope John Paul to Bangladesh in 1986 as they hoped that the existing relations between Bangladesh and the holy land would

further strengthen in the days to come.

Prime Minister's Office (PMO) Secretary Mollah Waheeduzzaman, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad, Special Assistant to PM Abdus Sobhan Golap and former ambassador Ziauddin were present.

'No case of swine flu reported in India'

METRO DESK

No case of swine flu has been reported in India so far, a press release of the High Commission of India said yesterday.

It said India has been closely monitoring the situation on influenza A/H1N1 (swine flu) infection.

Indian authorities have undertaken health screening of passengers coming from affected countries in 21 International airports at Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Bangalore, Calicut, Chennai, Cochin, Coimbatore, Delhi, Varanasi, Goa, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mangalore, Mumbai, Nagpur, Pune, Srinagar, Trichy and Trivandrum, the press release added.

A total of 41,498 passengers have been screened as of May 4. Of them, around 8,353 passengers were from affected countries.

It also said four passengers have been referred to identified health facility -- two at Delhi and two at Cochin. So far, a total of 12 samples have been tested negative. Three samples are under test.

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